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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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DENR Administrative Order
No. 2021 – 32

SUBJECT : GUIDELINES ON THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL FOREST MONITORING SYSTEM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINE REDD+ STRATEGY

Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 881, series of 2010 designating the Department as the operational implementer of the strategy to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests, and Enhancement of Carbon Stocks (REDD+), and Executive Order No. 174, s.2014, designating the Department as the lead agency in conducting the inventory of Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions from wastes, industrial processes, and the land use and forestry sectors, the following guidelines are hereby promulgated to establish the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) as the National Measurement, Reporting and Verification and Monitoring System for the Philippine REDD+ Strategy, providing for its operationalization and institutional arrangements.

SECTION 1. Basic Policy. It is the policy of the State to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Also, it is the policy of the State to strengthen, integrate, consolidate, and institutionalize government initiatives to achieve coordination in the implementation of plans and programs to address climate change in the context of sustainable development.

SECTION 2. Objectives. The main objective of this Order is to establish and operationalize a NFMS. Specifically, the DAO aims to:

- a. Establish and operationalize within six (6) months from the issuance of this Order, the Satellite Land Monitoring System, and produce activity data on forestland use and land-use change every two (2) years;
- b. Adopt the Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) as the National Forest Inventory of the Philippines, providing data on emission factors for the country every five (5) years;
- c. Enable the Department to publish National Greenhouse Gas Inventories for the forestry sector containing emission and removal estimates every two (2) years;
- d. Develop and operationalize within six (6) months from the issuance of this Order, a Forest Information System or a web portal where all verified data on Philippine forestlands are published, stored, and accessed for the consumption of various stakeholders, including but not limited to other national government agencies, local government units, research institutions, financial institutions, civil society organizations, and the academe; and
- e. Enable the Department to produce data relevant to the generation and submission of the Biennial Update Reports, National Communications, and reporting requirements from other international commitments.

SECTION 3. Scope & Coverage. This Order shall apply to the establishment, operationalization, and maintenance of a NFMS for the implementation of plans, programs, and activities using the REDD+ strategy. Information derived from this system, however, shall not be limited for use in the measurement, reporting, and verification requirements of REDD+ results-based payments.

SECTION 4. National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). The Department hereby establishes a National Forest Monitoring System for the collection, production, storage, and access of reliable information on Philippine forests.

SECTION 5. Definition of Terms

- a. Activity Data – refers to all quantitative data that pertains to the forest and land cover, the changes that occur within it, and the factors that cause said changes.
- b. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – an international environmental treaty for the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.
- c. REDD+ - more formally known as “reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries,” is a mechanism developed through the UNFCCC to incentivize developing countries to keep their forests standing by offering results-based payments for actions to reduce or remove forest carbon emissions.
- d. National Communications – document to be periodically submitted by Parties to the Convention, containing figures on GHG emissions and sinks, as well as updates on actions they have undertaken to implement the Paris Agreement.
- e. Biennial Update Reports – a more extensive report submitted by non-Annex I parties every two (2) years. It contains updates of national greenhouse gas inventories, national inventory reports, information on mitigation actions, needs, and support received. REDD+ reports are also included in this document through a technical annex.

SECTION 6. Functions of the NFMS

- a. **Monitoring Function** – The NFMS shall be able to provide a clear picture of the present status of the Philippine forests and the years leading up to that. Information derived from this system shall enable its users to monitor the implementation of projects, programs, and activities done in the country’s forests and assess their impacts, especially those established in accordance with the REDD+ Strategy.
- b. **Measurement, Reporting, and Verification Function** – The NFMS, for the purpose of accessing results-based payments through the REDD+ strategy, shall enable the measurement, reporting, and verification of all qualitative and quantitative data on the implementation of projects, programs, and activities in the country’s forestlands. It shall also allow the Philippine government to comply with Article 12 of the UNFCCC, which requires Parties to communicate to the Conference of Parties all information on their climate actions through the Biennial Update Reports and National Communications.

SECTION 7. Components of the NFMS. Consistent with international frameworks and conventions, the NFMS shall have the following as its main components and sources of information:

- a. **Satellite Land Monitoring System** – Utilizing the latest available technology on Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing (GIS-RS), the Satellite Land Monitoring System shall generate data on land use and land use change, specifically the country’s forest cover and forest cover change, and shall be able to do so at least every two (2) years. It shall also serve as the premiere source of activity data for the reporting requirements of the UNFCCC, especially the REDD+ programme, and other international commitments.

- b. **National Forest Inventory** – The FRA Methodology is hereby officially recognized as the Philippines’ official National Forest Inventory. For uniformity, all field inventories conducted by the government in the future for the purpose of measurement, reporting, and verification shall utilize the revised field manual for the FRA.
- c. **Other Data Sources** – The NFMS shall also incorporate in its system other sources of information pertaining to the country’s forests, such as but not limited to the following:
 - i. Forest tenure programs of the Department;
 - ii. National Greening Program;
 - iii. Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System;
 - iv. Foreign-Assisted & Special Projects;
 - v. Findings/Studies of private entities, voluntarily submitted to the Department; and
 - vi. Other National Government Agencies’ database

SECTION 9. Forest Information System. All data gathered and generated through the NFMS shall be published through a web portal called the Forest Information System. The web platform shall be maintained and housed by the Lead Implementer of this system, who shall also be responsible for its regular updating.

SECTION 10. Lead Implementer. The Forest Management Bureau shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Bureau shall collect data relevant to the generation of reliable information on the Philippine forests and organize, store, and publish these findings through the Forest Information System. The Bureau shall also submit to the Climate Change Commission their data needs in preparation of the Biennial Update Reports and National Communications to be submitted in compliance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

SECTION 11. Allocation of Funds. The Department through the FMB shall allocate funds for the operationalization and implementation of the National Forest Monitoring System.

SECTION 12. Repealing Clause. All Orders, Circulars, Memoranda, and other Issuances inconsistent with this Order shall be amended or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 13. Separability Clause. Should part of this Order be declared unconstitutional, those parts unaffected shall remain valid and enforced.

SECTION 14. Effectivity. This Order shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in a newspaper of general circulation and registration with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) of the University of the Philippines – Diliman Law Center.


ROY A. CIMATU
Secretary



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