



DENR Lifts Suspension of Cutting in Natural and Residual Forests For Plantation Development in Regions 9 & 13

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), on its memorandum dated May 28 May 2013, consistently with Executive Order No. 23 of February 2011 and the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force Resolution No. 2011-005, lifted the suspension of cutting in natural and residual forests in Regions 9 and 13 for site preparation for plantation establishment. The lifting allows the DENR regional executive directors of both regions to accept and

process applications for tree cutting in natural and residual forests including site preparation subject to existing forestry laws, rules and regulations.

On June 5, 2013, the DENR issued a clarificatory memorandum to the May 28, 2013 memorandum stating that the suspension is lifted only for site preparation for plantation establishment in degraded residual forests.



PWPA, UPLB Sign Deed of Book Donation



Partnership in Education. PWPA Executive Vice President A. C. Keh, Jr. (third from the left) and UPLB Chancellor Rex Victor Cruz (second from the right) shows the Deed of Book Donation. Flanking them from the left UPLBCFNR Chief Librarian Andriette Valdez, PWPA Deputy Executive Director Maila Vasquez and UPLB CFNR Dean John Pulhin.

The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA), over the many years, has accumulated volumes or collections of books, journals and other reference materials pertaining particularly to the wood industry. To have access to, and share their value especially to students and researchers, the PWPA thought of donating all of them to the UPLB College of Forestry and Natural Resources (UPLBCFNR) at Los Banos, Laguna.

On February 6, 2013, Executive Vice President Alfonso Keh, Jr. and Deputy Executive Director Maila Vasquez of the PWPA and UPLB Chancellor Rex Victor Cruz and UPLBCFNR Dean John Pulhin formalized the donation by having a simple Deed of Donation signing ceremony at the UPLBCFNR library.

Chancellor Cruz said the collections do not only have material but also historical value since many materials were published way back in the 1930's.

Also present during the signing ceremony were UPLBCFNR College Secretary Mutya Manalo, Chief Librarian Andriette Valdez and other College staff.

PWPA Meets FPI Chair Emeritus

The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) met with Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) Chairman Emeritus Meneleo Carlos, Jr. last April 18, 2013 in his office at the RI Chemicals, Inc. compound in Pasig City to discuss means of controlling plywood smuggling mainly coming from China and a possible cooperation between the PWPA and the FPI in effectively implementing smuggling-deterrent measures.

The PWPA expressed to Chair Carlos interest in the media campaign being arranged by the FPI for the petroleum industry to combat oil smuggling that the wood industry may model from against plywood smuggling. Chair Carlos said the media campaign's purpose is to bring out to the public the evil of petroleum smuggling. He added the campaign will be in the form of investigative journalism, the like of Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) does; however, hard facts are essentially needed: how smuggling is being done, who are behind it, where it is happening and effects on the country.

Chair Carlos said the FPI would like to do similar campaign for all industries affected by smuggling. He added plywood smuggling can be one, however, there

should be a good story to tell based on hard facts that answer the how, who and where questions.

PWPA Executive Director (ED) L. D. Angeles inquired about the possibility of PWPA directors and plywood manufacturers meeting with him and other FPI officers on the matter of anti-plywood smuggling campaign. Chair Carlos said he is willing to have it done.

On another matter, ED Angeles asked if plywood could be included in the list of 'sensitive' commodity imports, like oil, entering only in accredited ports. Chair Carlos there should be a strong argument for such a need for local plywood.

He said the argument could center on the danger the China-made plywood poses to body and health, in case of its failure in its use, because of its weaknesses like warping, emission and wet strength as tested by RI Chemical Corp. Parenthetically, Chair Carlos intimated the need to include these properties in the PNS standard for plywood.

Chair Carlos was with Ms. Carolina Carlos and Mr. Bernie Bagaman of RI Chemicals, Inc. while ED Angeles was with Deputy Executive Director Maila Vasquez and Wood Industry Coordinator Ricardo Patawaran.

