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# PURSUING SUSTAINABLE UPLAND DEVELOPMENT ANCHORING ON FOOD, WOOD AND NON-WOOD SECURITY AND ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY AND PROVIDING THE MECHANISMS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND FOR OTHER...

*EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 606, February 27, 2007*

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WHEREAS, a sustainable approach to the development of the natural environment through effective governance and improved delivery of basic services to the marginalized sector of society is called for by the government's development agenda, the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (2004-2010) and the commitment to the united Nation's Millenium Development Goals;

WHEREAS, there is a need to pursue a paradigm shift or refocusing to ensure sustainable development and livelihood in the countryside, specifically in upland areas, through rehabilitation and adoption of programs geared towards producing high value crops and trees;

WHEREAS, the country's land area is comprised largely of upland and forestlands, covering more than 50% of the 30 million hectares of land, with a big portion of occupied and tilled by marginalized people such as upland farmers, indigenous peoples and tribal groups, who mostly belong to the socially and economically displaced and disadvantaged sectors of society;

WHEREAS, the continuing problems of poverty and internal conflict are mostly brought about by the unequal access and control and inequitable distribution of the benefits over the country's limited natural resources and productive areas, especially in the uplands;

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the primary government agency responsible for the conservation, management, protection and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources specifically forest lands and other lands of the public domain;

WHEREAS, under the Local Government Code of 1991, the national government, specifically the DENR, shares with the Local Government Units (LGUs) the responsibility in the sustainable management and development of forest and natural resources, as exemplified under Joint Memorandum Circular signed by the DENR and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and witnessed by the different leagues of LGUs in 2003 and as early as 1998;

WHEREAS, LGUs have been supporting and addressing the problems of their constituency in the uplands and have initiated innovative and exemplary practices in sustainable upland development, such as co-management of natural resources, community-based forestland use planning, forest protection, resource management, rural road maintenance and agricultural and forestry extension services, in line with the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);

WHEREAS, three (3) rural development agencies of the national government, namely the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and the DENR, under the convergence policy,



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have institutionalized the DA-DAR-DENR Convergence Initiative to address rural development efforts of the government. This convergence towards sustainable rural development was formalized through Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 01, series of 1999, signed by the three Secretaries of said agencies and revitalized through JMC 2004-01. Further, JMC 2006-01 mandated the "Adoption of the Guide for Implementation on DA-DAR-DENR Convergence Initiatives towards Sustainable Rural Development."

WHEREAS, the adoption of the Community Based Forest Management strategy supports SFM and convergence initiatives among legally-mandated agencies working in the uplands and the local initiatives to effectively address poverty in upland areas;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to strengthen the existing development framework between national government and local government agencies for the improved delivery of basic services and development programs, specifically in the upland areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order the pursuit of sustainable upland development anchoring on food, wood and non-wood, security and economic productivity that leads to the improvement in the quality of life of upland communities, increase economic productivity of upland areas, and ensure sustainable management of the country's forest resources.

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the state to pursue sustainable development of the country's upland areas and communities by ensuring a proper balance between ecological and economic concerns in a manner that the forests natural resource base is maintained and improved. At the same time this would promote economic activities in the uplands through agricultural and forest production and utilization of upland resources to generate sufficient income for the communities residing and making a living in the uplands.

It is further declared as state policy to ensure the equitable access to and enjoyment of the benefits of development and use of uplands by the marginalized segments of the population and preserve and conserve these benefits and developments not only for the present generation of Filipinos but also the future generation.

SEC. 2. Basic Guiding Principles and Strategies. As a matter of policy, the operationalization of the country's sustainable upland development strategy at the local levels shall be consistent with the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), adopting primarily the Community Based Forest Management (CBFM), strategy in the conduct of community mobilization, local land-use planning, delivery of basic social services, extension services, forest protection and resource management, rural infrastructure and development of local enterprises and livelihood activities. Furthermore, the implementation of sustainable upland development shall also be based on the following:

1)

Co-management is the principle of institutionalizing mutual cooperation and collaborative partnership between national and local government institutions as well as local communities in the performance and implementation of legally-mandated responsibilities, roles and functions in the development and management of the uplands;

2)

Convergence is the integration, complementation and maximization of institutional, technical, resource, financial and human resources of all the key stakeholders in the upland areas, especially among national and local government agencies; and

3)


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Participatory Governance involves directly capacitating and fully involving local government units (LGUs) and communities in the whole process of formulating, planning, implementing and monitoring of all development activities and programs in the uplands.

