



Republic of the Philippines
Province of Occidental Mindoro
MUNICIPALITY OF ABRA DE ILOG

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR

12 September 2023

FELIX S. MIRASOL, JR., CESO IV

OIC-Regional Executive Director
3rd Flr., 1515 DENR by the Bay Bldg.,
Roxas Boulevard, Barangay 668
Ermita, Manila

**SUBJECT: ILLEGAL ENCROACHMENT OF FOREST LANDS IN
ABRA DE ILOG OCCIDENTAL MINDORO**

GREETINGS RD MIRASOL:

I hope my letter finds you well and the state of MIMAROPA's environment still in the pink of health and threats effectively addressed. May I bring to your attention a pressing matter that may balloon into a nightmare scenario for our environment. It concerns the encroachment of forest lands in our town, Abra de Ilog.

Our neighboring town, Puerto Galera, already bursting on its seams and the picture of urban congestion, has its eyes fixed on forest lands in our town for expansion. This boundary demarcation issue was the topic for settlement between the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* of the adjacent provinces of Oriental and Occidental Mindoro, but sadly remains unresolved.

At the moment our *bantay gubats* in Bgy *Udalo*, our barangay next to Bgy. *Aninuan*, Puerto Galera have reported several land prospectors both foreigners and locals, lured and enticed by masquerading forestland occupants and pretending landowners over parcels of land within the forest zone.

So far we have been able to discourage these would be buyers and the land "brokers" on the occasions our *bantay gubats* chance upon them in the area. But everytime we warn and admonish them, officials of barangay *Aninuan* and even the Municipal Government of Puerto Galera come to the aid of these brokers and threaten our *bantay gubats* verbally and through notes ordering them to refrain from interfering with their activities.

We call upon you to help us curb this illegal practice that has the connivance of local government. At your level may we also seek a pronouncement or



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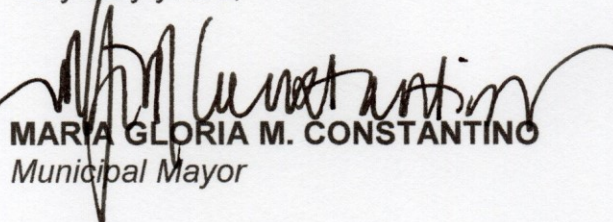
demarcation of forest lands and also the extent of the provincial boundaries or Oriental and Occidental Mindoro. This would settle and clarify upon whose jurisdiction and authority, in conjunction with the DENR, would the enforcement of these environmental laws fall.

To control this, we also seek to create a composite environmental protection task force consisting of the DENR, the PNP, AFP, our LGU to monitor and guarantee compliance with all environmental laws. We have so far created several monitoring stations throughout Abra de Ilog with composite governmental agencies to do exactly this, from marine protection areas, fish sanctuary and *bantay gubat* stations in our highlands and forest lands.

With your permission our plan is to construct another of this composite environmental monitoring station at the boundary of Occidental and Oriental Mindoro, wherever ideal, to maintain and project vigilance against those minded to degrade our pristine environment.

I look forward to your positive reply on this report and that together we take the initial steps toward viable ecological use and preservation.

Very truly yours,



MARIA GLORIA M. CONSTANTINO
Municipal Mayor

Copy Furnished:

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