PWPA Attends Workshop on Sustainable Forest Management

The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) joined other forestry institutions from government, academic, non-government organizations and the private sector in a workshop on Setting a Unified Forest Management Framework on February 7-8, 2013 at Fersal Hotel, Quezon City.

The objective of the workshop is to review the working paper prepared by Dr. Adolfo Revilla, retired professor and dean of UPLB-CFNR, entitled "Framework for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in the Philippines" with the view of consolidating a unified framework to guide the sustainable management of the Philippine forests.

The workshop is part of the project of the Department of Environment & Natural Resources – Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB) and Food And Agriculture Organization (FAO) on the Non-Legally Binding Instruments (NLBI).

FAO-NLBI Project Coordinator Guillermo Mendoza said the workshop was strongly recommended by a multi-stakeholder FAO-NLBI consultation held a year ago. He said he has requested different representatives from forestry sector to review the paper of Dr. Revilla and to present their views thereon in the workshop that hopefully would strengthen the objective of SFM.

The review-presentors were (a) FMB Director Ricardo Calderon presented the Vision and Road Map for Sustainable Forest Management from the perspective of the government; (b) WISE President Marlea Munez, her review from the perspective of Community Forestry and Gender Issues; (c) Dr. Ernesto Guiang, an international forestry consultant, his review from the perspective of governance and general forestry; (d) PWPA ED L. D. Angeles, his and For. M. R. Vasquez' review from perspective of their experi-

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From the Perspective of the Wood Industry: Forest Laws Enforcement, Governance and Trade in the Philippines

by Antonio C. Olizon¹

(Second of two parts)

The question begging for an answer is: Why can the Philippines not implement a real FLEGT in a manner recognized by the international community?

The challenge today is how to make forestry governance simple, practical, doable, friendly, measurable and yet efficiently functioning and cost-effective. We propose four strategies to make this happen:

We must change our current paradigms, think out-of-the-box, and harness the power of information.

It is, imperative that, while continuing to implement the current FLEGT system, a new paradigm must be urgently sought, formulated and implemented to remedy and to improve the forestry situation.

We recommend to the Society of Filipino Foresters (SFF), that it considers advocating for and helping formulate a new FLEGT paradigm in lieu of the antiquated PD 705 and the few issued EOs. The Sustainable Forest Management Act is an excellent bill to enact into law to serve as the legal benchmark for law enforcement.

Since the 8th Congress, it has gone through a number of revisions. In this 15th Congress, the Lower House has passed and endorsed to the Senate its version of the SFMA and the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources of the Senate is presenting to the plenary its version of the SFMA. We hope that the Society of Filipino

Foresters will show a strong support for the approval of the SFMA by this Congress.

We also need clear and separate Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) for the management and development of protection forestland on one hand, and in the production forestland, on the other. Likewise, there should be separate IRRs for the natural forest from the plantation forest.

We need our laws to be more proactive instead of reactive. Stricter monitoring for illegal logging should be done at the source or at the forest area where cutting of trees can actually be prevented, rather than trying to catch illegal activities at the ports, where damage to the environment has already been done.

THINK OUT-OF-THE-BOX. We need to intensify our efforts in forest protection and prevention of illegal logging.

The placing and manning of forest stations in the heart of untenured forestlands, as done abroad, may be considered for implementation. The employment of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategies is a powerful way for getting the cooperation of communities in the matter of forest protection and the prevention of illegal logging.

When possible, appropriate tenurial agreements in forestlands should be granted to as many qualified and responsible stakeholders, whether families, communities, associations, local government units, and private sectors.

Experience and study point out that forests are protected and developed by people or organizations trusted with contracts. In this manner they have the authority and at the same time they have responsibility to manage the forest.

We need cooperation or convergence among agencies.

The 'UNIVERSE' of the wood industry, for example, extends not only to the DENR but also to the DTI/BOI, DOF/BOC, NEDA, OP/TC (Tariff Commission) & NCIP, etc.

