

EFFECTIVENESS OF LOGGING BAN POLICIES IN PROTECTING THE REMAINING NATURAL FORESTS OF THE PHILIPPINES ¹

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Abstract

The Philippines has imposed a logging ban in old growth natural forests since 1991. About 20 policy issuances on logging ban and moratorium have likewise been issued on the second growth natural forests in specific provinces and regions of the country over the last three decades (1970s-2000s). An analysis of the content, process and legality of these logging ban policies reveal that the primary objective is to preserve and protect the remaining natural forests in these areas. However, as these policies have been issued mainly as a reaction to various environmental crises such as calamitous typhoons, landslides, destruction and loss of lives and property, and unchecked deforestation, many sectors have been affected. The forestry industry and the forest-dependent communities as well as the buying public have taken the brunt of the decreased supply and increased prices of forest products from the local natural forests. The country has become a net exporter of logs and other processed wood products since the late 1980s.

The paper discusses the findings of the study on the content, process and legality of logging ban policies in the Philippines and how effective these policies have been in the protection of the remaining natural forests of the country. The study forwards some institutional and social reforms in the policy making and implementation process of the country with regards to its forests and natural resources.

Introduction

Logging ban or moratorium is a policy instrument used by government in response to environmental, socio-economic, political and other concerns and issues that threaten the forest and the resources within. There are more than 20 policy issuances on logging ban and moratorium imposed in over 46 provinces or nationwide over the last three decades. There is also a continuing debate in Congress on the enactment of a law that will totally ban logging in the country for the next 10 to 20 years although the bill has yet to be approved in both Houses.

This paper discusses the results of an analysis of the content, process, and legality of the logging ban policy issuances in the Philippines. The study reviewed and analyzed existing literature, field reports, articles, and case studies on logging ban. Key informants were likewise interviewed to validate the results of the content and process analyses of the various policy issuances. The study forwards some key institutional and social reforms for policy making and effective implementation of forest and natural resources management policies.

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Forest land Area in the Philippines

The Philippines is located in Southeast Asia at 5° to 20° north of the equator or some 1,107 km away from the coast of mainland Asia. It is made up of more than 7,100 islands with three major island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. In the 1600s, almost 97 percent of the country's total area of 30 million hectares (ha) was covered with old growth forest. In 1960, we had 20 million ha and by 2000, the old growth natural forest has dwindled to only three percent. As of 2003, the forest cover is estimated to be 7.2 million ha or merely 20 percent of the country's total land area (Table 1). Of this, about 75 percent is production forest while 25 percent is protection forest. Production forests are forest lands used for the production of timber and other forest products. Protection forests are forests on fragile lands and those protected for plant and animal biodiversity conservation. Figure 1 shows the map of the country with estimated land and forest cover.

Table 1. Estimated forest cover of the Philippines, 2003

Forest Cover	Area (ha)
Closed Forest	2,560,872
Open Forest	4,030,588
Mangrove	247,362
Plantation Forest	329,578
Total	7,168,400

Source: Forest Management Bureau, DENR

Forest Land Utilization

Under the 1987 Philippine Constitution, all of the country's natural resources are owned by the state. The State, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), manages the exploration, development and use of these natural resources by itself or it can allow the private sector to undertake these activities through co-production, production-sharing or joint venture agreements. Previous to the 1987 Constitution, the country allowed the exploitation, development or utilization of natural resources through license, concession, or lease for a period of 25 years, renewable for another 25 years. The Timber License Agreement (TLA) was the main instrument issued by government to corporations to legitimize commercial logging activities from the 1950s to the 1980s. No other TLAs have been issued since 1987 and the last remaining are due to expire by 2010.

The TLA was replaced by the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA), Socialized Forest Management Agreement (SIFMA), and Community-based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA), among other tenurial instruments over public forest lands. These are instruments issued for logging and plantation development to corporations in areas from 500 to 40,000 ha (IFMA); to families or people's organizations for areas from 1 to 500 ha (SIFMA), or to community organizations living within or adjacent to residual or second growth forest areas (CBFMA). Table 2 shows the number and area covered of IFMA, SIFMA, CBFMA, and TLA issued as of 2003. Private land forestry is also encouraged in the country and the practice is deregulated except for the registration of private forests as a prerequisite for obtaining permit to harvest timber in such lands. There are 14,019 registered private forests or plantations with an aggregate area of 45,760.93 ha all over the country as of 2005.

