



**MEMORANDUM**

**FOR/TO :** **The Undersecretaries**  
Field Operations and Environment  
Special Concerns and Concurrent Director of the Biodiversity  
Management Bureau

**The Executive Director**  
Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

**The Deputy Administrator**  
National Mapping and Resource Information Authority

**The Directors**  
Legal Affairs Service  
Land Management Bureau  
Foreign Assisted and Special Projects  
Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau  
Forest Management Bureau

**FROM :** **The Assistant Secretary**  
Policy, Planning and Foreign Assisted and Special Projects

**SUBJECT :** **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF THE DENR  
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) ON THE  
REVERSION OF ABANDONED, UNDERDEVELOPED,  
UNUTILIZED FISHPONDS (AUUF) AND REQUEST FOR  
OTHER INFORMATION**

**DATE :** **17 SEP 2021**

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This pertains to the DENR TWG on the reversion of AUUFs created under Special order (SO) No. 2021-274, signed last May 25, 2021. May we respectfully provide your offices with a copy of the highlights and summary of agreements of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of DENR AUUF Reversion TWG held last 26 July 2021 for your perusal.

Pursuant to the agreements made during the meeting, may we also request for the following information:

Requested Information	Office Concerned	Deadline
Names of designated alternate and their contact details;	NAMRIA Legal Affairs Service, BMB, LMB,	24 September 2021

	FMB, Office of Usec for Field Ops	
Names and contact details of designated representatives to the Secretariat	Forest Resource Conservation Division, FMB  Physiography and Coastal Resource Division, NAMRIA  Coastal and Marine Division, BMB  Coastal Zone and Freshwater Ecosystems Research Division, ERDB  Land Management Division, LMB	24 September 2021
Relevant policies, initiatives, reports, studies, special projects, spatial data, references, draft guidelines and the like on AUUFs/Fishponds	NAMRIA BMB FMB LMB ERDB FASPS PCSD	24 September 2021

Please send your responses via email to [psddivision@gmail.com](mailto:psddivision@gmail.com) or [policy@denr.gov.ph](mailto:policy@denr.gov.ph).

For your information and appropriate action, please.

  
**MARCIAL C. AMARO, JR., CESO III**

**1<sup>st</sup> DENR TWG Meeting on Reversion of Abandoned, Underdeveloped, Unutilized Fishponds (AUUF)  
26 July 2021 | 9:30 AM**

**I. Attendees**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asec Marcial Amaro - PPFASPS, FMB</li> <li>2. Dir. Melinda Capistrano- PPS</li> <li>3. Dir. Henry Adornado – ERDB</li> <li>4. For. Flordelino Rey - OASEC PPFASPS</li> <li>5. Mr. Raul Magabo - NAMRIA</li> <li>6. Ms. Beata Batadlan- NAMRIA</li> <li>7. For. Armida Andres - BMB</li> <li>8. Ms. Nilida Baling - BMB</li> <li>9. Ms. Desiree Maano - BMB</li> <li>10. Mr. Michael Cornito - BMB</li> <li>11. Mr. Jeric Dejuocos - BMB</li> <li>12. Mr. Charles Evangelista – BMB</li> <li>13. Ms. Jacqueline Concepcion - BMB</li> <li>14. Ms. Criselda Castor - BMB</li> <li>15. Ms. Jezreelyn Milar - BMB</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Dr. Malou Moreno – ERDB</li> <li>17. Ms. Julie Ann Ibasco – ERDB</li> <li>18. For. Tess Aquino - FMB</li> <li>19. For. Amie Rabang - FMB</li> <li>20. Mr. Richard Lugod</li> <li>21. Marlene M. Francia - DENR V</li> <li>22. Vida Orrubia - DENR V</li> <li>23. Atty. Ed. Gumba – DENR V</li> <li>24. Mr. Lorenz Kurt Abrasaldo – DENR V</li> <li>25. Ms. Emilyn Castillo – LMB</li> <li>26. For. Vener Garcia – PPS</li> <li>27. Ms. Anna Michelle Lim – PPS</li> <li>28. Ms. Amisol Talania – PPS</li> <li>29. Ms. Marilyn Arzaga – PPS</li> </ol> |
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**II. Highlights**

The meeting commenced at 10:00 AM and was presided over by Asst. Sec. Marcial C. Amaro, Jr. The AUUF Mangrove Project in DENR Region V was added as an agenda item under Other Matters.

Agenda Item	Discussions/Instructions	Person Responsible/Timeline
<b>I. Brief Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For. Venerando U. Garcia (PPS) presented a short briefer on AUUFs, Legal Bases for reversion, and basis for the creation of the AUUF Reversion Technical Working Group (TWG). He also briefly tackled the roles and responsibilities of the various National TWG, Regional</li> </ul>	

TWG, and National Secretariat.

