

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 917, August 22, 1979

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 917, August 22, 1979

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/f8ab5e7af0e3/>

TO:

The Minister of Natural Resources
The Minister of Human Settlements
The Minister of Local Government and

Community Development

The Director, Bureau of Forest Development

WHEREAS, among the major concerns of government are to ensure the security of the state and provide the citizens with their basic needs, among which is a healthy and wholesome environment;

WHEREAS, it is essential to close certain areas of the public domain from any form of commercial exploitation or similar activities in order that the government objectives on national security and the enhancement of a healthy and wholesome environment as well as the maintenance of adequate water supply for hydro-power generation, irrigation, industrial and domestic needs, and the prevention of floods, droughts, excessive soil erosion and surface run-off, can be effectively attained;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby direct, as follows:

- That all mossy forests, protection forests, critical watersheds and proclaimed watershed reservations supporting existing government dam projects or domestic water supply facilities, are hereby declared Wilderness Areas, and shall not be the subject of exploitation of whatever nature;
- That mangrove forests essentially needed in foreshore protection and the maintenance of estuarine and marine life, including special forests which are the exclusive habitats of rare and endangered Philippine flora and fauna, are likewise declared Wilderness Areas;
- That within each timber concession, an area of at least five (5%) percent of the total forest land area covered thereby, exclusive of any mossy or protection forest therein, are likewise hereby declared Wilderness Areas; Provided that, The Director of Forest Development shall inform, in writing, all holders of timber licenses affected to identify such areas based on guidelines provided for the purpose, and upon failure on the part of these licensees to exercise such option within sixty (60) days from date of notice, the Director shall proceed to identify such area or areas and undertake the necessary actions in pursuance to this instruction;
- That in the interest of national security, all forest lands within a 45-kilometer radius from Palanan Point in

Palanan, Isabela, and such other forest lands as may later on be identified, selected and reserved for similar purposes are declared as Wilderness Area. For this purpose, natural boundaries and readily identifiable landmarks shall be used in defining the boundary of the declared Wilderness Area;

- That all disputed areas between timber licenses which are not presently the subject of exploitation shall likewise be declared Wilderness Areas;

- There shall be established, maintained and preserved, on areas near, bordering, or surrounding population centers such as barrios, municipalities and cities, Greenbelts, where all forms of development activities shall be strictly controlled. Other government agencies shall assist in the development and maintenance of these Greenbelts;

- The Minister of natural Resources upon the recommendation of the Director of Forest Development shall submit to the President, the boundaries of the Wilderness Areas or Greenbelts in consonance with these instructions for proclamation as such.

- Except for the construction of foot trails, pathways or similar structures intended to make these areas accessible to the public for recreation and similar purposes, occupancy or use of the Wilderness Areas is hereby prohibited.

In the case of Greenbelts, all developmental activities that may be undertaken shall be strictly controlled and shall conform with the comprehensive development plan prepared therefor.

- The Minister of Natural Resources and the Director of Forest Development, in consultation with appropriate agencies of the government, are hereby authorized to promulgate and adopt such measures, rules and regulations as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this instruction.

Done in the City of Manila, this 22nd day of August, in the Year of Our Lord, nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Nine.

(Sgd.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS
President of the Philippines

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.