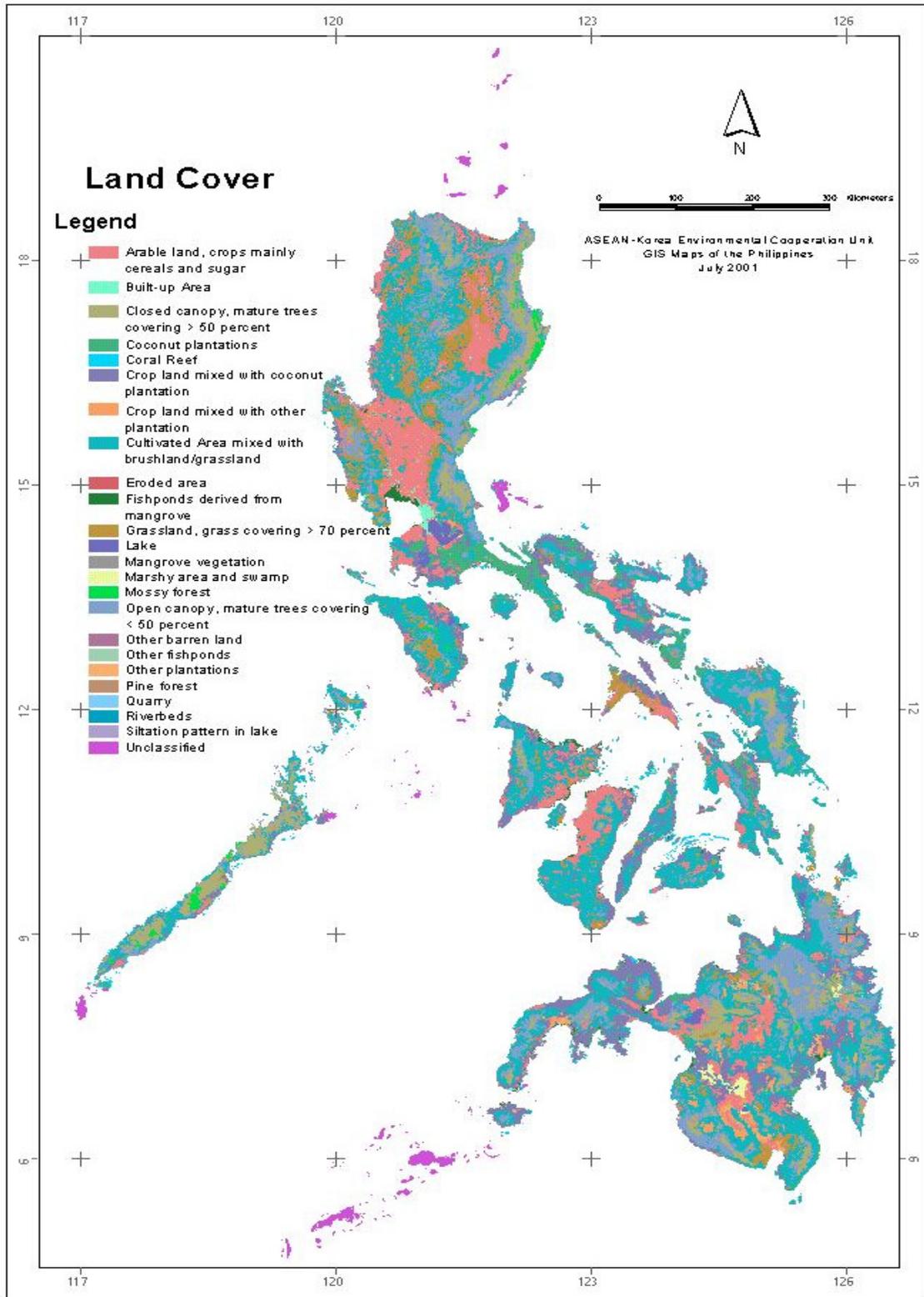


Figure 1. Map showing land cover of the Philippines (Bantayan 2001)

