

STRENGTHENING THE FOREST PROTECTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION IN THE BUREAU OF FOREST DEVELOPMENT, MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 1020, May 14, 1980

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TO:

Minister of Natural Resources
Minister of the Budget
Minister of Justice State Prosecutor
Minister of National Defense
Chairman, Civil Service Commission
Director, Bureau of Forest Development

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to protect and conserve the remaining forest resources;

WHEREAS, on 26 July 1978, a Presidential Directive was issued instructing the Minister of Natural Resources to organize a Special Forest Law Enforcement Group in the Bureau of Forest Development to meet this threat" posed by unscrupulous persons;

WHEREAS, pursuant thereto and by virtue of Sec. 10 of Presidential Decree No. 7051 Ministry Order No. 1 dated 14 September 1978 was issued officially creating and making said office operational charged with the bounden responsibility of enforcing all forestry laws, rules and regulations; and in relation thereto: prevent and/or investigate cases of unlawful occupation of forest lands, kaingin-making, illegal cutting/gathering/transporting/processing and/or sale of forest products unauthorized hunting, gathering and/or slaughter of wildlife and other marine life, forest fires, apprehend and/or arrest all offenders, and file criminal charges against all persons responsible therefor;

WHEREAS, the Special Forest Law Enforcement Group has shown to be an effective and efficient implementing arm of the BFD in carrying out the national policy on protection, development, management, and rehabilitation of forest lands to ensure their continuous productive capacity as well as maintain the balance of the forest ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, in order to further accelerate and intensify the protection of forest lands through strict implementation and enforcement of all existing forestry laws, rules and regulations throughout the country, the Special Forest Law Enforcement Group had been restructured into a Division of the Bureau of Forest Development now called Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division by virtue of Ministry Order No. 6 Series of 1980.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby direct the immediate strengthening of the Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division, any law or regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, by authorizing

the following:

- The Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Budget shall immediately appropriate the initial amount of P5 million from the Working Unit Special Deposit collected under Sec. 2(a) of FAO No. 64 dated 11 August 1972 allotted for forest protection, not otherwise appropriated, as funds available for the purchase of the necessary equipment as approved previously by the Director of the Bureau of Forest Development, is hereby given specific authority to recommend the purchase such transport, communication and other equipment, as an exception to existing instructions, laws and policy.
- The Director of the Bureau of Forest Development or his duly authorized representative shall sell at public auction, and/ or dispose in accordance with existing laws, all confiscated timber and other forest products found illegally cut, gathered, and/or transported and all proceeds derived there from be allotted as intelligence funds of the Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division;
- The personnel of the Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division shall receive monthly incentive allowance equivalent to 100% of their monthly salaries to be initially chargeable against the savings of the BFD and thereafter, the same shall be included in the annual appropriation of the division;
- The Ad Hoc Committee on Organizational units created under LOI No. 720 shall study and consider the approval of the Staffing Pattern of the Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division as submitted by the Director of the Bureau of Forest Development and recommended by the Minister of Natural Resources.
- The Minister of National Defense shall lend assistance in the enforcement of all forest laws, rules and regulations.
- The courts and proper prosecuting or administrative officials or agencies shall give preference to the expeditious disposition of cases involving violations of forest laws, rules and regulations.
- The Minister of the Budget shall immediately release the amounts herein needed;
- The Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Division may call on any ministry, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations for such assistance as it may need in connection with the performance of its functions.

This LOI shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 14th day of May, in the Year of Our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty.

(Sgd.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS

President of the Philippines

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