

DENR Memorandum Order
No. 07
July 09, 1993

SUBJECT : Guidelines on the Selection and Conservation of Candidate Flagship Species

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as NIPAS Act of 1992, DENR Administrative Order NO. 25 series of 1992 or NIPAS Implementing Rules and Regulations, PD 705 as amended and in line with the policy of the government to protect, conserve and preserve representative samples of biological diversity, the following guidelines are hereby issued for your guidance and immediate compliance.

Section 1. Basic Policy

It is hereby declared a policy that the identification and selection of candidate flagship species shall be undertaken to focus attention on the conservation of important wildlife species without losing sight of the need to conserve other species and their habitat. Flagship species refers to those species of wild flora and fauna which can be used as emblems of conservation for a certain community/locality/region owing to its outstanding characteristics, occurrence, importance to the system, capacity to attract attention and contribution to the most important conservation areas.

Section 2. Objectives

1. To conserve and protect the different species of wild plants and animals and their natural habitats particularly those that are threatened and facing extinction.
2. To promote awareness on the importance of these species and the conservation of the ecosystem.
3. To generate and encourage public support for conservation projects and other related activities.
4. To perpetuate the existence of wildlife species and help conserve biodiversity.

Section 3. Methods in the Selection of Flagship Species

The DENR Regional Offices will be responsible in the identification and selection of candidate flagship species in their respective areas of responsibility. If

possible, at least 6 species of Flora and 3 species of fauna will be identified and selected as candidate flagship species. In the process, the following procedure must be considered.

1. Gathering and Collation of information.

A long list of candidate species shall be drawn by each Office concerned. This process shall be done in order to have alternative choices of species to avoid duplication. All available information on the candidate species shall be gathered and collated. The information will then be the basis in making a short list of candidate flagship species.

A preliminary field survey shall be conducted to generate the needed data and information to determine if the candidate species fit or qualify according to the criteria set forth.

2. Choice of flagship species, both for flora and fauna shall be limited to species in the wild including economically important wild edible fruit-bearing trees or wild ornamental plants.
3. Each DENR Regional Office should adopt a flagship species. However, in view of the numerous protected areas comprising the initial component of the NIPAS each Regional Office shall have the discretion to choose which protected area will be assigned a flagship species. No two Regional Office or protected area shall have the same flagship species.

Section 4. Criteria for Selection

Selection of the candidate flagship species shall be based on any or a combination of the following criteria.

1. The marked presence of a plant/animal species in a certain area. For instance the natural stand of *Pinus markusii* (Mindoro pine) in Mindoro, and the pure stand of *Xanthostemon verdugonianus* (Mancono) in Samar/Leyte and large tract of *Hopea cagayanensis* (Narik) forest in Isabela.
2. Representativeness, or the degree to which a certain species can represent a particular community in terms of hectarage for flora and number for fauna.
3. Endemism, or the presence of a species in a particular area or region and nowhere else. For example, the pure stand of Narek in Isabela, tamaraw in Mindoro and Mynah in Palawan.

4. **Threat Status**
 - a. Endangered species and subspecies of wildlife whose populations are threatened and in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if causal factors continue operating.
 - b. Threatened species and subspecies of wildlife whose population throughout the islands where they are found have suffered a high degree of depletion to the point of having their numbers reduced to the minimum, below which, said species or subspecies will totally become extinct.
 - c. Rare species and subspecies of wildlife found only in one particular area or only in a few areas in the Philippines, in very highly specialized habitat types but occurring in very small numbers and are therefore, seldom met, even within their preferred habitat type. Their populations are not at present endangered or vulnerable but are at risk.
5. Inclusion of the species to CITES Appendices I, II, III and species included in DENR A.O. NO. 45.
6. Economic value of a plant or animal species as a source of medicine, food, genetic cultivars, raw material for handicraft and other cottage industries.
7. Cultural significance such as religious, historic, artistic value of the species in relation with the day to day existence of a particular indigenous cultural community (e.g. the Subanons and Mangyans, revealed that the molars of the captive wild pigs when finely ground and mixed with drinking water can cure or exorcise bewitched persons and other similar instances).

Section 5. Nomination of Candidate Flagship Species

Each Regional Office shall submit a short list of its candidate flagship plant or animal species that will symbolize each region or designated protected area under its jurisdiction together with the justifications and evaluation reports. However, in cases where one protected area is covered by two (2) or more Regional Offices, these offices shall have to coordinate with each other in order for them to come up with a common list of candidate species.

Section 6. Selection of Flagship Species and Design of the Logo

As soon as all the reports have been submitted, PAWB shall screen, select and recommend to the Secretary the suitable flagship species for each Regional Office and designated protected area or areas. Furthermore, the designing of the logo shall be undertaken by each Regional Offices concerned, subject to PAWB's approval for uniformity in implementation.

Section 7. Management Concept

The field offices of the DENR shall develop a detailed plan for the conservation of the approved flagship species and its habitat, and the same will be incorporated in the management plan for each protected area. The plan shall be submitted for review and/or approval to the DENR Secretary thru PAWB. Cost of implementing the plan shall be included in the Work and Financial Plan of each Office. The role of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau is to provide technical assistance in the implementation and formulation of policies in support to the program/activity. In the process of program implementation an action plan shall be prepared by each Regional Office for the protection and conservation of identified/selected flagship species.

Section 8. Effectivity

This Order shall take effect immediately.

ANGEL C. ALCALA
Secretary

Recommending Approval:

BEN S. MALAYANG III
Undersecretary for Environment
and Research

CORAZON CATIBOG-SINHA
Director