Requirements and regulations of government agencies and purposes and objectives of organizations over certain issues, at times, cross one another and are difficult to reconcile. The situation makes it difficult for the wood industry to develop and progress.

REFORM, TRANSPARENCY, INFORMATION EXCHANGE, AND SUPPORT-SHARING are better taken up in a milieu of cooperation or convergence among agencies of related mandates, interests and concerns.

The private wood industry has proposed the creation of the Timber Industry Board for the purpose of having long-term plans and policy-making for the wood sector. This is also to avoid the present practice of CHANGING POLICIES every time we have a new DENR secretary.

We need streamlined processes.

Though we have encountered resis-

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PWPA Meets Mega Maderas of Guatemala

Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) Vice President for Lumber and Director Ramon Uy welcomed the Mega Maderas representatives Project Manager Paulina Alvarado and Fiji Operations Manager Carlos Arriola at the PWPA office on April 15, 2013.

Mega Maderas, an international trader of Mahogany (*Sweitenia macrophylla*) sawntimber/lumber based in Guatemala, Central America and with field office in Fiji Island came over to seek information from PWPA about the local sources/availability of Mahogany lumber of different grades and sizes they can possibly market abroad on sustainable basis (at least 20 container vans per month).

Director Uy said there are many small mahogany plantations in Panay and in Mindanao; however, the trees have not grown to their fullest because of close planting and no thinning. He said most of the trees are about 30 cm in diameter only and are cut by chainsaw, hence of poor surfaces. He estimated the Philippines has a potential volume of 2-3 million board feet of Mahogany lumber.

Director Uy then referred the Guatemalan visitors to someone who, he knows, produces Mahogany lumber of different grades and sizes. He added that this person may be able to supply them with the volume they require. He also suggested that they make contact with big lumber consolidators who maybe able to assure them of the sus-



PWPA Director Ramon Uy (center) with Mega Maderas Project Manager Paulina Alvarado and Fiji Operations Manager Carlos Arriola.

tainability of the supply of the desired volume of Mahogany lumber they need.

ED Angeles inquired about the long-term global market future of Mahogany lumber and to which Mr. Arriola said that based on their experience, the market is growing as the requirement for Mahogany lumber is increasing in the US, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean and Australia which are their active markets.

Ms. Alvarado and Mr. Arriola again thanked the PWPA and said they will leave with a positive feeling about what they can do here in the Philippines.

PWPA Meets Perusahaan Kosinar SDN. BHD.

The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) met with Perusahaan Kosinar SDN. BHD executive director A. Onogi in March 26, 2013 to discuss the potential of the Philippines as a market for plywood.

Mr. Onogi informed PWPA President Antonio Olizon that their company has downgrade/utility grade plywood the PWPA members may be interested in. He discussed the details of the plywood as: 3' x 6' in size, JAS standard fall down with thickness of 9mm, 12mm, 15mm, 32mm, 24mm. The downgrade is due to overlap, short core; thin in thickness with-variance to the actual size -2mm.

He said the veneer wood used for face & back is mix OT; while the core is OT medium softwood. He said the

face veneer is whole while the back veneer, jointed. They use phenol glue. The volume is about 3-4 40-footer container/month.

President Olizon told Mr. Onogi that 3' x 6' plywood in the Philippines is a special size because the standard is 4' x 8'. However, he said he would check with certain special users of the 3m x 6m plywood.

President Olizon then asked the terms of payment as Mr. Onogi told him the following: LC at sight, TT is also on; no credit/consignment; CNF basis, buyer pay the taxes.

Mr. Onogi also informed President Olizon about Genuine Beyond Sdn Bhd who is a supplier of logs and sawntimber in Sabah, Malaysia. He said the members of PWPA might be interested to buy logs and sawntimber from it.

