

NEWS RELEASE

DENR-EMB implements new DAO providing guidelines for public participation for proposed river restoration project through dredging activities

The DENR Administrative Order 2022-02 was recently signed by Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu. It provides guidelines on public participation for project covered under the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System. It was issued in response to the urgency of river restoration projects under DAO 2019-13, 2019-14, 2020-01, 2020-07, as amended by 2020-15 and 2020-12.

The main objective of the DAO 2022-02 is to serve as guideline for the identification of the public participation procedures for the individual Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study required to be undertaken by contractors pursuant to Part V, Section 3 of DAO 2019-13 and Part IV, Section 3 of DAO 2019-14, 2020-01, 2020-07 and 2020-12.

According to EMB Director, William P. Cuñado, the said order indicates the requirements and procedures of public participation for DENR river restoration through dredging projects.

In the first stage of DAO 2022-02, which is the Review and Evaluation, it identifies public participation activities for proposed dredging project by public scoping and public consultation.

In public scoping, the proponent is required to gather issues and concerns that can be integrated with the EIA through any of or a combination of the following; 1) Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with key stakeholders; and/or 2) Interview with key stakeholders. The proponent shall submit results of the FGD and/or interview with stakeholders that should include a list of issues and concerns and attendance of stakeholders to EMB concerned prior to the conduct technical scoping.

Then in public consultation, the proponent after the first deliberation of the Environmental Impact Statement document informs the public of the results of the EIA study. It shall be conducted through a meeting or series of meetings with key stakeholders to be participated in among others by those who were duly notified/invited and/or present during the previously conducted public scoping activities. Written invitations from the proponent shall be send to key stakeholders seven (7) days prior to the scheduled consultation. Within the same period, the proponent shall provide the EMB RO a Notice of Public Consultation for posting at the concerned EMB RO website for at least seven (7) days prior to consultation. The public consultation shall be facilitated by the representatives from the EMB Regional Office or DENR Field Office, or LGU concerned.

“We conduct public consultations via online platform such as Zoom, MS Teams, Google Meet and Cisco WebEx. We post the announcements on our official website and Facebook page to inform more people and increase public participation,” Cuñado said.

For the second stage which is the Monitoring Stage, the Inter-Agency Committee shall have an option to establish a Multi-Partite Monitoring Team (MMT). The IAC shall identify the members of MMT as well as its monitoring activities to be undertaken during the dredging operation. The MMT shall prepare a monitoring report for endorsement of IAC to EMB Regional Office concerned for record of the project compliance as well as for validation of the MMT findings/observations.

The proponent shall provide funds for the monitoring activities of the MMT, the amount of which shall be based on the annual work and financial plan to be prepared by the MMT in consultation with the EMB Regional Office concerned.

To learn more about the DAO 2022-22 you may visit emb.gov.ph. ###

