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DENR Memorandum Circular
No. 2022 - 04

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR THE NAMING OF WATERSHEDS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 705, otherwise known as the “Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines” as amended, Executive Order No. 192, series of 1987, Providing for the Reorganization of the Department of Environment, Energy and Natural Resources, Renaming it as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and For Other Purposes, DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 1999-01, entitled, “Adoption of the Watershed and Ecosystems Planning Framework”, DAO No. 2005-23, entitled, “Adoption and Implementation of Collaborative Approach to Watershed Management” and DENR Memorandum Circular (DMC) No. 2008-05, entitled, “Guidelines in the Preparation of Integrated Watershed Management Plans”, the following guidelines for the naming of watersheds in support to the National Irrigation System (NIS) and other watersheds development activities in the Philippines are hereby promulgated.

SECTION 1. Basic Policies. It is the policy of the State to protect and advance a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

SECTION 2. Objectives. This Circular aims to guide the DENR Field Offices in the naming of watersheds that will provide a unique identity useful in the formulation of Integrated Watershed Management Plans, ease of retrieval of data, and implementation of activities, plans, and interventions within watersheds.

SECTION 3. Scope and Coverage. This Circular shall cover the naming of all watersheds and their respective sub-watersheds adopting the ridge-to-reef approach. The watersheds delineated using the ridge-to-reef approach is attached as Annex 1.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. For this Circular, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- a) Estuary – a water body where seawater of oceanic origin is diluted by freshwater from land drainage areas. Areas influenced by this include deltas, tidal marshes, and river mouth, among others.
- b) Outlet – an area where all streams and rainfall within the watershed drains. It could be the outflow of a reservoir, the mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel.
- c) Ridge-to-reef – integrated watershed ecosystems management framework that emphasizes the interrelationship between the upland, lowland, and coastal ecosystems.
- d) Sub-watershed – drains its water to the larger watershed
- e) Tributary – a river or stream flowing into a larger river or lake.

- f) Watershed – a land area drained by a stream or fixed body of water and its tributaries having a common outlet for a surface run-off.
- g) First level stream – the main tributary of the watershed where the outlet is the estuary.
- h) Second level stream – sub-watershed where the outlet is the main tributary.

SECTION 5. Procedures in the Naming of Watersheds. Watersheds are delineated based on the topographic divide, and not based on political boundaries, hence, watersheds may encompass one or more regions and provinces. The concerned DENR Regional Offices with the jurisdiction over the watershed shall be responsible in naming of the ridge-to-reef watersheds. In cases of watersheds that cover more than one region, the concerned Regional Office with the largest jurisdiction over the area shall be responsible in naming of the watersheds.

In cases of sub-watersheds with second-level stream as the main tributary, the DENR Regional Office shall delineate the sub-watersheds of the ridge-to-reef watersheds within their jurisdiction prior to naming of sub-watersheds. Annex 2 shows the process of naming the sub-watersheds that covers one province and sub-watershed that covers more than one province belonging to the same region.

The DENR Field Offices shall ensure that the process of naming the watersheds is done in coordination with the local communities. Naming of watersheds after personalities, roads, streamflow-gaging stations, and other structures shall be avoided. The naming of watersheds shall follow the following procedures:

5.1 Ridge-to-reef Watersheds

- 5.1.1 Watersheds shall be named using the name of the main tributary, the name shall be completely spelled out (Annex 3).
- 5.1.2 When the watershed is composed of two or more major tributaries, a situation where the major river near the estuary immediately branched-out, use the hyphenated naming structure to create a unique name (Annex 4).
- 5.1.3 When there are two watersheds having identical names of main tributaries, the name of the province where the outlet of a watershed is located must be hyphenated to the name of the main tributary (Annex 5).

If the condition exists in the same province, the name of the province and municipality where the outlet of the watershed is located shall be hyphenated next to it (Annex 6).

5.2 Sub-watersheds

Annex 7 illustrates the stream levels in sub-watersheds while Annex 8 illustrates the sub-watersheds at the second level stream.

- 5.2.1 The name of the sub-watershed shall be based on the name of the tributary of the second-level stream (Annex 9). The same goes for the tributaries adjacent to it and so on.
- 5.2.2. When the sub-watershed is composed of two significant tributaries with the same level (Annex 10), use the hyphenated naming structure to create unique names.

SECTION 6. Identical Name Across Regions. All DENR Regional Offices shall submit the names of watersheds to the Forest Management Bureau (FMB). The FMB shall identify if there are duplication in the name of the watersheds. In the event that there are watersheds with identical name located at different regions, the FMB shall revised the names following the Section 5.1.3 of this Circular.

SECTION 7. Watershed Name Registry. The FMB shall develop and maintain a registry on the official names of watersheds in the country. The shapefiles of these watersheds shall be provided by the FMB to DENR Regional Offices for reference.