PWPA in Plantation Logs/Lumber Grading Meeting

The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA), as a member of the technical committee (TC) of the PCAARRD-assisted project “Efficient Utilization of Technologies for Selected Industrial Tree Plantation Species (ITPS) in CARAGA Region,” joined the Forest Products Research and Development Institute—Department of Science and Technology (FPRDI-DOST) in its first Technical Committee meeting/dialogue last June 20, 2013 at the DENR CARAGA, Butuan City. The meeting/dialogue, in coordination with the Bureau of Products Standards, set the preliminary discussion on the development and formulation of logs and lumber grading rules for ITPS in CARAGA.

Forester Jeremias Bruzon, OIC Regional Technical Director for Environmental Research and Development Services in the region, welcomed the group and said the project is an opportunity to standardize the marketing of tree plantation species in CARAGA. He said that once developed and implemented in CARAGA, it can be a model which can be used by other regions. He said that he wanted CARAGA to be a real timber corridor not only in name but also to be recognized as producer of world class plantation timber.

Forester Robert Natividad of the FPRDI-DOST gave the rationale of the project. He said that as early as the 90’s he already figured out that tree plantation will be the source of raw materials of the wood industry. He added that about 82% of the timber production of the country is from plantation of which 60% comes from CARAGA, the reason why the project has targeted the region.

He said that the project was conceptualized due to the observation that the grading of logs and lumber were based on diameter only. He said that bidding was made in bulk. With the project, he said that the quality of raw materials may improve due to the additional criteria for the grading of logs and lumber. He also said that with the new grading, there will be high price of raw materials for the farmers while the manufacturers will get quality raw materials thereby getting a higher recovery as well as high cost of the wood products.

He added the project covers only five plantation species, namely: 1) falcata; 2) gmelina; 3) mangium; 4) mahogany; and 5) bagras.

Department of Trade and Industry/Bureau of Product Standards (DTI/BPS) representative Tes del Rosario made a presentation about how they formulate standards. She said there is no need to re-invent the wheel as they are formulating standards based on what is already there. They use the international standard so that what can be developed will already be acceptable in the international market.

Engineer Victor Revilleza presented the draft standard they have prepared as a working document. He presented different specifications for grading logs and lumber. The grading factors they have identified were: a) diameter; b) length; c) standard or allowable defects; and d) percent soundness.

Forester Maila Vasquez of PWPA, during the open forum, said that developing standards will be beneficial both to the producers, the manufacturers and end-users/consumers. She said it is good that the formulation is already anchored with the international standards, however, the grouping of said species and the ease and practicality of implementing the standards are also very important.

After consideration of all the comments presented by the TC members, Forester Natividad said they will revise the draft standards and same will be presented again to them in August 2013.

The meeting was also attended by Engineer Ruben Zamora of FPRDI-DOST, Miss Marie Kris Delarmente of DOST-CARAGA, Mr. Inocencio Atenta of Richmond Plywood Corp., Mr. Julius Mabando, Chairman of the Federation of CBFM PO in CARAGA, Inc. (FECPCAR), and Mr. Victor Plaza of FECPCAR.



(Clockwise) DTI/BPS Tes del Rosario, PWPA Maila Vasquez, FECPCAR Victor Plaza and Julius Mabando, DENR-CARAGA Jerry Bruzon, FPRDI-DOST Robert Natividad, DOST CARAGA Marie Kris Delarmente and Richmond Plywood Inocencio Atenta.

**Induction and Turn-over Ceremonies, 12th Year Anniversary Celebration and General Membership Assembly of the Bulacan Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc.
27 January 2013, Manila**



PWPA Director Calvin Tan David is the New President of the Bulacan Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc.