- For. Garcia asked which specific office will do the consolidation of maps and other data. Ms. Beata Batadlan (NAMRIA) commented that they provided swamp zonation maps in Nov 2019 to FMB, who may have already initiated the database. For. Amie Rabang stated that the NAMRIA's identification of those in approved Land Classification maps is still ongoing, which means, the maps provided are still lacking. The 93 sheets provided by NAMRIA were analyzed. The analysis indicated that there are areas with houses and others that have reverted into mangrove areas. FMB needs additional information on other LCs that may or may not have been covered by FLAs but were also part of the LC projects zonified for fishpond purposes.
- For. Andres shared that out of the 16 Regions, only 5 submitted data on AUUF. The BMB will share the data they received, which is incomplete. Some regions have data on hectareage, but not the no. of FLAs or the list and vice versa. As per the data of BFAR, around 119,000 ha were turned over to BFAR, which does not align with DENR's existing data. Asec. Amaro said that this is where coordination is needed so that there can be common figures.
- For. Tess Aquino corrected that RA 10654 amended RA 8550, and removed the provision on reversion. Asec. Amaro said that our starting point is NCI-SRD.
- Dir. Henry Adornado added that as to the figures obtained by the ERDB, a total area of 1,043 hectares was reverted to DENR as of September 2011.
- Asec Amaro stated that there are two critical offices – NAMRIA and FMB who is doing the initial analysis of the data. He tasked **FMB to consolidate maps and other data on AUUF.**
- Asec. Amaro also stated that there should be a **full accounting or inventory of policies on AUUF.**
- For. Garcia asked whether the scope of work of the TWG will include illegal fishponds that are already abandoned. Asec. Amaro said that these areas should be noted by the TWG and subject to appropriate policies and regulations so that these may be addressed accordingly.
- Asec. Amaro highlighted the challenge on the discrepancies and incomplete data on AUUF. We need to identify the kinds of data that should be obtained from DA to facilitate Reversion. He requested the **BMB to provide a copy of their data and Memorandum of request to the**

**FMB**

**Secretariat**

**BMB**

	<p><b>Regions. This will be reiterated, especially for those regions that did not comply.</b> This issue may be taken up during the budget hearing as this topic is of interest to Sen. Risa Hontiveros.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Malou Moreno (ERDB) shared that in the policies they researched, there are conditionalities on the areas declared by DENR as available for fishponds. This may be used by the DENR for reversion. <b>ERDB will share these policies and conditionalities with the Secretariat.</b> DENR Memo Order No. 17 s. 1998 also banned the further zonation of mangrove forests for fishpond development. Thus fishponds developed after 1998 may be considered as illegal. Asec. Amaro added that RA 7161, which banned the cutting of mangrove, may also be used as basis for recalling these areas.</li> <li>• <b>All concerned agencies to submit the accounting of spatial data, issuances and other information to PPS-PSD. A formal Request will be signed by Asec. Amaro.</b></li> <li>• The meeting noted that there are already guidelines drafted under the Integrated Coastal Resources Management Project related to AUU Reversion. Asec. Amaro said to <b>revisit and update these guidelines.</b> He instructed the Secretariat to coordinate with FASPO and <b>obtain copies of the aforementioned policies, as well as those issued by other agencies and under other projects, and other relevant references.</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ERDB</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NTWG</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat</b></p>
<p><b>II. Current Status and Initiatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For. Armida Andres (BMB) presented the current status and initiatives of BMB with respect to AUUFs. One issue raised by BFAR is on the 300 hectares of active FLAs that were planted and included in the NGP. She summarized the data they gathered and their findings. There will also be a field visit on Aug. 10-12 in Zambales related to AUUF. DENR was tasked to brief the participants and develop validation matrix on AUUF.</li> <li>• Asec. Amaro asked the <b>Secretariat to check if the PCSD has any relevant initiatives on AUUF, as well as other offices.</b></li> <li>• Asec. Amaro requested for clarification on the BFAR's issue on planted active fishponds. For. Tess Aquino said they received the memo but the attachment, particularly the list of fishponds that were developed under NGP for verification on the ground. Spatial information is critical. A way forward if for the <b>FMB to request the shape files of affected active fishponds for</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FMB</b></p>