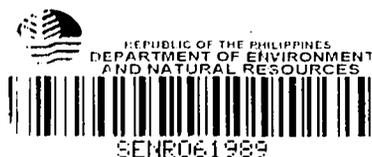
SECTION 8. Transitory Clause. Within one (1) year of effectivity of this Circular, the DENR Regional Offices shall revise the names of watersheds with existing Characterization cum Vulnerability Assessment Reports and Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs) that do not follow the procedures of this Circular.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Circular shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the other portions or provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue in full force and effect.

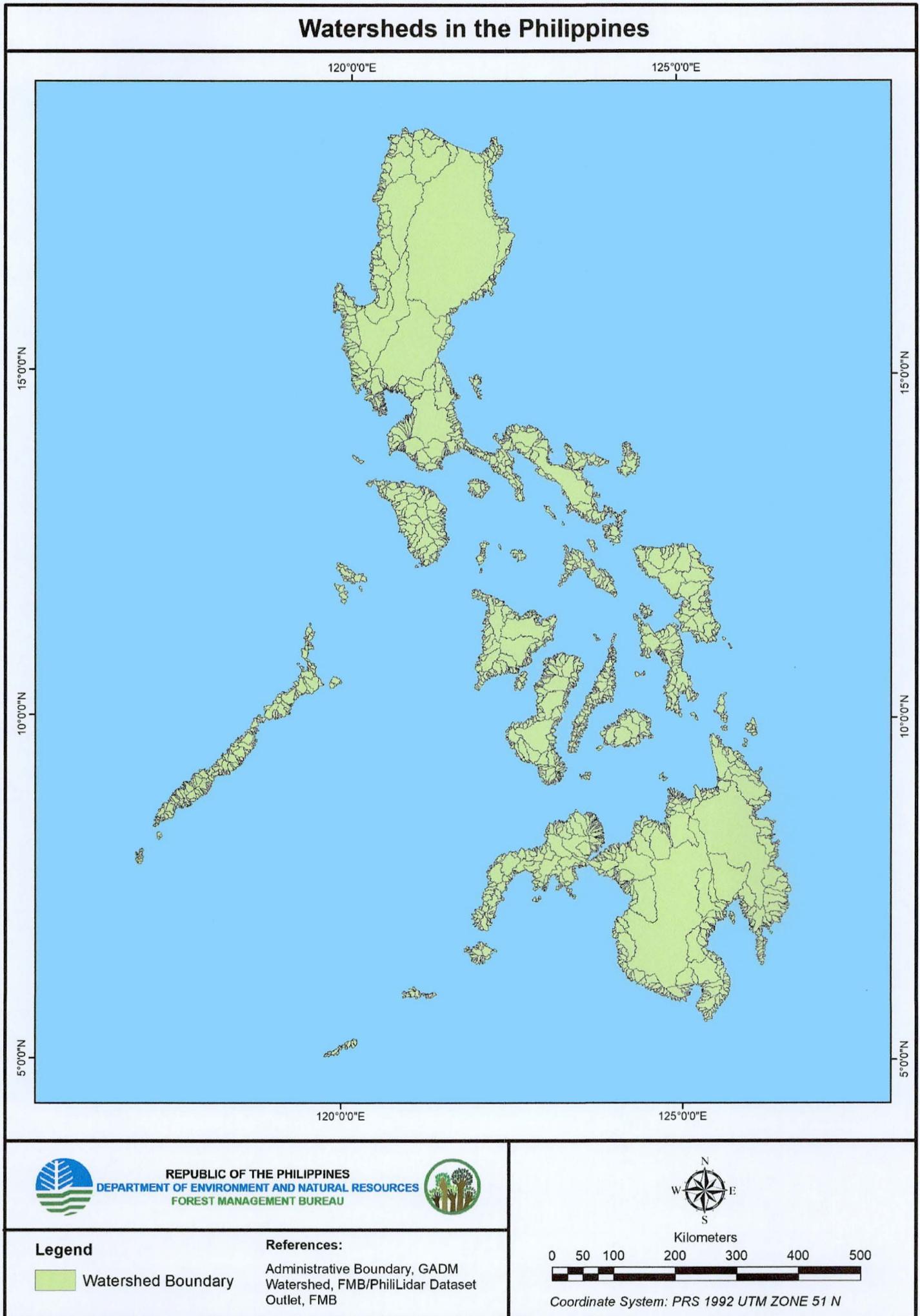
SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. All Circulars and other similar issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately.

