

January 19, 1994

DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER)
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SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING THE CAVE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION PROGRAM (CMCP) AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREOF.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 192 and Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as the NIPAS Act of 1992, and in line with the Department's mandate to conserve, manage, develop, and properly use the country's environment and natural resources, a Cave Management and Conservation Program (CMCP) is hereby established.

SECTION 1: Rationale

Caves are part of our natural heritage. They possess outstanding historical, educational, cultural, scientific and aesthetic values. They are part of our ecosystem and habitat of unique and diverse flora and fauna. Caves and their resources when properly conserved and sustainably managed can aid in the social, cultural and economic upliftment of our country and can provide livelihood opportunities and benefits to the Filipino people.

SECTION 2: Basic Policy

It is the policy of the State to ensure the sustainable use, development, management, renewal and conservation of the country's forest, mineral land, off-shore areas and other natural resources, including the protection and enhancement of the quality of the environment and equitable access of the different segments of the population to the development and use of the country's natural resources not only for the present generation but for future generations as well.

It is the policy of the Department to exert maximum effort to implement the spirit and letter of the Constitution and of other laws defining its mandate, along with the objectives, provisions and principles of the Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development (PSSD) and of the actions or agreements adopted by the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) in pursuing the

objectives of Agenda 21 of the United Nations Council for Environment and Development (UNCED) and of such other international protocols and treaties to which the Philippines has committed to abide. The Department shall ensure the sustainable use, protection, development, management and conservation as well as ensure the equitable access of the different segments of the society to the benefits offered by caves and cave resources. It shall also promote the widest participation of the different sectors of the society in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Cave Management and Conservation Program.

SECTION 3: Definition of Terms:

As used in this Order, the following terms shall be taken to mean as follows:

(a) **Caves** - any naturally occurring void, cavity, recess or system of interconnected passages which are found beneath the surface of the earth or within a cliff or ledge which is large enough to permit an individual to enter, whether or not the entrance is naturally found or man-made. Such term shall include any natural pit, sinkhole, or other feature which is an extension of the entrance.

(b) **Cave Resources** - include any material or substance occurring naturally in caves, such as animal life, plant life, palentological deposits, sediments, minerals, speleogens and speleothems.

(c) **Department** - the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

(d) **Speleogen** - relief features on the walls, ceiling, and floor of any cave or lava tube which are part of the surrounding bedrock, including but not limited to anastomoses, scallops, meander niches, petromorphs and rock pendants in solution caves and similar features unique to volcanic caves.

(e) **Speleothem** - any natural mineral formation or deposit occurring in a cave or lava tube, including but not limited to any stalactite, stalagmite, helictite, cave flower, flowstone, concretion, drapery, rimstone or formation of clay or mud.

(f) **Secretary** - the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources.

SECTION 4: Scope and Objectives:

The Cave Management and Conservation Program (CMCP) shall include and cover all present programs, projects, initiatives of the Department related to an involving the cave ecosystem.

This will also include those present programs which the Department is undertaking jointly with or in support of other government units and agencies, people and non-government organizations and international entities or instrumentalities. This program will also encompass all ecological support systems contributing to the living organisms in caves and sustainable development of its resources.

The CMCP shall have the following objectives:

1. Develop and implement a human resource development program for cave conservation and management.
2. Develop and implement a research and development program on the different components of the cave ecosystem.
3. Formulate and implement policies to supports the management and conservation of caves and cave resources.
4. Formulate and implement plans and programs which will promote wise use of an equitable access to caves and cave resources.
5. Promote participation of the different sectors of the society in the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programs of the Cave Management and Conservation Program (CMCP).
6. Develop and implement an information, education and communication campaign for cave conservation and management.
7. Use community organizing as a strategy to ensure people's participation in the planning and implementation of the CMCP.
8. Facilitate the development and implementation of management plans for individual caves which are identified for proclamation as part of

the national heritage on the basis of their cultural, scientific, aesthetic and archaeological value.

SECTION 5. Program Components.