**Deed of Book Donation Signing
06 February 2013, UPLB CFNR Library, College Laguna**



(Left photo) PWPA EVP A. C. Keh, Jr. (fifth from right) poses with UPLB Chancellor Rex Victor Cruz (fourth from right), UPLBCFNR Dean John Pulhin (3rd from right), UPLBCFNR College Secretary Mutya Manalo and UPLBCFNR Librarian Andriette Valdez (2nd and 3rd from left, respectively) and other UPLBCFNR staff. (Below-right) PWPA and UPLB signs Deed of Book Donation. (Below-left) PWPA Deputy ED M. R. Vasquez (3rd from right) poses with UPLBCFNR officers and staff.



Earth Day 2013 General Assembly, Celebration and Thanksgiving 18 March, 22 April & 28 May 2013 DENR, Quezon Memorial Circle & Blue Ridge, Quezon City



(Clockwise) QC Mayor Herbert Bautista, DENR USEC Demetrio Ignacio, EDNP President Bert Guevarra and Presidential Adviser on Climate Change Bebet Gozun; the EDNP booth. Awarding of partners during the EDNP thanksgiving at Blue Ridge, Quezon City.

PWPA attends ...

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ences in the wood industry; and (e) UPLBCFNR Dean John Pulhin, his review from academic and scientific community.

Former DENR Usecs Ric Umali and Renato de Rueda served as moderators of the lively workshop. Dr. Guiang summarized the results of the review and ensuing discussion as that the SFM principles and general policy should

be generic application to overall forest development. However, specific SFM strategies, plans and programs should apply separately to different forestland uses and situations; e.g. watershed and biodiversity protection, timber production, agroforestry, ecotourism, etc. Research, training and capacity building on SFM in general should be pursued.

From the Perspective....

(Continued from page 3)

tance from older generation of foresters, PWPA has proposed to use the portfolio approach to attract investors to invest in industrial tree plantations. What are its salient features?

Permits required in granting and operating an area for industrial plantation should already be secured or should already be in place, when the government wants to bid out or invite investors to go into a specific area. Permits, which are really very voluminous such as permits from the local LGU, permits from FMB/DENR, including the environmental clearance certificates, environmental impact statements – the permits from the indigenous people-NCIP, and so many others that really discourage investors to go into this business of industrial tree plantation.

IF YOU HAVE P50MILLION idle capital today, you would not only think twice or thrice, but maybe 10 times before you go into such a business. Why so? Because it would take you an average of 1 year before you can get all the necessary permits and licenses before you can start up with your project. That would mean to say, P50 million of IDLE CAPITAL, P50 million that is NOT PRODUCTIVE AT ALL and not at all sure when one can start operations.

WE PROPOSE THE PORTFOLIO APPROACH – that all permits and licenses should be in place before the government invites investors – to maximize bids from private investors for areas that are suitable for industrial tree plantation. Investors do not have to think of so many other things, and they can just focus on operations and profitability, and sustainability.

The government must also rethink regulations on plantations such as the species to be planted. Malaysia and Indonesia have taken the lead to plant oil palm in their forestlands and are now reaping tremendous income not only for their investors but also for their

government. They have become world leaders not only in timber products but also in the supply of palm oil.

HARNESS THE POWER OF INFORMATION.

The Forestry Management Bureau must have a better database. Today, if you apply for a certain parcel of land, either for planting or for harvesting purposes, it will be likely that the FMB would not have complete information on this land. They would not be able to pinpoint, calculate or even describe the contents of that parcel of land. In most probability, they would only depend on satellite maps, which are not that DETAILED.

In other countries, if you want to apply for a parcel of land, in a few minutes, their Forestry Authorities could already tell you if the land you are applying for is suitable for plantation, they would be able to tell you the topography of the land, they would be able to tell you the exact location having very accurate coordinates. They would also be able to tell you if there are inhabitants or claimants to that land. THIS IS NOT THE CASE IN THE PHILIPPINES. We lack a clearer database, even in statements released by government on the forest cover of our country, there are already inconsistencies between pronouncements by different government agencies.

