

[DENR, March 17, 2009]

**CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL STANDARDS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
(DENR)**

WHEREAS, Section 1, Article XI of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that "Public office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency, act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives";

WHEREAS, Section 7, Chapter II, Book IV of Executive Order No. 292, otherwise known as the "Administrative Code of 1987" empowers the Secretary to promulgate administrative issuances necessary for the efficient administration of the DENR;

WHEREAS, Section 13 of Republic Act No. 6713, otherwise known as the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees" provides that nothing in said Act shall be construed to derogate from any law, or any regulation prescribed by any body or agency, which provides for more stringent standards for its officials and employees;

WHEREAS, the Cabinet in coordination with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) adopted a national anti-corruption framework known as Integrity Development Action Plan (IDAP) on 17 December 2004;

WHEREAS, on 15 April 2005, the DENR submitted its agency-specific IDAP commitments to the PAGC;

WHEREAS, one of the DENR's IDAP commitments is the formulation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the "Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007" provides that the State shall maintain honesty and responsibility among its public officials and employees. It shall take appropriate measures to promote transparency in each agency with regard to the manner of transacting with the public, which shall encompass a program for the adoption of simplified procedures that will reduce red tape and expedite transaction in government; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the DENR hereby promulgates this Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards, to wit;

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Title. This Code shall be known as the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources".

SECTION 2. Objectives. The following are the objectives of this Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards:

- a. To serve as a tool to attain the DENR vision, mission and the core values;
- b. To provide employees with guidance in ethically ambiguous situations in the performance of their duties and responsibilities;
- c. To sharpen the DENR criteria and standards for public service accountability and good governance;
- d. To serve as guidepost in clarifying desirable and undesirable governance;
- e. To provide protection for employees against arbitrary or unethical behavior of superior officials;
- f. To develop and maintain public trust, transparency and integrity in the performance of official duties and functions;
- g. To help promote professionalism and standards of excellence in public service;
- h. To impress upon employees the standards of behavior required of them in the performance of their duties; and
- i. To provide a detailed set of rules and guidelines for all officials and employees to meet the highest standard of integrity in public service.

SECTION 3. DENR Vision and Mission.

VISION: A nation enjoying and sustaining its natural resources and a clean and healthy environment.

MISSION: The DENR shall be the driving force in the pursuit of sustainable development, enabling stakeholders' participation in the protection, conservation and management of the environment and natural resources for the present and future generations.

SECTION 4. Core Values. Towards the attainment of the DENR Vision and Mission, the following Core Values shall be upheld:

- a. The environment and natural resources are critical to the well-being of Filipinos and the development of the country, and must therefore be governed with a deep sense of responsibility and accountability.
- b. As conservator and manager of the environment and natural resources, the DENR shall fully observe integrity, accountability and transparency in its programs and projects.
- c. The DENR shall ensure effective and efficient delivery of its services.
- d. DENR officials and employees shall lead simple and modest lives, observe low carbon lifestyles, and cultivate sincere

appreciation for natural ecosystems appropriate for stewards of the country's environment and natural resources.

e. DENR officials and employees shall observe professionalism and organizational discipline pursuant to laws and regulations and this Code.

f. Due diligence shall be observed in the making of decisions or actions and their implementation.

g. All officials and employees of the DENR shall always promote nationalism, patriotism and the sovereignty of the Philippines.

h. Improve the management of environment and natural resources in accordance with the Constitution in partnership with stakeholders.

SECTION 5. Scope and Applicability. This Code shall apply to all officials and employees regardless of employment status within the DENR and its attached agencies, including those on leave and those classified as contractual regardless of any stipulation of the absence of an employer-employee relationship with the DENR (e.g. Job Order or Contract of Service).

This Code shall complement the provisions of Executive Order No. 292, otherwise known as the "Administrative Code of 1987", Republic Act No. 6713 otherwise known as the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees", its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and issuances of the Civil Service Commission and other relevant and related laws.

Former officials and employees shall within one (1) year from separation be prohibited from transacting with their former offices and subordinates. Rendition of consultancy services to former offices shall not be considered as transacting with said offices. Provided that those that have compulsorily retired may not be hired as consultants.