Table 2. Number and area covered by IFMA, SIFMA, CBFMA, TLA

Instrument	Number Issued	Tenure Area (ha)
IFMA (as of 2003)	201	714,000
SIFMA (as of 2003)	1,591	36,237
CBFMA (as of 2006)	1,781	1,622,129
TLA (as of 2003)	15	616,000

Source: Forest Management Bureau, DENR

Logging Ban Policies in the Philippines

Logging moratorium or ban is a policy instrument used by government in response to environmental, socio-economic, political and other concerns and issues that threaten the forest and the resources within. There are over 20 policy issuances on logging ban and moratorium imposed in selected municipalities, provinces, regions, or nationwide over the last three decades (1970-2000). The study analyzed the content of these logging ban policies specifically on the reasons behind their issuance, the objectives of the policy as well as the implementation mechanics including institutional and financial support for implementing the policies.

In 1991, the DENR issued Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 24 to shift logging from the old growth forests to the second growth or residual forests. This national logging ban no longer allows timber extraction in old growth forests and in critical areas such as those on steep slopes (50%+), above 1000m elevation, stream banks (20m sides), and wilderness areas primarily for conservation of biodiversity and gene pools. Commercial logging was allowed under this Order only in secondary forests and in plantations. However, in December 2004 following the destructive typhoons that hit the provinces of Aurora and Quezon causing much damage to lives and property, Philippine President Arroyo ordered the cancellation of logging permits in Quezon province and suspension of all permits in the rest of the country. Later in March 2005, then DENR Secretary Michael Defensor lifted the suspension of timber harvesting in Regions 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula), 11 (Davao) and CARAGA (Agusan provinces) to address local demands for wood, which he said is still available in the two regions.

Prior to both the 1991 and 2004 logging ban orders, more than 20 policy issuances have been implemented in specific provinces or regions. These all emanated from the President or from the Department Secretaries or Regional and Provincial Directors. These issuances are in the form of executive orders, presidential instructions or directives, administrative orders, or memorandum orders. Table 3 lists some 61 provinces under moratorium or ban.

Among the reasons cited for logging ban or moratorium in the policy issuances are reports of unabated/unchecked logging activities; strong clamor from local officials and representative sectors; calamities wrought by heavy rains resulting to floods, landslides, and adverse economic effects particularly on agricultural production; conservation/preservation of remaining forest resources; and continued violation of forestry laws. Most of the violations are a direct result of poor implementation and monitoring of existing forestry laws but the catalysts are the calamities brought about by strong rains and typhoons in the Samar, Leyte, Quezon, and Aurora provinces where excessive logging was blamed for the landslides and floods that killed many people in these areas (Bugayong and Peralta 2006).

The island of Palawan is under logging ban based on strong representation by environmental groups to preserve the remaining natural forests. The strong advocacies for conservation of the

island's resources resulted in the enactment of Republic Act 7611 or the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan Act, which includes the provision for preserving the biodiversity and gene pools in the island. DENR Administrative Order No. 45 bans logging in the whole island.

