

DENR Memorandum Circular
No. 22
July 08, 1993

SUBJECT : Revised Procedures on the Evaluation of Communal Forest and Pasture Areas for Purposes of Determining Areas to be Developed Under the ISFP and/or Other Similar Land Uses.

Pursuant to DENR Administrative Order No. 4 series of 1991, which provided for the conversion and development into Integrated Social Forest (ISF) area of all communal forest, communal pastures and other areas covered by leases which have been abandoned or ceased to serve the purpose the area had been declared for, the following procedures on the conversion into ISF areas are hereby promulgated for the compliance and guidance of all concerned.

Section 1. Creation of Study Team and its Functions. The Regional Executive Director (RED) concerned shall create a study team to be composed of representatives from the Regional Social Forestry Division as Team Leader, the representatives from Forest Resources Development Division, the concerned Community Development Officer/Assistant, and the local government units/s (LGUs) concerned as members. The study team shall have the following functions:

- 1.1 Study and review all documents relevant to the subject area, specifically information on the establishment data, legal use, extent of the areas, location, vegetative condition, dominant species, administrative jurisdiction, supervision and development scheme;
- 1.2 Conduct assessment of the area based on the review made on the documents and information gathered ascertaining the suitability and feasibility of converting and developing the subject area into ISF;
- 1.3 Conduct inventory on the number of occupants and the extent of occupation;
- 1.4 Prepare report on the findings and formulate recommendations to the DENR Secretary with due endorsement by the RED concerned.

Section 2. Evaluating Criteria. The Study Team shall in the performance of their functions be guided by the following criteria:

2.1 Purpose of the Communal Forest/Communal Pasture

The purpose for the establishment of the Communal Forest is to supply the construction need of the residents or supplement the wood/firewood needs of the community; protect, support and improve the condition of water resources, and other specific purposes benefitting the residents of the community/municipality while the communal pasture is to provide grazing area for raising livestock for domestic purposes.

2.2 Maintenance and Development of the Area

Protection and conservation measures being undertaken including the municipal government development plan for the maintenance/development of the communal forest/communal pasture.

2.3 Existence of CTF, FOM and other Social Forestry-oriented projects.

Existence of Forest Occupancy Management (FOM), Family Approach Reforestation (FAR), Communal Tree Farm (CTF), Communal Forest, Communal Pastures which have ceased to serve the purpose for which they were established, neglected or abandoned and other suitable reforestation/afforestation projects.

2.4 Occupancy

Extent of the area occupied, number of families, nature of occupancy whether for agricultural, industrial, residential, commercial, or other purposes.

2.5 Economic potential of the land

Suitability of the area for development into a productive ISF project and/or other similar land uses such as for school site, reforestation site, and other land uses of similar nature based on its bio-physical features and the establishment of such projects will contribute to the development and conservation of forest resources.

2.6 Attitude of the Occupants

Willingness of the occupants of the Communal Forest/Communal Pasture to develop the area by the qualified beneficiaries under the Integrated Social Forestry Program.

Section 3. Evaluation Procedures. To ensure effective implementation of this Order, the following general procedures shall be adopted by all concerned:

3.1 The Study team shall give priority to areas covered by requests for development under the ISFP, disestablishment, and for other purposes, by the Barangay Council or association of forest occupants or the Municipal Council.

Disestablishment of communal forest/communal pasture if warranted should come first before developing the area into ISFP and other suitable land use consistent with existing forest laws, rules, and regulations;

3.2 The Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) shall make preliminary evaluation of the area and endorse the same to the Secretary through the Regional Executive Director;

3.3 The Regional Executive Director (RED) shall deploy the designated Study Team to conduct evaluation of the area;

3.4 The Study Team shall coordinate with CENRO, the Municipal/Barangay Council, association of forest occupants, or group of forest occupants concerned before doing actual investigation and evaluation of communal forest/communal pasture.

3.5 The Study Team shall submit a report to the Secretary containing its comments and recommendations.

3.6 In case the area or any portion thereof shall be converted or allowed for development under ISF and/or other similar land use, the RED concerned shall send the Land Evaluation Survey Team to survey and exclude the areas occupied from the coverage of the Communal Forest/Communal Pasture, in case the subject area is not fully occupied.

Moreover, the RED concerned shall recommend to the DENR Secretary with due concurrence by the FMB Director, the disestablishment/amendment or conversion of communal forest/communal pasture or portion thereof as may be found suitable for the purpose, for the ISFP and/or other similar land use.

3.7 Upon approval of the Order, the DENR Secretary, through the RED concerned shall cause the immediate implementation of the project.

Section 4. Repealing Clause. All other, circulars and memoranda are hereby repealed and/or amended accordingly.

Section 5. Effectivity. This Circular takes effect immediately.

ANGEL C. ALCALA
Secretary