I AM TALKING FROM EXPERIENCE. Several years ago, we actually applied for a certain piece of land for industrial tree plantation purposes, we went through the tedious process of application, filling out many documents, only to find out after several long months that the land we were applying for had already been granted to another party for mining purposes.

IN THIS AGE, INFORMATION IS POWER.

A real FLEGT is motivational, developmental and rewarding to existing and prospective stakeholders or

investors.

To close, I would like to go back to the story of Mr. G. He, along with the other foresters I've had the privilege of knowing these past decades, as well as all of you attending this conference, does not merely have a career in forestry – what you have is a VOCATION. Our forests are the only sustainable, natural resource that we have. IN MY VIEW, you have even greater responsibilities than that of any mining engineer, whose duty is to discover and extract something that cannot be replaced, something that is non-renewable.

Foresters study and take care of trees including its best use, from seedlings all the way to harvesting then back to planting – THE FULL CYCLE OF LIFE. In fact, wood is essential to man's cycle of life as well - from the cradle we use as crib for infants to the coffins we use in our death – all come from the wood in our forests. Forestry is far more complex than other basic disciplines. You study the characteristics of hundreds of wood. A lot of other industries like construction industry, the furniture industry and handicraft industry are dependent on our forest.

YOUR VOCATION, YOUR CALLING, YOUR MISSION, is to ensure the sustainability of our forests which give life to so many in the present, and hopefully to future generations. Sustain our forests and sustain lives. Let us heed this call by being at the forefront of law enforcement, governance and trade. Let us make a difference and bring back the glory days of the forestry sector. Let us walk tall and stand proud.

I thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today. Good afternoon and Mabuhay ang mga Foresters.

¹ PWPA President A. C. Olizon delivered the paper/speech during the 64th SFF Convention, Sept. 19-21, 2012 at Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines.

Preliminary US anti-dumping duties for plywood imports from China

The US Department of Commerce announced on April 30 the preliminary anti-dumping duties on decorative plywood imports from China.

These duties were to come into effect on July 17 but, because two of the affected companies requested the postponement of the deadline the entry into force was delayed to allow for further investigation.

Those investigations have been concluded and the duties will come into effect in July. The new duties will be added to the existing preliminary countervailing duties, which range from 0.22% to 27.16%.

Two companies will not pay any anti-dumping duties (Linyi San Fortune Wood Co. and Jiangyang Group).

Over 100 companies were assigned a preliminary anti-dumping duty of 22.14%. All other producers will pay the China-wide duty of 63.96%.

Plywood from China has an estimated 30% market share in the US. All hardwood and decorative plywood is subject to the investigation and duties, including plywood with face and back veneer made from softwoods or bamboo.

Structural plywood and shaped plywood are excluded from the investigation.

Source: ITTO Tropical Timber Market Report, Volume 17 Number 11, June 1-15, 2013.

EU FLEGT Update from EFI

The European Forest Institute's (EFI) EU FLEGT Facility, in cooperation with the EU FAO FLEGT Programme and the European Union, publishes regular updates on progress in negotiating and implementing VPAs. The following is extracted from the recent EFI Update.

Côte d'Ivoire and EU prepare for their first VPA negotiations

The EU and Côte d'Ivoire have begun preparations for the first VPA negotiation session scheduled to take place on 20-21 June. Three technical working sessions have taken place since the end of March. Participants in these preparatory meetings included forestry officials and representatives from civil society and the private sector.

VPA implementation in Cameroon gets a positive review

Work on implementing Cameroon's VPA received a positive evaluation during the first 2013 meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee on 25-26 April. The Committee noted that considerable progress had been made.

Technical progress includes the development of a methodology to assess private certification schemes and procedures for issuing legality certificates, as well as the organisation of an independent audit.

Other notable efforts were the adaptation of the regulatory framework to meet VPA requirements, with three

related decrees published, and in communication and transparency, with progress made on the annual report, website and information to be made public.