The different components of the Cave Management and Conservation Program shall be as follows:

1. **Rapid Cave Resource Assessment.** This component shall include the inventory, classification and documentation in general terms of the biologic, geologic, hydrologic, paleontologic, archaeological and historic resources associated with individual caves. This will also involve pinpointing the exact location of caves and mapping of the caves.
2. **Biodiversity Assessment.** This will involve the inventory of flora and fauna and collection/documentation of ecological data on them.
3. **Assessment of Geological, Paleontological, and Speleological Resources.** This will involve inventory and documentation of the structure, composition, features and extent of geological, paleontological and speleological resources within caves.
4. **Cultural and Archaeological Resources.** This will include an inventory and assessment of cultural and archaeological resources within the caves. This activity should only be conducted with proper authorization from the Philippine National Museum.
5. **Management of Resource Utilization.** This component will involve consumptive uses of caves and/or cave resources. Assessment and implementation of activities for consumptive use or mineral extraction should be in accordance with the established policies, rules and regulations.
6. **Visitor Management.** This will involve activities related to visitor impact, access control, cave interpretation, visitor safety, socio-economics and other aspects of ecotourism associated with caves.
7. **Information, Education and Communication Campaign.** This component shall deal with the production and dissemination of print,

broadcast and audio-visual materials on cave management and conservation.

8. **Human Resources Development.** The development and implementation of training modules to support proper cave management and conservation.
9. **Research Component.** This will focus on a multi-sectoral approach to the development of proposals and the implementation of research activities in support of management or policy formulation.

SECTION 6. Program Management.

A National Cave Management and Conservation Committee (NCMCC) shall be created and shall be tasked to formulate policies/plans and programs for the Cave Management and Conservation Program. It shall also act as an advisory body to the Secretary on matters relating to the CMCP.

Members of the Committee shall come from the different units of the Department as well as from other organizations which may be willing to be represented in the CMCP. The Secretary shall designate the Program Coordinator and members of the Committee.

The following units of the Department shall be represented in the National Cave Management and Conservation Committee:

Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau
Mines and GeoSciences Bureau
Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau
Office of the Undersecretary for Environment and Research
Office of the Undersecretary for Field Operations
Office of the Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Management
Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Office
Human Resource Development Service

The following agencies shall be invited to send representatives to the Committee:

Department of Education, Culture and Sports
Department of Interior and Local Government

Department of Tourism
Philippine Information Agency
Philippine Tourism Authority
Philippine National Museum
Presidential Management Staff
University of the Philippines
National Institute of Geological Science
Non-Government Organizations
People's Organizations
Academic Institutions (Colleges and Universities)

A Regional Cave Management and Conservation Committee (RCMCC) shall be created in each of the Department's regional offices. It shall be tasked to assist the National Cave Management and Conservation Committee in the formulation of policies, plans and programs of the CMCP. Each RCMCC shall be responsible for the allocation of tasks to the participating sectors as well as the PENROs and CENROs of the regional office concerned.

The Regional Executive Director may designate the members of the RCMCC which shall be composed of the following:

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| Regional Coordinator | - | RTD for Environment and Protected Areas |
| Members | - | RTD for Mines and Geosciences |
| | - | RTD for Research |
| | - | Regional Public Affairs Office
(one representative) |
| | - | Representative from the regional office of the Philippine Tourism Authority |
| | - | Representative from the regional office of the Department of Tourism |
| | - | Representative from the Local government Unit |
| | - | Regional Philippine National Police Command |
| | - | Representative from locally-based non-government organization |

Membership of the National and Regional Cave Management and Conservation Committees may be expanded to include other interested parties who have valid concerns for cave management and conservation.

The Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau shall serve as the Secretariat for the National Cave Management and Conservation Committee while the Protected Areas and Wildlife Division shall serve as the Secretariat for the Regional Cave Management and Conservation Committee.

SECTION 7. Funding.

The funds to implement this Order shall come from appropriate or designated items in the Annual General Appropriations of the Department and from such other sources both local and foreign, as programmed or obtained for the national development and conservation efforts of the Department.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause.

All orders, circulars, official instructions or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Order are hereby repealed and amended accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

(SGD.) ANGEL C. ALCALA
Secretary