	<p><b>verification of field offices.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For. Amie Rabang (FMB) presented the current status and initiatives of FMB with respect to AUUFs. She presented the data of the Status of FLAs per region. However, this data does not include maps. She elaborated the actions taken on NGP areas covered by FLAs and FLAs that were loaned to DBP. They requested maps and other information of all FLAs within jurisdiction of DA, which the BFAR did not provide due in part to their ongoing inventory of all FLA areas under their jurisdiction. She emphasized that the starting point for the TWGs work is on the mapping of the FLA areas turned over to BFAR.</li> <li>• For. Andres surmised that the BFAR itself may not have maps of their fishpond areas. Asec. Amaro said that a protocol could be developed on how to address this data gap, in coordination with other agencies.</li> <li>• For. Rabang recommended starting with zonified maps on FLAs. Asec. Amaro suggested that assistance could be extended to NAMRIA to expedite the development of these maps.</li> <li>• For. Aquino suggested also revisiting the data generated by previous projects such as the ICRMP. <b>Asec. Amaro instructed the Secretariat to coordinate with FASPS on this.</b></li> <li>• Dir. Melinda Capistrano raised that RED Arleigh Adorable is persistently asking about this issue and asked about the guidelines for the Regions in terms of AUUF. Asec. Amaro said that some guidance could be provided to the Regions, and pointed to the previous agreement to inventory policies and projects pertaining to AUUF.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Secretariat</b></p>
<p><b>III. Organizational Arrangements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For. Garcia requested the members to submit their preferred contact details as well as their nominated alternate members. <b>The PPS shall also develop an action plan with timelines for presentation during the next meeting.</b> In terms of funding requirements, they are anticipating that this will be applicable to the Regions. Based on agreements today, the Secretariat will prepare necessary memorandum for the Regions for their guidance.</li> <li>• Asec. Amaro also instructed to <b>submit status report to the Principals such as Usec PPIA, copy furnished Usec LAHRLA and Usec FOE.</b> For. Andres agreed as the SO is pursuant to NCI-SRD.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Secretariat</b></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PPS</b> <b>[Aug. 6, 2021]</b></p>

### III. Summary of Agreements/Ways Forward

- ▶ Inventory of relevant laws and policies including issuances of other agencies such as PCSD, DILG, DAR, etc.
- ▶ FMB, NAMRIA, Regional Offices to conduct Inventory of areas released for FLA and updating on their status. Clarify overall universe of FLAs for reversion
- ▶ Secretariat to review completed and ongoing projects to determine relevant outputs to NTWG work
- ▶ FMB to consolidate thematic maps
- ▶ BMB to share data submitted by regions with NTWG
- ▶ NTWG to follow up with the Regions re: compliance to BMB Directive in 2020
- ▶ Secretariat to draft request for updates from regional offices on activities conducted pursuant to DENR SO No. 2021-274, including expected funding requirement
- ▶ PPS to draft Action Plan, with timeline and budget proposal to be presented next meeting, including tasks of Regional Technical Working Group. Leveling off with RTWGs once details are complete
- ▶ Secretariat to prepare Work and Financial Plan for IATWG for discussion with IATWG and consideration/endorsement by NCI SRD national secretariat
- ▶ Include non-FLA fishpond areas (e.g. covered with tenure instrument, included in reforestation projects)
- ▶ NTWG to study reporting and communication protocols for IATWG as well as internal protocols
- ▶ Secretariat to draft report for USEC PPIA on highlights and agreements of first AUU NTWG meeting copy furnished OUFOE and OULAHRL by this Week
- ▶ Secretariat to Invite PCSD and other relevant DENR Offices in succeeding meetings
- ▶ Secretariat to prepare proposed Terms of Reference of NTWG
- ▶ NTWG Members to submit details of permanent and alternative representatives as well as contact details by next week
- ▶ PPS to suggest inclusion of AUUF Updates as agenda under next meeting of NCI SRD PA CWG
- ▶ Tentative Schedule of Next Meeting: August 9 (Monday)