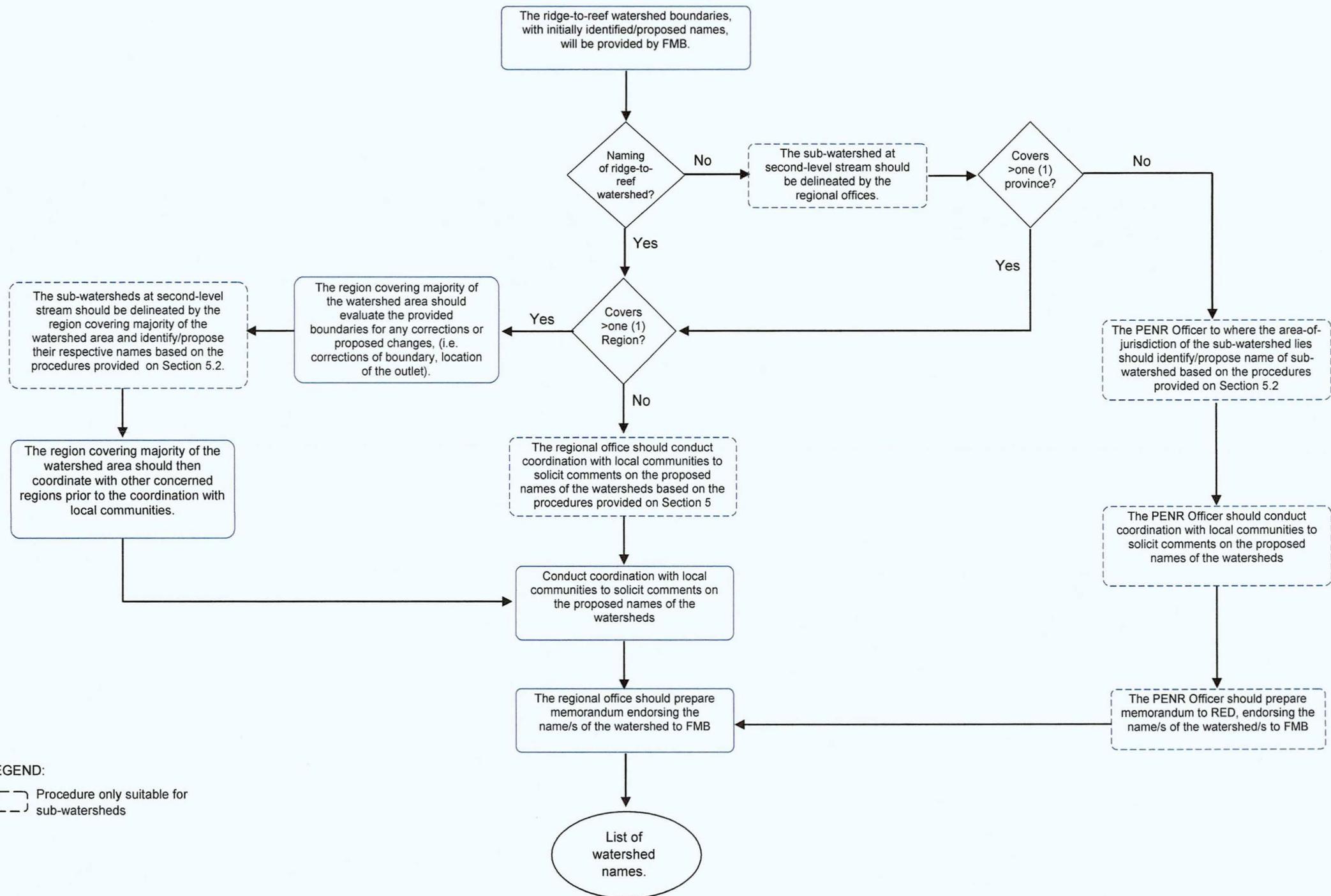
JIM C. SAMPULNA
Acting Secretary



ANNEX 1. WATERSHEDS IN THE PHILIPPINES DELINEATED USING RIDGE-TO-REEF APPROACH