Table 3. List of Provinces under logging moratorium and ban by region and year

Region	Province (Policy Issuance, Year)	Reason
1- NE Luzon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, La Union, Baguio City (Presidential instructions to Minister of Natural Resources Jose Leido Jr. 1975) Pangasinan (LOI 409, 1976) Ilocos Norte & Sur, La Union (Presidential directive, 1983) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop all timber cutting & logging Protect Sierra Madre, Caraballo, Cordillera & Zambales mountains National logging ban except in 9 areas
CAR – N Luzon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abra, Mt. Province (Presidential directive, 1983) Abra, Benguet, Ifugao (Min. Order No. 4, 1986) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National logging ban except in 9 areas
2 - NW Luzon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya (MNR Order, 1982) Batanes (Presidential directive, 1983) Nueva Ecija, N. Vizcaya, Quirino, Ifugao (MNR Order No. 2, 1986) Cagayan – Gattaran & Baggao town (DENR Regional Moratorium Order, 1989) Nueva Vizcaya (DENR MO No. 2, 1990) Isabela - San Mariano & Ilagan towns (DENR Regional Moratorium Order, 1992) Quirino (DENR Administrative Order, 1993) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National logging ban except in 9 areas Forest degradation & violations Rampant illegal logging Local reports of unchecked illegal logging Rampant illegal logging Local government reported rampant illegal logging
3 – C Luzon	Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Aurora (LOI 409, 1876; Presidential directive, 1983)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Sierra Madre, Caraballo, Cordillera & Zambales mountains National logging ban except in 9 areas
4a -S Luzon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Rizal (LOI 409, 1976) Quezon – Real & Mauban towns (BFD Circular 4, 1982) Quezon – Infanta & vicinities (DENR Moratorium Order, 1992) Quezon, Aurora (DENR Memorandum, 1994) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Sierra Madre, Caraballo, Cordillera & Zambales mountains Hot spots for illegal logging & transport of illegally cut logs Illegal logging hotspots
4b -SW Luzon islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marinduque, Mindoro Occidental & Oriental, Romblon (Presidential directive, 1983) Palawan (DENR Administrative Order No. 45, 1992) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National logging ban except in 9 areas RA 7611 – Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan Act provides for total commercial logging ban
5 – SE Luzon	Albay, Camarines Norte & Sur, Masbate (Presidential directive, 1983)	National logging ban except in 9 areas
6 - W Visayas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras (Presidential directive, 1983) Negros Occidental (Presidential Instructions, 1984) 	National logging ban except in 9 areas
7 – C Visayas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negros Oriental (MNR Order, 1974) Bohol, Cebu, Siquijor (Presidential directive, 1983) 	National logging ban except in 9 areas

8 -E Visayas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leyte, Southern Leyte (MNR Administrative Order No. 31, 1982) • Eastern, Northern & Western Samar (DENR Moratorium Order, 1989) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve remaining natural forests • Need to assess existing resources; environmental disasters
9 – W Mindanao	Basilan (DENR Moratorium Order, 1989)	Strong local advocates against indiscriminate logging
10 – NE Mindanao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camiguin (Presidential directive, 1983) • Misamis Occidental (Ministry Order No. 4, 1986) • Bukidnon (DENR Moratorium Order, 1990) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National logging ban except in 9 areas • Endorsed by local officials & sectors
11 – C Mindanao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davao del Sur (Presidential directive, 1983) • South Cotabato (MNR Order No. 3, 1986) • Saranggani (DENR Moratorium Order No. 25, 1994) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National logging ban except in 9 areas • Vulnerability to flashfloods & calamities due to excessive logging
12 – S Mindanao	Surigao del Norte (Presidential directive, 1983)	National logging ban except in 9 areas
ARMM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sulu, Tawi-tawi (Presidential directive, 1983) • Lanao del Sur (Memorandum Order No. 30, 1992) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National logging ban except in 9 areas • Protect Lake Lanao watershed

Although the logging ban policies stem from the goal of preserving and protecting the remaining natural forests, the objectives stated in the policy issuances are: to curtail nefarious activities, foremost of which are illegal logging and timber poaching; prevention of floods, landslides, excessive soil erosion and surface run-off; promotion of the appreciation and conservation of natural forests; the need to reassess and evaluate forest resources and rates of forest destruction; and national security (Bugayong and Peralta 2006). It is obvious however, that the root of the violations is ineffective law enforcement. The study did not see any objective that pertains to the rehabilitation of denuded areas or the establishment and development of production forests and plantations to address the loss of wood supply resulting from the ban on harvesting.

The mechanics of implementing the logging ban and moratorium issuances are grouped into three: assessment, planning and implementation; regulatory procedures; and forest law enforcement. At least five issuances mentioned the need to undertake a study, assessment or evaluation of the existing resources, situation and forest management policies as basis for longer-term policy decisions (given the temporary nature of moratorium orders). Other issuances require the inventory or logging and sawmilling equipment as well as illegally cut or undocumented logs and lumber (Bugayong and Peralta 2006)..

Under forestry regulatory procedures, some issuances explicitly ordered the suspension of acceptance and processing of applications (both new and renewal) for permits and licenses; ensuring strict compliance of permittees/licensees with forestry laws, rules, and regulations; notification of the concerned licensees/permittees regarding the Orders; and for the implementing offices to submit compliance reports. Some of the issuances have general statements requiring the implementing office to prepare, submit to the higher authorities, and implement specific guidelines on how to undertake the field activities (Bugayong and Peralta 2006).

