

Memorandum Circular  
No. 17  
October 15, 1992

**SUBJECT : Delineation of Functions and Implementation of the Integrated Social Forestry Program after the Devolution of Functions to the Local Government Units (LGUs)**

Pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 and Department Administrative Order No. 30, series of 1992 and to have a common framework and direction among the different offices for the eventual devolution of projects to Local Government Units (LGUs), you are hereby , instructed to adopt the following procedures specifically on the functions retained with the DENR, pending the completion of the Comprehensive Manual of Operations for ISFP.

**Sec. 1. Powers and Functions to be Retained with the DENR.**

1. **Identification and delineation of IS Projects.** Based on the result of the Inventory of Forest Occupants (IFO), the DENR Regional Office shall identify and indicate in the control map, potential areas for ISF development. As an initial activity, profiling of these areas shall be conducted as basis for evaluation of any request coming from the Local Government Units and communities for the establishment of new ISF projects.
2. **Perimeter and Parcellary Surveys.** As soon as the evaluation of the proposed project area is completed, and upon the recommendation of the team that the area is available and suitable for ISF development, perimeter survey of the area shall be conducted by the Land Evaluation Survey Team based at the Region in accordance with the provisions of DAO No. 72, series of 1990. The survey shall serve as the final requirement for the approval of the area for ISF purposes.

Based on the perimeter survey of the project area, the necessary parcellary survey shall be conducted to identify individual occupations of the ISF beneficiaries as basis for the issuance of the Certificate of Stewardship (CS). The survey team, however, shall see to it that farmer representatives shall be actively involved in the actual survey to avoid conflicts of boundaries.

3. **Processing and Issuance of Land Tenure Instruments**

Applications for CS and Certificates of Mangrove Stewardship (CMS) shall be filed by the applicant at the concerned CENRO. However, the Social Forestry Desk Officer (SFOO) before receiving the application shall see to it that the same have been cleared and deliberated at the Environment and Natural Resources Council, a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency group at the municipality. Upon receipt of the application, the SFDO shall evaluate the application for approval by the CENRO. In the processing and evaluation of the application, the SFOO, through the CENRO, may request for the assistance of the Social Forestry Provincial Coordinator (SFPC) and/or the Regional Social Forestry Division.

After the approval, the documents shall be forwarded to the concerned Mayor or Governor through the Council for awarding. The original copy of the documents shall be forwarded to the Regional Office, SFD, for control and records purposes. On the other hand, a summary of issuances, indicating the names, CS/CMS number, area, location of the project shall be forwarded to the Social Forestry Division (SFD), Forest Management Bureau (FMB) Central Office.

Applications for Certificate of Community Forest Stewardship (CCFS) shall be submitted to the region through the SFDO and SFPC which should pass the Environment Council at the Municipality. The Regional SFD shall process and evaluate the application for approval by the concerned authority in accordance with the provisions of DAO No.4, Series of 1991. Thereafter, the documents shall be forwarded to the Council for issuance. All original copies of the CCFS documents shall be forwarded to the Social Forestry Division Forest Management Bureau, Central Office for control and records purposes .

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** All projects either devolved or retained shall be subjected to Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) by the DENR in coordination with the Local Government Units and the affected communities. On the devolved projects, monitoring and evaluation shall be done to determine the status of program implementation, areas where DENR could provide the necessary assistance and problem identification which could serve as basis in the formulation of policies and guidelines. As a function of monitoring, it shall check whether devolved projects are included in planning and budgeting at the LGUs. For retained projects, the conduct of M & E shall likewise not be limited on physical development of ISF projects but shall also include the process to determine strengths and weaknesses of project implementation as basis in policy review and development.

The Regional Office in coordination/consultation with the PENRO, CENRO and the concerned LGU through their CDO/CDA shall spearhead the conduct of M & E. Social Forestry Division at Central Office in coordination with the Project Development and Evaluation Division of the DENR shall issue detailed guidelines on the monitoring and evaluation for Social Forestry Projects and shall assist the Regional Offices in monitoring and evaluation of Social Forestry projects.

5. **Production and Dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Materials.** In support to the implementation of the ISF program at the Local Government units, the DENR in coordination with the LGUs shall continue to develop, produce and disseminate information on ISFP.
6. **Training Programs.** The DENR shall continue to provide training programs not only to retained personnel but to the devolved CDOs/CDAs as well. However, attendance of the latter shall be subject to the recommendation/approval of the concerned Mayor/Governor.

**Sec. 2. Definition of Roles.** In the performance of the above functions, the various level of DENR field offices (CENRO, PENRO, RENRO) shall have the following functions:

**A. Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO)**

To attend to all ISFP concerns at the CENRO level, the CENR Officer shall designate from among their existing manpower a Social Forestry Desk Officer (SFDO) who shall have the following functions:

1. Prepares work plans regarding ISF implementation for submission to the Regional Office through the PENRO in coordination with the concerned Local Government Units. The plan must highlight the different activities that require DENR interventions in order to facilitate ISF implementation by the LGU.
2. Receives and consolidates ISF reports from the LGUs for submission to the Regional Office through the PENRO.
3. Receives applications for Stewardship Agreements for approval by the concerned authority.