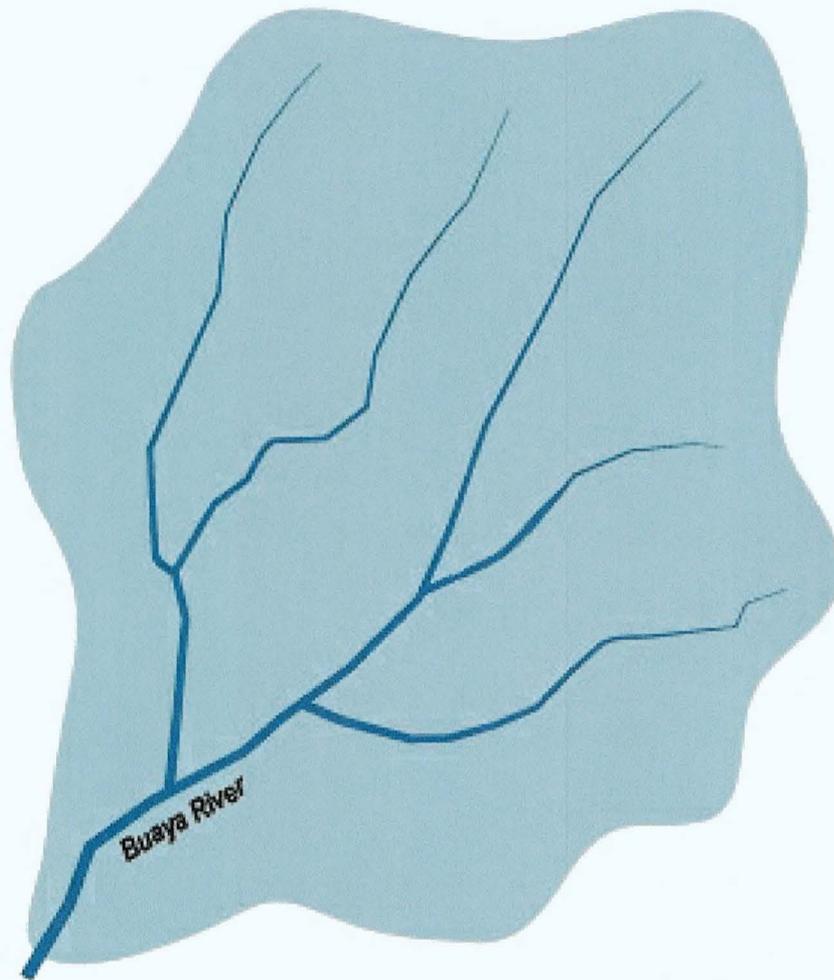
ANNEX 2. PROCESS FLOW ON NAMING OF WATERSHEDS.



LEGEND:

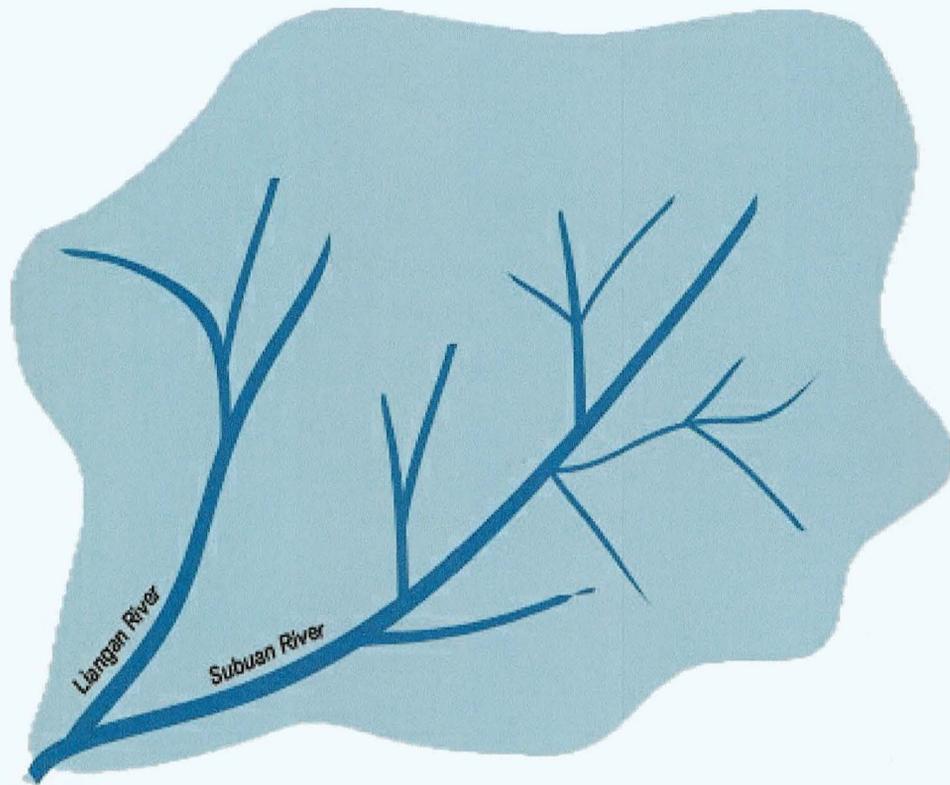
 Procedure only suitable for sub-watersheds