Most of the activities listed in many of the issuances relate to forest law enforcement. Foremost of said activities is the immediate suspension or prohibition of logging operations and cutting of

trees in the areas covered by the moratorium or ban. Another is the prohibition of occupancy or resource use in the concerned areas. Other activities include the investigation or verification of non-compliance with forestry laws, rules and regulations; cancellation of permits and licenses; confiscation of illegally cut timber and logging equipment; and padlocking of sawmills (Bugayong and Peralta 2006).

In terms of institutional and financial support for the enforcement of logging ban, it is implicit in the policy issuances that the DENR fulfills its mandate as primary enforcer of the logging moratorium and ban using its regular budget, personnel and other resources. In some instances though, the DENR has coordinated with the police or military and local government units for their cooperation in enforcing the ban within their local jurisdictions (Bugayong and Peralta 2006).

Effects of the Logging Ban

With the existing national logging ban (except in Regions 9,11 and CARAGA) imposed in 2004, the forest industry, forest-dependent communities, and the buying public have felt the immediate impacts of reduced domestic wood supply, increased prices, and loss of jobs and incomes. Following are the statistics forwarded by the wood-based industries.

- 1) Loss of jobs. About two million displaced workers in wood producing and furniture industries are drastically affected by the logging ban. Of this, 500,000 are direct workers, 300,000 are indirect workers, while over one million are involved in the subcontracting network (Chamber of Furniture Industries, 2004). There are not enough alternative opportunities that could absorb the displaced workers. Some 10,000 establishments are affected by the logging ban, with 2,500 from the furniture export industry. The export of high value-added finished wood products is another major industry.
- 2) Increased forest-dependence of displaced workers and nearby communities. Loss of jobs and related livelihood are proven push factors for displaced workers and nearby communities to extract forest resources for survival. Some 20 million people already occupy forestlands and this could be increased with the logging ban.
- 3) Critical state of the forest industry. The annual log requirement for wood, both for local demand and export commitments, is estimated to be 2.5 million cubic meters. The Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) reports that only 25 percent of this is produced by local wood processing corporations while 40 percent is supplied from illegal logging sources, and the rest is imported. With the logging ban, the corporate processors' contribution is decreased while illegal logging sources and importation are filling the gap.
- 4) Increased wood importation and prices. Even before the 2004 national logging ban, the Philippines has been a net importer of wood materials. The loss of domestic wood supply increases the amount of imported log requirements estimated at PhP21 billion. Prices of wood have increased by 40 percent due to limited supply and expensive imported materials.
- 5) Loss of government revenues. Forest charges levied on logs legally cut from natural forests amount to one billion pesos annually. Loss of annual government revenues from taxes amount to PhP840 million while government income from export sales is pegged at Php2.7 million per month.
- 6) Inadequate protection of remaining forests. Loss of tenure over areas with remaining forest cover removes the forest protection given by the tenure holders, leaving them with open access and vulnerable to illegal harvesting activities. Government track record in

taking over the protection of untenured forest lands has been slow due to limited resources and support.

Effectiveness of the Logging Ban Policies

Effectiveness is often described as “getting things done”, with no emphasis on how it is achieved or the cost involved (efficiency). In the Philippines, logging ban is implemented at different levels. At the national level, directives are issued from the Central office to the field offices to enforce the bans using existing resources and eliciting support from other government agencies, local government units, military or police, non-government organizations, or other sectors. There are also local initiatives at the provincial and municipal levels.

A cursory review of its existing resources and budget for forest protection and reforestation shows that the DENR has a measly budget for undertaking the Herculean task of enforcing logging ban in over 60 provinces. The annual budget for forest protection is PhP37.4 million. The DENR employs a total of 4,000 forest guards, receiving average monthly salaries of PhP6,000-7,000, to protect over 15 million ha forestlands. The ratio of forest guards to area protected is 1:2,500-4,000 ha while the ideal ratio is only 1:500-2,000 ha depending on terrain. Meanwhile for reforestation, about PhP60 million is allotted per year or just PhP7.50 per hectare (Paje 2005).

