

**[DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 99-39,
September 01, 1999]**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF
ECOLOGICAL DESTINATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES**

In line with the Department's mandate to promote sustainable development, and cognizant of the Philippines' abundance in ecological destinations, the guidelines for Ecological Destinations Development and Management in the Philippines are hereby promulgated as follows.

SECTION 1. BASIC POLICY

1. It is the policy of the State to ensure sustainable development, management, protection and conservation of country's environment and natural resources for the benefit of the present and future generations;
2. It is likewise the policy of the Government to develop and manage ecological destinations to allow learning through experience, thereby improving the quality of life of our people while maintaining the integrity of the environment; and
3. It is the policy of the Department to establish/create multi-dynamic movement and convenient access to ecological destinations through environmental roads and environmental rest areas.

SECTION 2. OBJECTIVES

1. To promote environmental awareness through ecological study tours;
2. To allow ecological enthusiasts to use and benefit from environmental intangibles such as the priceless outdoor experience of isolation in nature; and
3. To provide income generating activities to communities with identified ecological destinations.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms

1. *Ecological Enthusiast* — a person who is interested in natural landscapes or environment.
2. *Environmental Intangibles* — all the benefits derived from ecological sites except those of material value.
3. *Ecological Destination* — a site that shows a unique natural feature(s) of a landscape that benefit people because of its aesthetic, recreational and

scientific value.

4. *Environmental Road* — road developed in harmony with nature leading to the ecological destination.
5. *Environmental Rest Area Park* — area with basic amenities such as comfort rooms, coffee shops, lodging rooms along the environmental road.
6. *Cost Recovery Scheme* — plan to recover investment made and earn a reasonable profit.
7. *Ecological User's Fee* — payment received/collected for the use of facilities and basic amenities of the ecological destination and rest area.

SECTION 4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE. This order shall cover the development and management of sites of ecological uniqueness and importance, excluding sites already covered by the eco-tourism program, and those areas under the jurisdiction of other government agencies.

SECTION 5. STRATEGY. Development and management of ecological destination uses the holistic approach. Activities include, among others, development of the site itself, greening and construction/improvement of the access road leading to the identified ecological destination and installation of amenities in rest areas. The development of the site must be environmentally sound, and with minimum disturbances in the area.

Low impact activities should be confined to the periphery of the site. Provision for an effective waste management and disposal shall also be undertaken.

The program shall utilize the in-house investment and marketing expertise of the DENR through the Natural Resources Development Corporation (NRDC). NRDC shall formulate and implement the cost and recovery scheme of this program.

The assessment team specified in Section 8 shall provide the necessary guidelines and formulate specific activities that could be allowed in the area, together with the plan, design and specifications of the infrastructures to be constructed therein.

NRDC shall take charge of the implementation of the plan in coordination with the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) who has jurisdiction over the ecological destination.

SECTION 6. CRITERIA ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ECOLOGICAL DESTINATIONS

6.1 Site Selection. The following criteria shall be considered/used in the selection of an ecological destination:

1. The area should have unique natural/endemic features which will provide enjoyment and education to ecological enthusiasts:
2. The area should be accessible;