ANNEX 3. NAMING OF WATERSHED BASED ON THE NAME OF THE MAIN TRIBUTARY



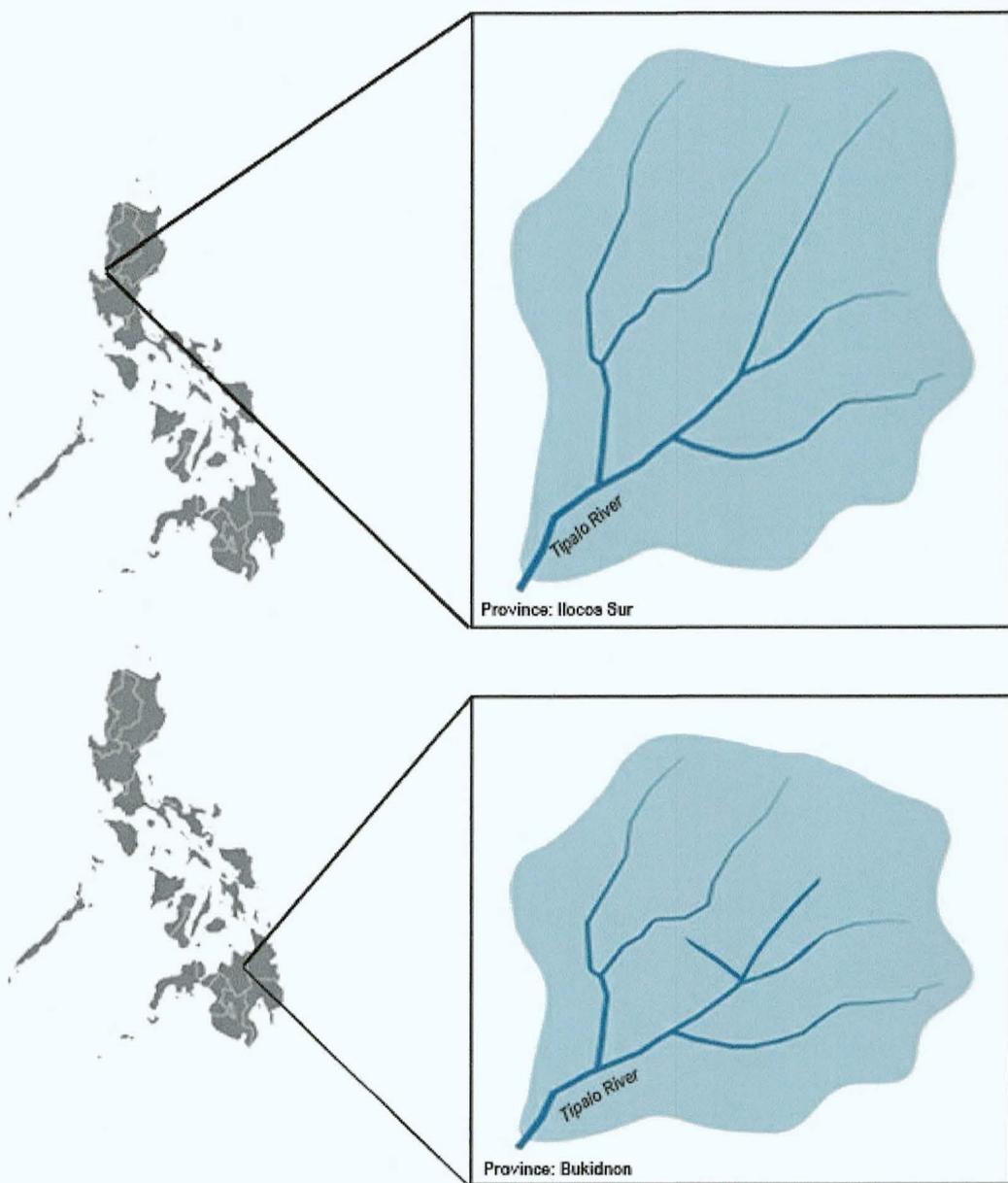
The name of the main tributary of the watershed is *Buaya River*. Hence, its name is Buaya River Watershed.