Although not a direct result of the logging ban issuances, reforestation and plantation development programs are inherent components of the DENR's management program for the country's forest resources. Forest destruction was averaging 300,000 ha annually during the heyday of commercial logging operations (1960s) coupled with conversion of forests into upland agricultural farms by landless farmers. With annual deforestation pegged at 100,000 ha in the late 1990s to early 2000s, reforestation lagged behind by only 20-30 percent annually. The foreign-funded contract reforestation program, implemented during the period 1988-1992, increased the target area to 165,000 ha, of which 65,000 and 95,000 ha were to be reforested by the DENR and private sector, respectively. Evaluation of the program revealed that actual area reforested through contracts was way below the target.

More recently, reports show that total area planted through regular government reforestation projects is 357,633 ha or just about 50 percent of the target area, as of 2001. Annual reforestation by the private sector including the timber licensees and holders of management agreements (i.e., IFMA, SIFMA, ITP, etc.) is in the area of 1,034 ha in 2003 while the biggest area planted was 18,729 ha in 1994 and the lowest was 172 ha in 1993 (Philippine Forestry Statistics 2003).

Plantation development in both public forestlands and private lands has been encouraged by government through tax exemptions and other economic incentives to address the demand for wood that can no longer be supplied from the natural forests alone. Carandang et al. (1999) reported that the country has about 168,100 ha of forest plantations, 24 percent of which is found in private lands totaling 40,500 ha in 1998.

Hence, assessing the government's efforts at enforcing the logging bans at the national level leaves a lot to be desired. However, localized efforts at protecting the forests and reforesting the denuded areas are being initiated in some provinces.

Localized Forest Protection and Reforestation Initiatives

The following initiatives did not directly stem from the logging ban imposition. However, they are working models for addressing the need to protect the remaining forest resources and the need to establish forest plantations or forest cover in degraded and denuded lands both for future wood supply and ecological purposes. These localized initiatives can complement and contribute to the effective national implementation and enforcement of logging ban.

1) Multi-sectoral Forest Protection Committee Program

The Multi-sectoral Forest Protection Committee (MFPC) Program was initiated in 1992 under the monitoring and enforcement component of the World Bank-funded Environment and Natural Resources Sectoral Adjustment Loan Program (ENR-SECAL). In 1998, some 299 MFPCs were established in four levels: national, regional, provincial, and municipal, with the aim of bringing “forest protection to the grassroots by involving the various sectors of the community” (Oliva 1999).

Under the ENR-SECAL, MFPCs had the following functions: “a) serve as a collection point for information on illegal forestry activities by tapping the independent networks to which its members belong; b) regularly receive and discuss reports from DENR, specific to routine and special monitoring, apprehension and prosecutorial activities; c) advise DENR and other relevant parties on these activities; d) publicize the committee’s discussions and findings except when treated as confidential; e) directly oversee the public awareness and alternative livelihood programs; and f) mobilize members’ networks in support of forest protection activities”.

Lessons learned from the MFPCs demonstrate its effectiveness “in creating public awareness and vigilance for forest protection; public vigilance serves as deterrent to forest crimes; community-based people’s organizations are effective in forest protection at ground level; and assured tenure for people’s organizations is a significant element in mobilizing grassroots action” (Acosta 2004). Furthermore, Oliva (1999) argues that “local government units, people’s organizations and other sectors of the community will be actively involved in forest management if they are given responsibility and stake in the sustainable development of the forest resources; [and] that policy making, information and education campaigns, forest protection and community based forestry [are] enhanced if there is an institutional mechanism where the various sectors of society [can] meet and address these problems”.

Local experiences with MFPCs in combating illegal logging activities provide strong justification for localizing forest protection activities as a necessary condition for effective implementation of logging ban. The MFPC in Samar island demonstrated this and have since elevated their forest protection initiatives by having the island proclaimed as a protected area as part of institutionalizing forest protection at the local level and imposing a logging ban in the island.

2) Protected Area Management Boards

Under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (Republic Act 7586), protected areas refer “to identified portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation”. Protected areas are proclaimed as such by the President or by Congress. However, the local government units can also proclaim protected

areas within their domain through local ordinances. One such example is the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park which was proclaimed by local ordinance and later on by a Republic Act after strong representation and lobbying in Congress (Malapukaw and Mirasol 2004).