SEC. 3. Scope and Coverage. The sustainable development of the uplands shall encompass and cover lands that are classified as forestlands, including allowable zones within protected areas. The key activities and areas of concern in support of the development of the uplands are outlined below, but not limited thereto:

1)

Identify and review convergence and impact of key programs and interventions provided by national and local agencies, including donor-assisted projects and programs to upland communities and areas;

2)

Review and assess the effectiveness and efficiencies of capacities and operations of key nationals and local agencies in the implementation and performance of their mandates in the uplands;

3)

Review and assess the consistency and applicability of existing national implementing policies, guidelines and program in addressing the needs and conditions of upland areas and communities;

4)

Identify, formulate, develop and recommend specific programs of actions and interventions to support the sustainable development of upland areas and communities; and

5)

Identify key policy reforms and recommendations to strengthen delivery and effectiveness of programs and initiatives in the uplands.

SEC. 4. Agency Involvement. The DENR shall be the lead agency for the implementation of the sustainable upland development order, assisted by the DA and the DAR.

SEC. 5. Institutional Arrangement. The Sustainable Upland Development Steering Committee is hereby created to oversee the implementation of this Order, chaired by the DENR, and the following as members: DA, DAR, DILG, and the Presidential Adviser on Agrarian Reform. The heads of various national LGU Leagues, such as the League of Provinces, League of Cities, League of Municipalities, and the Liga ng mga Barangays, are also encouraged to join the meetings of the committee. At the regional/provincial/ city/municipality level, parallel committees created under the convergence initiatives with the provincial/municipal chief executives as chair, shall be adopted:

SEC. 6. Duties and Responsibilities of key Agencies Involved:

**1) DENR**

a)

To call upon all national and local agencies for technical, policy, information and resource assistance and support;

b)


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Initiate and conduct national and regional discussions and consultations relating to policies, objectives and programs of actions for sustainable upland development;

c)

Review and translate specific recommendations into operational guidelines of national concern, programs and initiatives, key areas and themes in coordination with national and local agencies for sustainable upland development;

d)

Initiate and enhance partnership and coordinating activities with private sector groups, donor agencies and other relevant external bodies;

e)

Provide assistance to the program beneficiaries in the packaging and marketing of products derived from the project areas including resource mobilization;

f)

Submit regular reports and updates to the Office of the President and other relevant agencies.

### 2) DA

a)

Assist the DENR in the identification of suitable crop combinations and cropping systems;

b)

Assist the DENR in the transfer of appropriate and tested technologies to program beneficiaries;

c)

Provide assistance to the program beneficiaries in the packaging and marketing of products derived from the project areas including resources mobilization.

### 3) DAR

a)

Provide assistance in the conduct of capability building and enhancement programs for the beneficiaries;

b)

Provide assistance to the program beneficiaries in the packaging and marketing of products derived from the project areas including resources mobilization.

### 4) DILG

a)

Ensure coordination at the local level as well as execution/implementation of projects;

b)

Provide assistance to the program beneficiaries in the packaging and marketing of products derived from the


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project areas including resources mobilization.

SEC. 7. LGU Participation. The LGUs are encouraged to assist (1) in convening the provincial/municipal committees created under the Convergence Initiative for the identification of specific roles and functions, (2) in recommending specific programs/ projects and interventions, (3) in formulating specific administrative and operational guidelines related upland development in coordination with members of related committees, (4) in identifying sources of funds to ensure the delivery of needed services and implementation of specific programs/projects, and (5) in providing assistance to the program beneficiaries in packaging and marketing of products derived from the project areas including resources mobilization.

SEC. 8. Technical Assistance. The DENR shall tap the support services of the different technical working groups under the DA-DAR-DENR Convergence towards Rural Development and the DENR-DILG-LGU partnership as well as other individuals and institutional experts and specialists from both national and local technical agencies.

SEC. 9. Funding. Funds needed to carry out the provisions of this Executive Order shall be taken from available funds of the DENR, DA and DAR. Other sources of funds such as grants, donations, and other forms of technical and resource assistance from donor agencies, projects and other public or private entities may be tapped and facilitated by the DENR, DAR, DA, DILG and all the Leagues (Provincial/Municipal/City/Barangay) to support the objectives and activities identified under this Executive Order subject to regular auditing guidelines and procedures.

SEC. 10. Separability. Any portion or provision of this Executive Order that may be declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying other provisions hereof, as long as such remaining provisions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SEC. 11. Repeal. All rules and regulations, other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Executive Order, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Adopted: 27 Feb. 2007

(SGD.) GLORIA M. ARROYO
President of the Philippines

By the President:

(SGD.) EDUARDO R. ERMITA
Executive Secretary


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