

**Office of the President
of the Philippines
Malacañang**

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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 359

**CREATING THE BICOL RIVER BASIN PROJECT MANAGEMENT
OFFICE AND DEFINING ITS SCOPE OF AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the River Basin and Watershed Management Project is a six-year project to be funded by a World Bank loan:

WHEREAS, the Project has two major components, namely: 1) Bicol River Basin Management Component; and 2) Water Resources Management Component:

WHEREAS, the Bicol River Basin Management Component which will pilot the integrated water resources management approach on the ground is further subdivided into four subcomponents. These are: 1) Institutional Strengthening, 2) Watershed Development and Management to be led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and co-implemented by the Local Government Units (LGUs) within the Bicol River Basin; 3) Irrigation Management to be implemented by the National Irrigation Administration; and 4) Flood Mitigation to be implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways:

WHEREAS, the total project cost is estimated at \$30 Million, around \$22 Million of which is expected to come from the World Bank:

WHEREAS, there is a need to consult with provincial and municipal LGUs within the River Basin to confirm their willingness to spend for the Project and borrow resources for project activities which are considered devolved, e.g., communal forest development/management, livelihood and basic infrastructure including water systems):

WHEREAS, to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Bicol River Basin Component as well as other activities within the region related to water resources management, the Regional Development Council of Region V agreed early in 2004 to propose to the President of the Philippines the creation of a Bicol River Basin Board:

WHEREAS, a project management office with clear accountability is superior to a board:



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NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order the following:

Section 1. Project Management Office and Scope of Authority and Responsibility

There is hereby created a Bicol River Project Management Office within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), with the following personnel:

Project Management Officer with the rank of Undersecretary:

Deputy Project Management Officer with the rank of Assistant Secretary:

Technical staff seconded from each of the following agencies: NEDA, DPWH, DA, NIA, BFAR, DILG, BGLF, DBM, NWRB, LBP, NPC; and

Technical staff recruited from the academe

The Project Management Office shall have the following authorities and responsibilities:

- a. Coordinate and where necessary initiate and carry out the formulation, implementation and monitoring of water and watershed policies, studies, management actions and investments in the river basin consistent with the ecological principle of using the river basin as a unit of management, the institutional principle of stakeholder participation and devolution of action at the lowest possible level and the instrument principle of managing watershed and water resources as an economic good or a scarce resource using incentives and economic principles;
- b. Develop and update the Bicol River Basin and Watershed Strategic Framework;
- c. Organize the implementing structures, establish implementation policies, delegate authorities and responsibilities and call on other government agencies, financial institutions and donors, as needed to undertake basin wide programs and projects subject to applicable policies;
- d. Establish and maintain a structural consultation process at the appropriate executive levels with provincial, city and municipal LGUs, and representatives from people's organizations (irrigators, upland farmers, fisherfolk, water users' associations, indigenous peoples' groups) and from the private sector and civil society organizations based in the Bicol Region (academe, media, NGOs);
- e. Develop a portfolio of LGU projects in the river basin;
- f. Support/undertake and/or coordinate the appraisal and feasibility studies of individual projects;
- g. Assist LGUs in the packaging and documentation of their projects for submission to financing institutions;
- h. Manage and coordinate the implementation of the sub-projects under the River Basin Watershed Management Project;
- i. Support the LGUs, together with concerned line agencies, in the implementation of LGU sub-projects;
- j. Facilitate the coordination and implementation of activities between the different agencies involved in management and development of the Bicol river basin;



- k. Coordinate and plan with the relevant line agencies and LGUs to ensure proper operation and maintenance of the hydraulic infrastructures in the Bicol River Basin, including during periods of natural disaster, water scarcity and flood conditions;
- l. Collect and manage data and information pertaining to water and land use in the Bicol River Basin;
- m. Administer finance and procurement; and
- n. Undertake other duties and functions as may be necessary to perform its mandate.

Section 2. Budget

Funds for the operation of the Bicol River Basin Project Management Office shall be provided by DENR.

Section 3. The Project Management Office and Existing Agencies

Nothing in this Order shall be construed as effecting the diminution of powers of existing government agencies. The relationship between the Project Management Office and existing entities shall be one of complementarity, synergy and coordination to ensure that the ecological, institutional and instrument principles in river basin management and development are observed. In particular, the Project Management Officer shall work closely with the Regional Development Council.

Section 4. Any provisions of related issuances contrary to this Order and hereby suspended.

Section 5. This Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 17th day of September, 2004.

Gloria Arroyo



By the President:

Eduardo Ermita

EDUARDO ERMITA
Executive Secretary