Section 11 of RA 7586 provides for the creation of a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) for each of the established protected areas. The PAMB is a local multi-sectoral body chaired by the DENR (regional office) with representatives from the local government units, non-governmental (NGO) or civic organizations, people's organizations, indigenous peoples through their Council of Elders, and national government agencies. Protected Area funds are established with funds coming from general appropriations if proclaimed by Congress, or from income derived from the use of resources within the protected area.

Even if the PAMB is primarily mandated to oversee established protected areas, some localities have included the areas under logging ban, particularly the old growth or virgin forests within their territory. For instance, the Samar Island Natural Park was recently proclaimed as a protected area in 2006 after local advocates lobbied with their Congressmen to sponsor the bill. Samar Island has been under logging moratorium since 1989 after strong rains and typhoons wrought environmental damages and loss of lives in the area. Local leaders and civic organizations have since advocated for preservation of the remaining forest and biodiversity resources of the province and moved for a total logging and mining ban in the island. As a protected area, the island of Samar will be off limits to commercial logging activities in natural forests. This is a local initiative that is worth emulating by other local government units for effective logging ban enforcement.

Incidentally, two Bills on Local Logging Ban in the provinces of Southern Leyte and Negros Occidental, respectively, are being discussed in the House of Senate. These Bills seek to institutionalize logging ban in the two localities to give teeth to its implementation particularly in devolving functions to the concerned local government units. The PAMB in Negros Occidental is supportive of the logging ban Bill in their area. Both provinces are under logging ban, Southern Leyte since 1982 and Negros Occidental since 1984, and both are likewise covered in the 2004 national logging ban.

3) Tree-for-Legacy Program

The Tree-for-Legacy program was initiated in the province of Nueva Vizcaya (Northeastern Luzon) by the DENR and the provincial government and was later formalized through a memorandum of agreement signed in 2004 for the reforestation of a 24,000-ha area of the Lower Magat Reforestation Project. In this program, persons or groups are given access to denuded forest lands and are granted the privilege to plant trees in said areas. Two types of privileges are granted – the certificate of tree ownership and certificate of usufruct. The former gives the tree planter/owner the privilege to cut the tree while the latter grants the privilege to harvest the fruit of the trees planted. The Certificates can be transferred through sale, mortgage, succession, or donation (Oposa 2003).

The mountainous province of Nueva Vizcaya, with 70 percent of its area classified as forestland, is an acknowledged hotspot for illegal logging activities mainly due to the wood-based furniture industry that the region is well-known for. The province has been placed under logging ban and moratorium in 1982, 1986, and 1990 by the DENR because of forestry violations by logging companies, particularly excessive logging, and rampant timber poaching by individuals backed by investors needing the wood for furniture manufacturing and lumber processing. Local officials

and leaders of various interest groups have continually lobbied for the ban on logging in the province to avert environmental disasters and to preserve the remaining forest cover of the province. The province is presently covered by the 2004 national logging ban.

The Tree-for-Legacy program is a local initiative that actually devolves the function of managing the forest resources from the DENR to the local government. The Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160) mandates local government units to “share with the national government the responsibility (for) the management and maintenance of ecological balance within their territorial jurisdiction” [Sec. 3, (i)]. Local officials also have specific environmental powers and duties such as “[adopting] adequate measures to safeguard and conserve land, marine and forest resources of the province” (Sec. 465, Article 1, Powers of the Provincial Governor). These functions coupled with strong support and active participation of the citizenry has spurred the reforestation success of the Tree-for-Legacy program even while the logging ban is in place. Efforts are being done to expand the program while extensive information dissemination is being undertaken to encourage other provinces to implement their own Tree-for-Legacy program. A few provinces have already started the ball rolling.

Summary: Conditions for Effective Logging Ban

An analysis of the content, process and legality of the logging ban issuances highlights the reactive nature of the policies to threats of further environmental degradation through ineffective policies and law enforcement. Logging ban is only one of many tools to address the environmental and forestry crisis that the country is faced with. Following are some recommendations that will render the logging ban policies and other strategies effective in addressing forestry problems.