4. Provides technical assistance and other services to ISFP beneficiaries in coordination with the LGU.
5. Performs other functions as may be assigned by the CENRO.

**B. Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO)**

The PENR officer shall designate from among their existing manpower a Social Forestry Provincial Coordinator (SFPC) to coordinate and handle all ISFP concerns at the provincial level. Specifically, the SFPC shall have the following functions:

1. Consolidates all ISFP reports within the jurisdiction of the province or submission to the Regional Social Forestry Division.
2. Receives and consolidates plan of activities submitted by the LGUs for submission to the Regional Office.
3. Provides technical and manpower assistance to the CENRO and the LGU in the performance of either retained or devolved functions.
4. Performs other functions as may be assigned by the PENRO.

**C. Regional Environment and Natural Resources Office, Social Forestry Division (RENRO-SFD)**

To facilitate the delivery of services to various PENROs, CENROs and LGUs, the Regional Social Forestry Division shall be responsible for the following major functions in coordination with the different PENROs, CENROs, Local Government Units and the concerned Community Associations.

**1. Program Development**

- a. Conducts a thorough review of all existing guidelines regarding ISFP implementation and prepares appropriate recommendations to the National Social Forestry Division;
- b. Develops plans and proposals in coordination with the LGUs including the scheduling of activities based on the submitted work plans by the LGUs;

- c. Identifies and documents existing livelihood projects, upland farming practices and market outlets; and
- d. Coordinates and establishes linkage with other government offices, non-governmental organizations and other institutions for the provision of support services to ISF beneficiaries.

## **2. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- a. Conducts Performance Evaluation of the Stewardship Agreement holders;
- b. Undertakes periodic Monitoring and Evaluation of devolved and retained Social Forestry projects;
- c. Identifies and conducts perimeter and parcellary surveys of Social Forestry Project areas in coordination with the Land Evaluation Survey Team;
- d. Processes applications for Stewardship applications for approval by the concerned authorities;
- e. Maintains records regarding approved land tenure instruments; and
- f. Consolidates and maintains data bank on ISFP reports.

## **3. Extension, Education and Support Services**

- a. Conducts Training Needs Assessment, actual trainings/workshops in coordination with the HRD and other concerned DENR Units;
- b. Packages and transfers livelihood and other upland farming technologies including marketing assistance to the program beneficiaries;
- c. Prepares and reproduces IEC materials on the ISFP; and
- d. Coordinated the Operation of the Center for People's Empowerment in the uplands.

In the performance of its functions, the RENRO-SFD shall be transferred from Ecosystem and Research to the Forest Management Sector.

**Sec. 3. Development and Maintenance of the Center for People's Empowerment in the Uplands (CPEU).** To serve as training and research laboratory, at least one project per province shall be identified and developed as Center for People's Empowerment in the Uplands. Provided, that in the provinces of Quezon, Bukidnon, Palawan and Isabela two (2) model sites each shall be retained.

The established CPEU shall be maintained and developed by the concerned Community Associations under the supervision and technical assistance of the assigned Project Leader who shall likewise be retained with the DENR and shall be managed under the concept of model site development.

**Sec. 4. Assignment of Devolved and Retained Personnel**

- A. Devolved Personnel** - Pursuant to the provisions of Department Administrative Order No. 30, Series of 1992, personnel performing intermunicipal functions like the Community Development Officers/Assistants (CDOs and CDAs) shall be devolved to the concerned provinces where the municipalities are located. Provided, however, that the CDO/CDA assigned to the ISF projects in the cities of Davao, Zamboanga and Puerto Princesa shall be transferred to these cities and that at least one CDO and CDA shall be devolved to each of the other cities that have at least three (3) ISF projects in their jurisdiction.
- B. Retained Personnel** - Community Development Officers retained with the DENR shall be assigned at the Regional Social Forestry Division. Provided, however, that upon the request of the PENRO concerned upon the approval of the RED, the CDO depending on the bulk of the ISF activities can be assigned to the province. CDAs and Forest Community Organizers (FCOs) retained by DENR shall be assigned in the selected model site and Upland Development Pilot projects, respectively. Provided, further, that whenever necessary, these CDAs and FCOs shall be tapped in conducting training programs and monitoring and evaluation activities.

To support/complement existing ISFP manpower at the region, the RED shall identify and assign at least five (5) personnel from other Regional Divisions/Units to the Regional Social Forestry Division. They shall be trained on appropriate skills and technologies to strengthen their capabilities in the implementation of the ISF Program.

**Sec. 5. Repealing Clause.** Any part of the above procedures that will be inconsistent with the provisions of the Manual of Operations to be issued by the department pursuant to DAO No. 30, Series of 1992 shall be deemed amended and/or repealed accordingly.

**Sec. 6. Effectivity.** This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.

**ANGEL C. ALCALA**  
Secretary

**Recommending Approval:**

**ROLANDO L. METIN**  
Assistant Secretary  
for Management Services  
and ISFP National Coordinator