ANNEX 4. NAMING OF WATERSHED WITH TWO SIGNIFICANT RIVERS



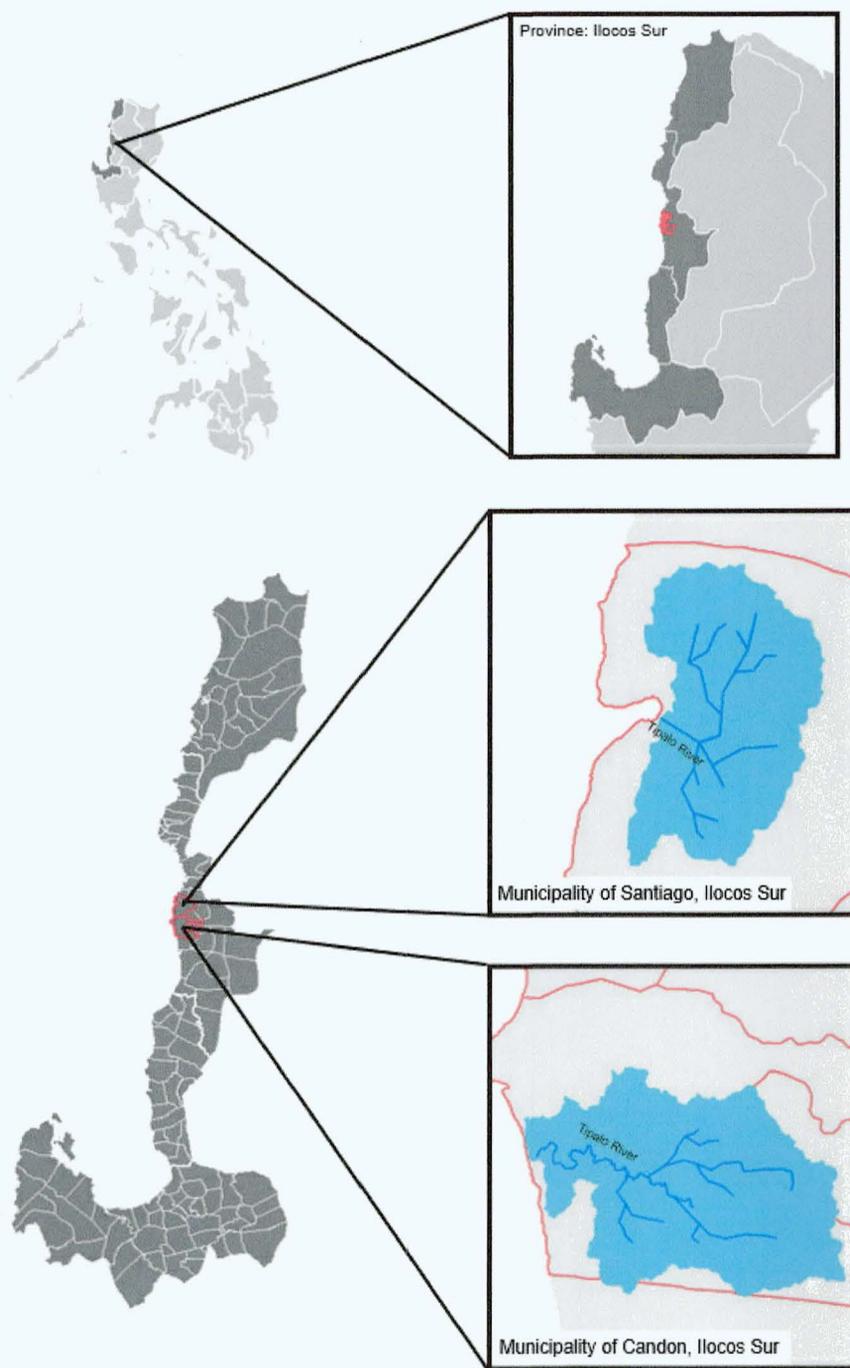
The major river near the outlet immediately branched out to two (2) major tributaries namely Liangan River and Subuan River, hence, the name of the watershed will be *Liangan-Subuan River Watershed*.

ANNEX 5. WATERSHEDS WITH IDENTICAL NAMES OF THE MAIN TRIBUTARIES



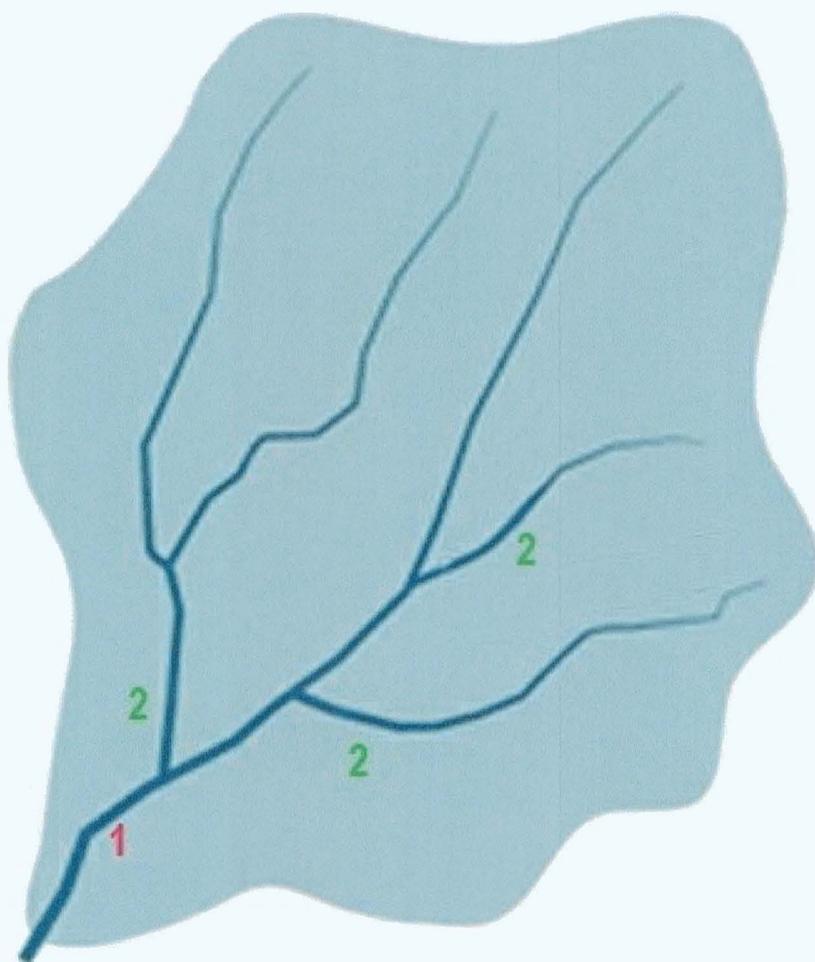
The watershed located in the province of Ilocos Sur shall be named as *Tipalo-Ilocos Sur River Watershed* and the watershed located in the province of Bukidnon shall be named as *Tipalo-Bukidnon River Watershed*.