- 1) Thorough analysis of the problem.** Firstly, logging ban is not and should never be a politically motivated solution to environmental and socioeconomic problems. It is however, a time-bound tool to allow a critically denuded natural forest area to regenerate for a given period until the trees are mature and ready for harvesting based on sustainable forestry principles. Secondly, logging ban should not be a sweeping policy on a nationwide scale as some argue that natural forest species are easier to monitor and declare as illegally cut under a national ban. This argument is a cop out for ineffective policy implementation. Thirdly, logging ban does not guarantee the protection of remaining forest cover since other technical, institutional, and socioeconomic conditions prevail. Thus, priority should be given to analyzing the problem before coming up with solutions such as a logging ban. Forestry, particularly logging, is an economic activity which impacts a lot of people so that the consequences of logging ban should be carefully studied before it is implemented.
- 2) Explicitly defined policy goals and objectives and how to achieve them.** For logging ban to be effective, policy makers need to explicitly define its goals and objectives and to clearly outline the mechanics of implementation including the roles of various agencies and stakeholders. Multi-sectoral consultations provide a venue for various stakeholders to participate in the process. Alternative sources of wood such as plantations or wood importation should be identified to fill in the supply gap created by banning harvesting in natural forests. Also, there should be a comparison of expected costs and benefits of issuing a logging ban. This will help ensure that the policy will lead us to the desired objective, that the costs and benefits are within acceptable level, and that resources required for an effective implementation are affordable and available.

- 3) **Comprehensive land use planning.** The context of logging ban should be the whole forest unit and the multiple functions, goods, and services that it provides to the public. Thus, it is necessary to first determine the various land uses and available resources in a given forest land area. Forest land use plans could show how multiple uses of the forest can be managed sustainably to achieve the desired goals and objectives. This is more effective at the local level where multi-sectoral representatives of various stakeholders are given opportunity to participate in the planning process, claim ownership of the plan, and actively ensure its implementation through their sectoral member's networks. Logging ban would be more effective at this level if the locals are aware of its goals and are supportive of its enforcement. It is also possible that logging ban is not the answer or just a temporary solution to our current environmental problems.
- 4) **Provision of the necessary wherewithal for an effective implementation.** This means that adequate financial, technical, and institutional support should be provided. Unless this is considered and provided adequately, this policy will just remain on paper or can never be implemented effectively.
- 5) **Address poverty issues in forest land areas.** The most directly affected sectors are the forest-dependent upland communities, displaced workers in logging and related industries, and nearby communities of areas under logging ban. Policy makers have to address the need for alternative non-forest-based livelihood for these people because poverty and lack of economic opportunity pushes them to the forests for subsistence. It is only when their basic needs are met can they become partners in protecting the forests in their midst.
- 6) **Intensified information, education and communication.** The level of knowledge, awareness, and consciousness of a people would define how they react to stimuli. In many places, logging ban has been ineffective simply because the local populace is not aware of the policy and how it impacts their lives and the environment around them. In areas where logging ban is successful, the key factor is informing the public on its purposes and how they can contribute to its enforcement specifically by being vigilant to forest crimes and doing something about it.
- 7) **Local participation in forest protection, law enforcement, and reforestation.** Experiences in local forest protection councils, protected area management boards, and Tree-for-Legacy reforestation demonstrate that multi-sectoral participation is a significant key to success in forestry endeavors. Devolving national functions and responsibilities of national government agencies to local government units has shown promising reforms in policy making and implementation at the local levels. Decentralized decision making at the local government units enables them to adapt policies to local conditions since they are physically nearer to the constituents served. Of course, there are still hitches in the devolution process since it is relatively new and the LGUs still have to get the hang of it. But there are potentials for successful forest protection, law enforcement, and reforestation at the local levels particularly with multi-sectoral participation.
- 8) **Strict monitoring and feedback system.** One of the major pitfalls of logging ban enforcement in the past is the lax enforcement and monitoring for a lot of reasons, e.g., graft and corruption, limited resources, lack of political and institutional support, etc. These could be addressed by systematically reviewing the existing monitoring and evaluation system of government and coming up with a more effective and efficient system. Baseline information needs to be established to complement an improved monitoring system and upgraded resources and technology. This is an area that government needs to invest on if it is really

serious in its mandate to protect the State-owned forests. Partnerships with the private and non-government sectors could reduce government costs in upgrading its resources and technology.

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