Other progress includes the establishment of structures to monitor the VPA, namely the National Monitoring Committee, Joint Monitoring Committee and Joint Implementation Council.

In the coming months, work will be undertaken to fulfil commitments for documents to be put into the public domain (Public Information Annex), through a website which is under development.

In addition, the Committee agreed to a strategy for developing an updated version of the legality verification system, as the work to date does not yet meet VPA requirements. With the EU Timber Regulation already in force but FLEGT licensing not yet in place, Cameroon's timber producers and exporters must demonstrate their compliance with the country's legal framework.

The Joint Monitoring Committee highlighted the need to prioritise the issuing of 'certificates of legality' and to be able to explain why certificates are not yet available to help businesses respond to questions from their European buyers.

Source: ITTO Tropical Timber Market Report, Volume 17 Number 11, June 1-15, 2013.

Chamber of Mines files SC motion to nullify Hontiveros petition

MANILA, Philippines - The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) filed yesterday a motion before the Supreme Court seeking to nullify the petitions filed by former Akbayan partylist Risa Hontiveros and others challenging the constitutionality of revenue-sharing provisions in the Mining Act of 1995.

In a statement, the group said it is represented by former Chief Justice Reynato Puno and former Supreme Court Associate Justice Vicente Mendoza.

In the petition, which was filed at 3 p.m. last Wednesday, COMP is arguing that the Supreme Court has already decided on the constitutionality of the Mining Act in the landmark La Bugal-B'laan vs. Ramos case in 2004, a decision penned by former Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban.

"COMP is joining its member respondents in asking that the petitions filed by former Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros and others in March 2008 against Sections 80 and 81 of Republic Act 7942, or the Mining Act, be dismissed," COMP said.

COMP argued that since the La Bugal ruling – the longest in Supreme Court history which took six years for the high tribunal to deliberate on – there has been no material change in the circumstances of the Philippine mining industry.

"There is no compelling reason for the high tribunal to abandon its previous ruling," COMP said in its motion.

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In their petition, Hontiveros, along with Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casino and others argued that the revenue sharing provision is disadvantageous to the government.

Sec. 80 stipulates that the government share in mineral production sharing agreement (mps) is limited to excise taxes.

Sec. 81, on the other hand, limits the government's share in Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) to taxes, fees and royalties.

COMP said about P173 billion (\$4 billion) in mining investments have been poured into the country since 2004 following the high court's ruling, making the industry a significant contributor to national development, added COMP.

The group noted that those investments include billions of pesos invested in the countryside.

"An adverse ruling by the high tribunal on the petitions not only undermines mining investments but also "leads to a significant loss of investors' confidence, not only in the mining industry but broadly across all industries, severely impacting the investment climate and harming the country's credibility," COMP said.

"To have the Supreme Court revisit its ruling so soon after the (La Bugal) decision became final in 2005 will definitely shake investor confidence and destabilize a critically needed industry," it added.

COMP said the Hontiveros-led petition "challenges not only the stability of the decisions of the Supreme Court, but also the high tribunal's institutional integrity."

Named as respondents in the petition were the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI), OceanaGold (Philippines) Inc., TVI Resources and Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD), and Asiaticus Mining Corp. (AMCOR).

SMI, OceanaGold, TVIRD, and AMCOR are all members of COMP, an association of exploration, mining, mineral processing, quarrying, cement, oil and gas, and service industries, as well as professional associations.

"A stable regulatory regime is a necessary foundation upon which to encourage business investment and the growth of industries. An adverse ruling by the Supreme Court on the petitions will be seen as once again changing the rules in the middle of the game," COMP said.

Source: Article of Ms. Czeriza Valencia for The Philippine Star. June 21, 2013.



Congressman Renato Dragon

Congressman Renato Dragon was the president of the Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) from 1983-1984, during the Martial Law period. Together with industry stalwarts Roberto Reyes, Ernesto Sanvictores, Santiago de Guzman and Aristeo Puyat, he worked assiduously to put order to a survivor organization, the PWPA, that just lately came out from its merger with Philippine Chamber of Wood Industry and

Philippine Lumber and Plywood Manufacturers Association.

