

MINDANAO MULTISECTORAL WATERSHED AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (MMWDC)

BRIEFER

I. BACKGROUND / RATIONALE

The Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (2004-2010) recognizes the exigency to balance the needs of the production sectors with the country's ecological carrying capacity. It is the national government's thrust to promote environmental sustainability by integrating environmental concerns in planning and decision-making at all levels of the bureaucracy, as well as broader participation of local government units, civil society, communities, concerned national government agencies and the private sector for the sustainable management and development of the environment.

The Mindanao Development Framework Plan (1995-2015) speaks of the same. The Plan emphasizes the importance of achieving a balanced and ecologically sustainable economic development. It calls for the institutionalization of the watershed or basin management approach in land-use planning, open dialogue among the stakeholders on policies and issues affecting the watersheds, public information campaign to facilitate watershed conservation and full appreciation of man's relationship with the environment, and formulation of policies in the use and management of watersheds consistent with national policies of the government.

In support thereof and in recognition of the fact that while Mindanao is endowed with rich natural resources --- it has to contend with its poverty problem that contributes to environmental degradation in the island, the 1st Mindanao Multistakeholder Forum on Watershed Management was held on 01-02 September 2005 at the Eden Nature Park and Resort, Davao City.

Spearheaded by the Forestry Development Center (FDC) of U.P. Los Baños, in collaboration with the Upland Development Programme (UDP) in Southern Mindanao and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the forum provided a venue for identifying multi-sectoral initiatives that will facilitate the improvement of watershed management in Mindanao through the lessons, experiences and success stories gained from past and on-going projects. The Forum was attended by more than 200 participants representing various agencies and organizations concerned with watershed management in the country. Among these are government agencies such as DENR, DA, DLR, NCIP, UDP; civil society groups such as PCEEM, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Kinaiyahan Foundation, Kahublagan Foundation, KASILAK Foundation; LGU representatives; private sector organizations such as Philippine Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA); and, members of the academe.

The participants were grouped according to the six (6) regions in Mindanao, with Region XI having four (4) sub-groups. Each group was tasked to identify national and local issues and concerns related to watershed management, and their corresponding policy, technology, or action recommendations. The results of the workshop are attached as **ANNEX A**. The regional outputs of the workshop shall comprise the Mindanao Action Agenda for Sustainable Watershed Management.

A Resolution was then crafted manifesting the stakeholders' support to various activities geared towards the management of Mindanao watersheds. Said Resolution was based on the Mindanao Action Agenda formulated during the Forum.

II. RATIONALE

The Mindanao Action Agenda, which was the result of the workshops conducted during the forum, is a compendium of regional issues and concerns identified by multisectoral participants who are knowledgeable of the problems affecting the watersheds in their respective areas. Also incorporated in the Action Agenda are recommendations on how to address these specific concerns.

It can be recalled that one of the major outputs identified during the conceptualization of the Mindanao Environment Watershed Summit (MEWS) was *to generate response to identified problems and issues on integrated river watershed management by the various LGUs and agencies concerned.*

Since it is observed that the conduct of the MEWS cannot be done in the immediate future (pending the conduct of all regional roadshow consultations to be spearheaded by the RBComs), the results of the Forum (the Mindanao Action Agenda) can serve as relevant inputs and reference on specific actions and next steps to be taken towards the realization of the integrated watershed management approach. The implementation of the activities specified in the Mindanao Action Agenda shall be monitored by the Mindanao Multisectoral Watershed and Development Committee (MMWDC).

III. MECHANISMS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT/ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Mindanao/Regional Multisectoral Watershed and Development Committee (MMWDC/RMWDC)

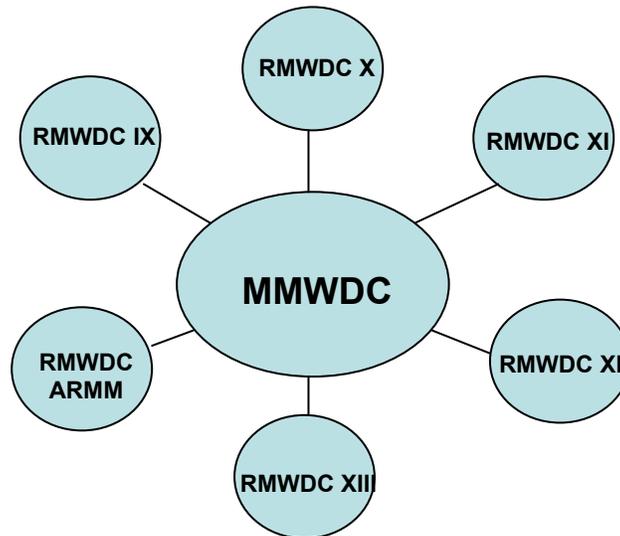
The Mindanao Multisectoral Watershed and Development Committee (MMWDC), which has been specially created to address watershed concerns for Mindanao, will serve as the primary advisory group for the Management of Mindanao Watersheds. With the following functions, the MMWDC is the pertinent body to handle this endeavor through the following assistance:

