

National Conference on Wetlands, Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity Conservation

CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Philippines is endowed with a variety of wetlands that provide a wide range of products and services critical to human life including the ability to mitigate the threats of climate change to our nation's security and which hosts valuable biodiversity;

WHEREAS, these wetlands are in a critical condition due to the various threats caused by unsustainable use, hydrologic alterations, pollution, vegetation damage, and encroachment, among others;

WHEREAS, destroying or degrading these wetlands can lead to serious consequences such as increased flooding, extinction of species, and decline in water quality;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention, and as such, is committed to conserve and promote the wise use of its wetlands through national and local actions as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world;

WHEREAS, despite the existence of a 1993 Philippine National Wetlands Action Plan, efforts towards the wise use of wetlands have been fragmented and at times, overlapping and conflicting, thus resulting in the continuing degradation of these important ecosystems;

WHEREAS, there is a need to update the 1993 Philippine National Wetlands Action Plan to be more responsive to current issues and concerns;

WHEREAS, the Conference recognizes the importance of wetlands, its critical role in the survival of humans and the planet itself, especially its role in climate change adaptation and mitigation;

WHEREAS, the consequences can be avoided by maintaining the remaining valuable wetlands, preventing their further destruction and restoring lost or degraded wetlands where possible;

THEREFORE, THE CONFERENCE RESOLVES THAT:

- **URGENT ATTENTION** be given to the state of our wetlands
- **ACT** on the threats to them to improve their ability to sustain the production of natural goods and services for people and communities; and
- In collaboration with other nations and international institutions, **COMMIT RESOURCES** (human, economic, social, political and financial) to make the actions work.

In turn, **WE SUBMIT** for consideration by Congress, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other agencies of the national government, and local governments in all places in the Philippines -- the attached **PRIORITY NEEDED ACTIONS** and the **TIME FRAME** they need to be done.

Priority Actions (Timeframe: 2 years)

- a) Capacity Development
 - Targeted CEPA (communications, education and public awareness)/documentation and dissemination of Best Practices in Wetlands Conservation and Management
 - Preparation of identified training modules and conduct of training courses
 - Resource mobilization strategies that look into innovative financing mechanisms

- Knowledge on and access to adaptation and mitigation, remediation technologies
- b) Development of a database of wetlands information
- c) Issuance of Joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) on the following concerns:
 - Between Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and DENR on easements
 - Among Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), DENR and DILG on reclamation especially on illegally reclaimed areas
- d) Develop a long term legislative agenda for wetlands
- e) Develop and institutionalize an Implementation Mechanism for the National Wetlands Action Plan by exploring existing institutions like the Committee on Conservation and Management of Resources for Development of the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD).

(Adopted in Silliman University, Dumaguete City, on January 14, 2009)