A self-made businessman, who in his early thirties, founded his own bank with 30 branches. An outstanding legislator who, for close to 14 years, staunchly served the 2nd district of Cavite.

He will surely be missed.

FMB Director Romeo T. Acosta

First of all, in behalf of the directors, officers, members and staff of the Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA), which represents the wood industry, we would like to convey our deepest condolences and sincerest sympathies to the family of Director Romy Acosta.

Many of our members have known Director Acosta when he became the director of the Forest Management Bureau.

However, many of our directors and officers did know him, much earlier than when he held the helm of the FMB, through fora or meetings attended by them, where the future FMB Director Acosta presented or read technical papers on forestry and wood industry of excellent depth and quality.

And their acquaintance of Director Acosta has deepened, when as already the director of

FMB, they would casually call to him on policy issues and, in turn, he would clarify DENR/FMB issuances.

Mutual deference and respect always predominated any and all official interactions with Director Acosta.

For, the constituency of the PWPA has appreciated the fact that in Director Acosta's: "what you see, you get" as the cliché goes. He's never overbearing or pretentious; in fact, he's very modest, very sincere and very honest. From Director Acosta: Help is one gets when help is deserved.

One very much appreciated quality that endeared Director Acosta to the PWPA was his uncanny and intimate understanding of the wood industry, its problems and its prospects. He knew the policy and regulatory issues facing the wood industry and he tried his best to assist

it honestly, within the bounds of laws, rules and regulations, and technical imperatives.



The wood industry hopes that there will be more people who will be like Director Acosta, who gave selfless, professional and public service to everyone, expecting none in return. From the PWPA and wood industry, goodbye Mr. Director, Forester Acosta, Professor Acosta, RTA and Romy – as he was invariably addressed or called.

- Read by PWPA Executive Director L. D. Angeles in behalf of the PWPA during the wake of Director Acosta at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Quezon City on February 15, 2013.



Mr. Santiago de Guzman

Mr. Santiago de Guzman, fondly called Tito, was the president of the Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) from 1982-1983. Tito de Guzman was the president of one of the oldest wood companies in the

Philippines called Insular Lumber Company. It is his company that pioneered the exportation of Philippine Mahogany lumber to the United States and Tito was the head of the company during its heights. His contemporary in the wood industry then were Don Carlos Fernandez of

Nasipit Lumber, D.O. Plaza, the Sanvictores Brothers, Dr. Tamesis, and the Aquino Brothers.

Even after his retirement, Tito could always be counted on to support the wood industry. He would give his commentaries on various subjects. He was also present in industry forums and was always looked-up as one of the authorities in the private wood industry. Tito is survived by his family, Pacita and 4 children. Tito would surely be missed by his colleagues in the wood industry.

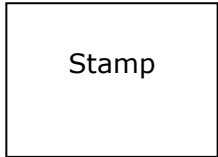
Metro Manila Survey of Plywood Prices in Peso/Panel

As of December 2012 vs. June 2013

	Before (December 2012)	Now (June 26, 2013)		Before (December 2012)	Now (June 26, 2013)
	(in Pesos/piece)			(in Pesos/piece)	
3mm (1/8) plywood	195	214	18 mm (3/4) plyboard	705	871
4 mm (3/16) plywood	280	295	1/8 lawanit	275	257
5 mm (1/4) plywood ordinary	285	319	3/16 lawanit	375	240
5 mm (1/4) plywood marine	305	352	1/4 Hardiflex	385	435
10 mm (1/2) plywood	495	548	1/2 Gypsum Board	380	325
18 mm (3/4) plywood ordinary	795	938			

Note: all pick-up prices inclusive of VAT retail prices

The Philippine Wood Producers Association
 3/F LTA Condominium Building
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