ANNEX 6. WATERSHEDS WITH IDENTICAL NAMES OF MAIN TRIBUTARIES IN ONE PROVINCE

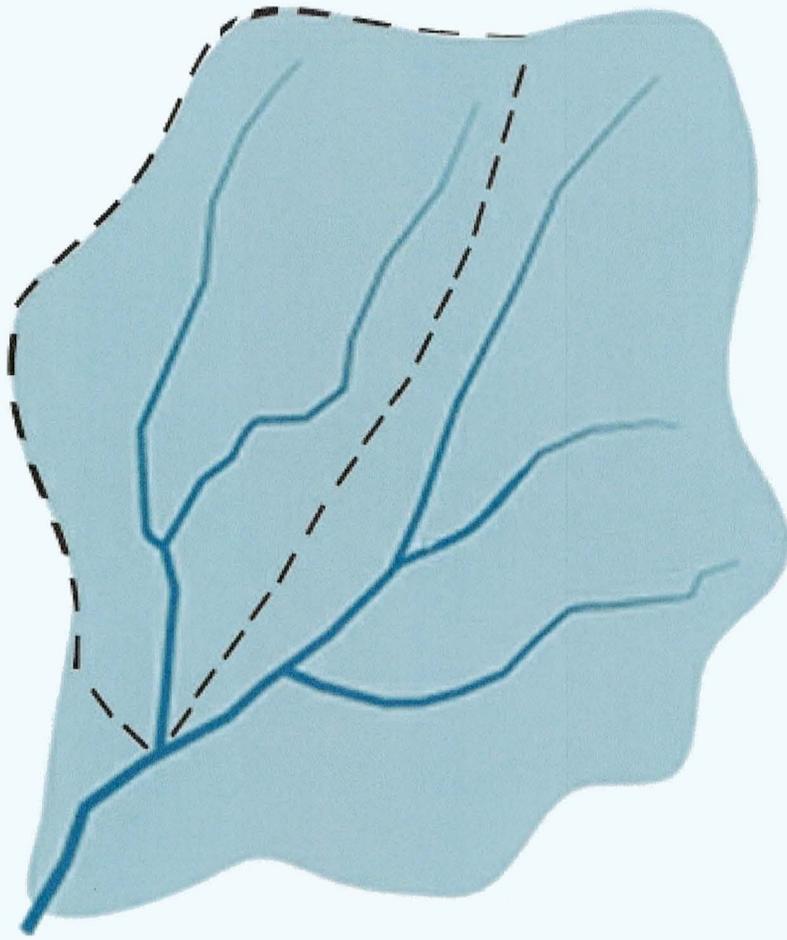


The watershed located in the Municipality of Candon, Ilocos Sur shall be named as *Tipalo-Ilocos Sur-Candon River Watershed*. On the other hand, the watershed located in the Municipality of Santiago, Ilocos Sur shall be named as *Tipalo-Ilocos Sur-Santiago River Watershed*.