1. Provide necessary linkage among the key players in the watershed sector, and provide mechanism to integrate various efforts towards its improvement and other related policies affecting the area;
2. Advocate policies and procedure towards attaining higher prioritization of Mindanao and watershed development programs, and encouraging the private sector to participate in the development efforts;
3. Conduct review and recommend necessary revisions on the watershed development programs for Mindanao and other related policies affecting the area;
4. Assist in the mobilization / accessing of funds, implementation and facilitation of resolutions pertinent to issues and concerns of the watershed and irrigation development programs for Mindanao;
5. Monitor and evaluate commitments in the implementation of programs and projects by the concerned government agencies; and,
6. Update stakeholders on the solutions and measures undertaken in addressing issues in the implementation of watershed and irrigation development programs and projects in Mindanao.

In this endeavor, the MMWDC will particularly dwell on the watershed concerns of Mindanao. It will serve as a mother body whose main function is to initiate and oversee the implementation and prioritization of various programs pertaining to the management of watersheds in Mindanao.

Moreover, it will also be involved in the prioritization, implementation and financing of various Mindanao watershed programs and projects.

The MMWDC shall be composed of the six (6) Regional Multi-Sectoral Watershed and Development Committees (RMWDC), which will be lodged under the Economic Committee of the Regional Development Councils (RDCs).



The composition of the RMWDC, on the other hand, shall be decided by the respective RDCs. The regions shall be given the liberty to decide on the composition of the RMWDC. The chairperson for each RMWDC shall represent the region during MMWDC Meetings.

The membership of the RMWDC may compose, but is not limited to, the following:

1. LGU Representatives
2. Regional Line Agencies – from DENR, DA, NCIP, NIA, DLR, NEDA
3. Regional Civil Society Organizations
4. Academe

Mindanao Multisectoral Watershed and Development Committee - Technical Working Group (MMWDC-TWG)

The MWITF Technical Working Group (MWITF-TWG) or the Secretariat, which will be created as the technical arm of the MMWDC, will provide technical assistance to the latter and will serve as its think-tank. It will aid the mother body in the performance of its functions relative to the prioritization, implementation and financing of various watershed programs and projects in Mindanao. The TWG will likewise provide updates on the watershed development programs and projects and recommend measures and solutions to address issues and concerns in the implementation of these programs / projects. It can also come up with specific project proposals for the consideration of the MMWDC.

The proposed secretariat shall compose the following members:

1. DENR – RTD Manny Isip
2. UDP – Wiebe van Rij/ Dashiell Indelible/Dory Nuevas/Gel Abalus
3. DA – Dir. Romy Palcon
4. NEDA – Dir. Nick Agustin/Connie
5. NGO – Jemuel Perifio
6. Academe – Dr. Ruth Gamboa
7. MEDCo Secretariat

IV. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Based on the results of the 1st Mindanao Multistakeholder Forum on Watershed Management, the proposed activities for the MMWDC have been indicated in the resolution passed during that Forum. It is upon the discretion of the RMWDC to choose among the activities outlined in the Action Agenda their respective priorities.

Among the doable provisions stated in the Resolution which were initially identified are the following:

1. The identification, delineation and proclamation of critical/priority watersheds in Mindanao;
2. All identified priority watersheds in Mindanao shall be covered by a watershed-based land use development plan to be formulated, adopted and implemented by the LGUs or the indigenous peoples or the PAMB, whichever applies, with the participation of the multi-stakeholders ensuring that cultural priorities are upheld. The approaches shall be as follows:
 - Participatory Watershed-based Land Use Planning
 - Baranggay-based
 - Networking
3. LGUs to pursue the implementation of co-management with concerned government agencies and communities (examples shall be UDP areas and PCEEM and Nueva Vizcaya);
4. Develop and implement a mechanism for equitable sharing of costs, benefits and accountabilities among the providers and users of environmental goods and services coming from the watersheds in Mindanao/Mainstream LGU financial support in their annual and investment plan/Institutionalize mechanisms for PES for watershed development;
5. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign/Mobilize resources for programs on watershed R and D, extension services and information/database generation (i.e. climate, land use, land cover, socio-economics, water, soil, etc.) and monitoring system to promote transparent, responsible and science-based management and decision-making.