Agency-Specific Ethical Obligations and Standards

Rule 1. RESPECT FOR THE CONSTITUTION, LAWS, ORDERS AND PROCEDURES.

1.1 Officials and employees shall faithfully implement Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) laws, rules and regulations.

1.2 Officials and employees shall comply with lawful and reasonable directions from superiors.

1.3 Officials and employees shall exercise their powers and duties lawfully and responsibly and at all times provide information and assistance to the public in accordance with law.

1.4 Constructive feedback mechanisms shall be encouraged in carrying out the vision and mission of the DENR.

1.5 Officials and employees must actively prevent abusive and demeaning conduct, discrimination (as to gender, ethnicity, age, disability, status and religion) sexual harassment and the like, committed by co-officials and co-employees, otherwise they shall be punished in accordance with existing and applicable laws, rules and regulations.

1.6 Management shall ensure that all employees have a safe and sanitary work place with appropriate space, ventilation and lighting, otherwise they shall be subject to grievance procedure.

1.7 Proper office decorum shall be observed, including proper wearing of uniform and ID, otherwise erring official or employee shall be dealt accordingly.

1.8 Officials and employees shall actively implement the DENR Citizen's Charter for efficient, responsive and satisfactory delivery of frontline services.

Rule 2. INTEGRITY. All DENR officials and employees shall avoid any conduct that would cause breach of the public trust and confidence. Any conflict that may arise between personal interest and public interest must be resolved in favor of the latter.

2.1 Officials and supervisors shall treat customers, stakeholders, co-employees and officials with utmost honesty, impartiality and fairness, and respect their rights and obligations.

2.2 Officials and supervisors shall be fair and reasonable in making decisions and in giving directions to subordinates.

2.3 Officials and employees shall notify or disclose to the appropriate authority violations of law and breaches of ethical standards.

2.4 Officials and employees shall demonstrate good leadership and promote behavior consistent with this Code.

2.5 Officials and supervisors shall acknowledge the good work of subordinates, delegate authority with prudence and encourage professional development.

2.6 Employees shall be represented in the selection and recruitment process. The merit promotion plan of the DENR shall be observed to strengthen professionalism. The appointing authority shall give regard to the recommendation of the Personnel Selection Board (PSB).

Rule 3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. Conflict of interest arises when a public official or employee or a relative within the 4th civil degree of

consanguinity or affinity of the owner of a business, partner in a firm, member of a board, an officer or a substantial stockholder of a private corporation who transact business with the DENR or applies for a license or permit. All DENR officials and employees shall avoid conflict of interest in the performance of their duties and functions.

3.1 Upon assumption into office or acceptance of employment or engagement in the DENR, and everytime it becomes necessary, officials and employees shall identify, declare areas of conflict of interest, and resolve such conflict in favor of the government.

3.2 Officials and employees as defined in Section 5 hereof shall disclose their business and financial interests in their Annual Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net worth (SALN) and everytime it becomes necessary.

3.3 The practice of profession shall not be allowed unless authorized in writing by the proper authority and shall not be in conflict with one's functions in the DENR.

3.4 Violations of this Rule shall be published in accordance with existing and applicable laws, rules and regulations.

Rule 4. RECEIVING AND HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS

4.1 Cases originally filed with the DENR

All administrative complaints filed at the DENR Central Office, unless referred to the Environmental Ombudsman or otherwise directed by the Office of the Secretary, shall be referred to the appropriate division of the Legal Service and shall be acted upon and disposed in the following manner:

A. Disposition of Cases without any Investigation

1. Complaints filed by anonymous complainants, such as those by "concerned citizens", "concerned DENR employees", etc. shall not be acted upon and be dismissed outright through the issuance of a standard Order to be signed by the Secretary or his/her authorized representative (Format "A-1"[*]), unless-

a. there is obvious truth or merit to the allegation, as can be ascertained from a sufficiently detailed description of the act or omission complained of, and the logical connections of the circumstances alleged, based on ordinary human experience (otherwise the case will be dismissed); or

b. there is documentary or direct evidence attached that proves the allegations, but the allegation/s thus proved must constitute the major element of the act or omission complained of (otherwise the case will be dismissed).