**Prepared By:**

**DENR AUUF Reversion TWG Secretariat**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The regularity of the meeting will also depend on the Action Plan to be drafted. ASec. Amaro recommended that the action plan be drafted in consultation with other offices. <b>A reporting protocol should also be drafted.</b></li> <li>On funding, Dir. Capistrano said that the activities for AUUF reversion is not included in the Region's work plan as of now. There may be remaining funds with PPD, and they can draft a work plan for downloading. For the Bureaus, they have funding. Asec. Amaro said there is a need to capture assignments of RTWG. <b>He said to request for updates from the Regions on their efforts regarding BMB's directive.</b></li> <li>The tentative schedule of the next meeting will be on Aug. 9, 2021.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat</b></p>
<p><b>IV. Activation of Interagency TWG</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IATWG, as per DENR-DA-DILG JAO 2008-01 will be chaired by DENR, with members from DABFAR, LGUs and FARMCs. For. Garcia said that the DENR TWG met first for preparation with meeting with counterparts. Asec. Amaro asked about the membership of LGUs concerned and asked if this pertains to the Leagues, since there are many LGUs. For. Andres said that for the FARMCs, there is a National FARMC. She also said that during the January roundtable, the members were already identified, which includes academe and CSO representative. This was reported to the NCI SRD National Steering Committee, and duly approved. This includes DAR, as a signatory of NCI. Initial discussions also included duties and responsibilities. <b>Asec. Amaro instructed BMB to submit the report on the NCI discussion of this matter to the Secretariat for scrutiny and appropriate action.</b></li> <li>Ms. Nilda Baling said that there is an upcoming activity of NCI-SRD on August 4-5 and BMB was tasked to give a briefing on AUUF and asked the extent of the briefing that BMB can provide. Asec. Amaro said the <b>Secretariat shall provide BMB with a copy of the Highlights of the Meeting for their reference in their briefing.</b> For. Garcia said that they will provide with highlights within the week.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BMB</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat</b> [Within the Week]</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For. Andres said that there is an initiative on defining large-scale aquaculture with DA, pursuant to the IRR of RA 11038. Usec Ching Caballeros already wants to meet with the DENR Regional Offices regarding this matter. Asec. Amaro asked the <b>Secretariat to include the Office of the Usec for Field Operations on this matter and secure their participation in future meetings.</b></li> <li>• Asec Amaro asked about the level of participation for the IATWG. Both For. Andres and Dir. Capistrano suggested that Asec. Amaro be the DENR's representative to the IATWG. Asec. Amaro said that the DENR will be required to oversee the preparation as the Chair. In the IATWG meeting to be called by the DENR, there should be two items that should be prepared by the DENR – the Permanent and Alternate representative and contact Details, second is the activities that need to be carried out for the rest of the year and for 2022, with the budget proposal. Since the NCI Resolution is silent on funding, For. Garcia suggested that in view of the resolution, we can submit a workplan requesting assistance in terms of funding from NCI to finance the activities of the IATWG. Asec. Amaro stated that the WFP has to be prepared before we can request funding assistance from NCI, as a basis for negotiations. <b>In addition, the reporting/working flow should be determined for the IATWG as well.</b></li> <li>• Dir. Capistrano said that they will propose for <b>AUUF Reversion to be included for discussion in the next NCI PA CWG Meeting.</b></li> <li>• For. Andres asked if the NTWG will conduct a levelling off with the Regions. Asec. Amaro said that this will be included in the Action Plan and that levelling off will be done once we have all the details such as protocols, activities, timeline, budget...etc</li> </ul>	<p>Secretariat (July 30, 2021)</p> <p>Secretariat</p> <p>PPS</p>
<p><b>V. Other Matters</b></p> <p><b>AUUF Pilot Project in Region V</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Vida Onrubia presented the Collaborative Assessment of AUUF in Sorsogon Province Project. The Project cost is P2,000,000 with project duration of 18 months. They will be assessing FLAs issued by BFAR in the province of Sorsogon. As instructed by DENR CO, they requested BFAR for information in AUUFs. However, they could not provide data on AUUFs. The project aims to develop a database of</li> </ul>	

FLAs and AUUF areas in collaboration with BFAR. Their main output will be a Field Guide for assessment of AUUFs. Other outputs include: AUUF Database, AUUF Assessment Report, AUUF Maps in digital format. They also intend to have a Memo of Agreement (MoA) with the three agencies. **Policy recommendation will be included as another output.** The project is for endorsement of FASPS.

- Dr. Moreno asked if there was a review of related literature conducted because there is an existing Mangrove Inventory and Assessment of AUUFs which is available on the FASPS' website conducted in Region 9, Zamboanga Sibugay. Ms. Onrubia answered they were directed to coordinate with Region 9, who informed them that they did an assessment and inventory of AUUF. However, they did not develop any manual and this proposed project is different. This is also different from the project implemented in Region 6. Dr. Moreno said that the research gap should be identified. Asec. Amaro said that this distinction should be clear in the endorsement of FASPS. Dir. Capistrano said that she will inquire with FASPS on this matter.
- For Amie Rabang shared that the BFAR already issued an Admin Order on fisheries that they will issue tenurial instrument for AUUFs. Asec. Amaro could agree for a win-win situation in the IATWG.
- For. Andres said that during the roundtable, the NAPC is inclined to retain the lands. However, For. Andres invoked the law that these areas should be returned. Asec. Amaro agreed that the law is clear and that these areas should be returned as these are earmarked for a particular purpose.
- For. Aquino inquired whether there is possibility for the project to also include an assessment of alleged NGP areas within active fishponds. Asec. Amaro affirmed this as well as those areas that are already titled. For. Rabang explained that many fishponds were titled because the areas were identified as A&D for fishpond. However, these were under the zonification project and not subject to release.
- Asec. Amaro asked the **Secretariat to define the scope of work of the TWG and its Terms of Reference. This shall be included in the next meeting for affirmation.**

Secretariat