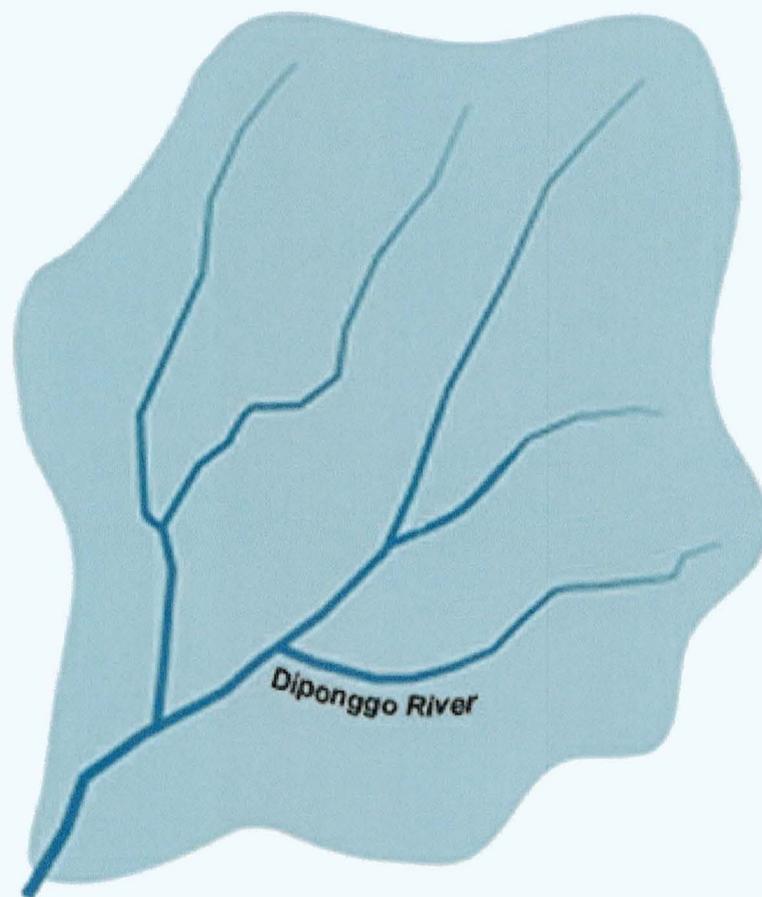
ANNEX 7. STREAM LEVELS IN THE WATERSHED



ANNEX 8. SECOND-LEVEL STREAM SUB-WATERSHED

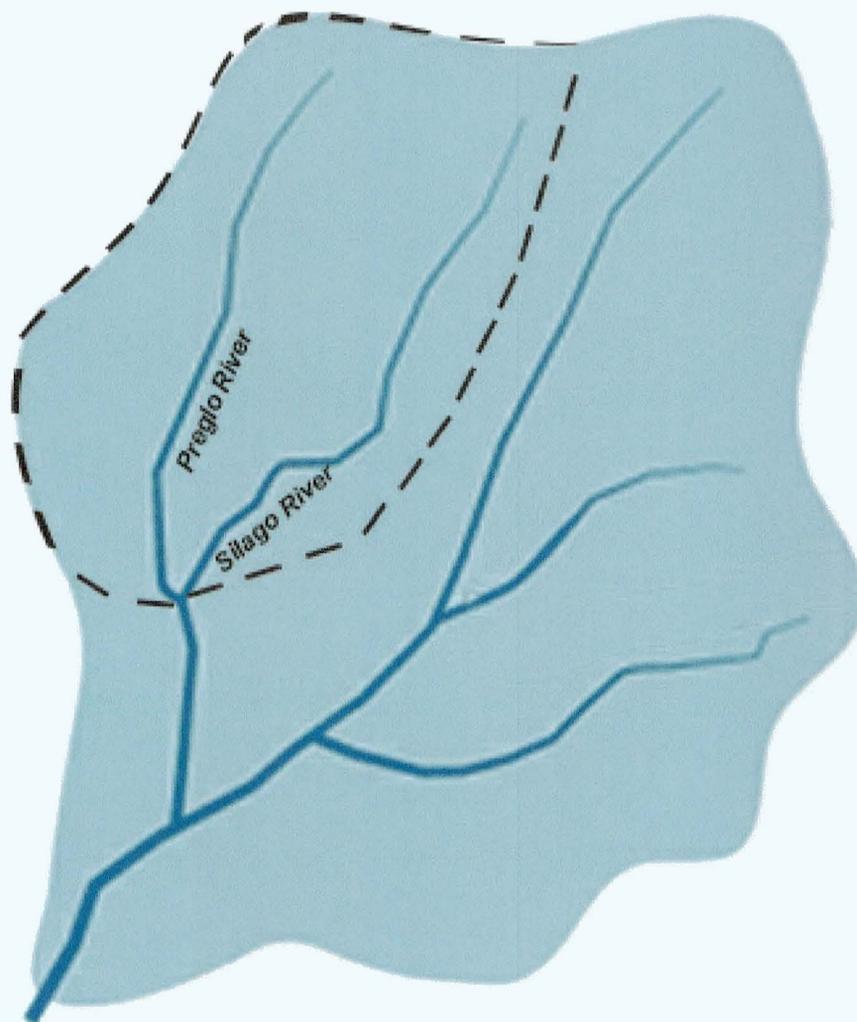


ANNEX 9. THE TRIBUTARY AT A SECOND-LEVEL STREAM



The tributary at a second-level stream is Diponggo River. Hence, the name of the sub-watershed is *Diponggo River Sub-Watershed*.

ANNEX 10. SUB-WATERSHED WITH TWO SIGNIFICANT RIVERS,



The sub-watershed with two significant rivers (Preglo River and Silago River) shall be named as *Preglo-Silago River Subwatershed*.