

# DENR, Filminera, Phil. Gold, and LGU sign Aroroy Integrated Area Dev't Plan MOA

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INTEGRATED AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR AROROY, MASBATE – Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Masbate LGUs signed on March 27, 2017 the DENR’s first Integrated area development plan MOA with Filminera Resources Corp. and Philippine Gold Processing and Refining Corp. for Aroroy, Masbate. Signing the accord were (from left to right): Filminera Director Ms. Gloria Tan Climaco; Phil. Gold Chair Johan Raadsma; DENR Usec for Field Operations Philip G. Camara; Aroroy Mayor Arturo Virtucio; and Aroroy Vice Mayor Eric Castillo.

Representatives of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Filminera Resources Corporation (Filminera), Phillippine Gold Processing & Refining Corp. (PGPRC) and the local government unit (LGU) of Aroroy on March 27 signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the implementation of an Integrated Area Development Plan (IADP) for the Municipality of Aroroy in Masbate Province at the DENR Central Office.

The IADP is the first accord under DENR DAO 2017-02, released by Environmental Secretary Regina Paz Lopez, and calls for the formulation and implementation of a six-year Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD) Action Plan by the government, civil society and the private sector. Sec. Lopez has defined SIAD as “an approach, a strategy and a guiding philosophy that weaves environmental considerations with social justice and human development” and is aimed at applying area-based interventions and concepts on natural resources development programs.

“This is what the secretary wants,” said DENR Undersecretary Philip Camara, one of the signatories to the MOA signed at the DENR head office, “she wants to show that the DENR can work with the mining companies for the sake of the environment.”

The DENR recognizes that Filminera and PGPRC are bound by law to use the SDMP funds in the eight barangays that were identified as part of their impact area. This MOA will bring in the DENR to implement programs that will include all other barangays of Aroroy that are not within the impact area of the minesite.

Filminera and PGPRC operate the Masbate Gold Project (MGP) located in Aroroy, Masbate. MGP is the largest single investment in the Province of Masbate and the largest producing gold mine in the Philippines. PGPRC is the holder of a mineral processing permit and owns and operates the processing plant

in the Masbate Gold Project. Filminera is the holder of the Environmental Compliance Certificate, the mining tenements, surface rights and the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA).

The IADP will be aligned with all relevant DENR programs like the National Greening Program, Biodiversity Program, Biochar Program for Agricultural and other Wastes, Coastal Research and Management, Clean Water and Air Programs, and Solid Waste Management Program.

Aside from third party experts, the Parties will coordinate and collaborate with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Science and Technology and experts from universities, and agencies of the DENR, such as the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and Environmental Management Bureau.

The local government units of Aroroy have expressed enthusiasm for the project. “We are looking forward to this project since this is for the development of Aroroy. We would like to see harmonious relationships forged through this agreement,” says Aroroy Mayor Arturo Virtucio.

Both the mayor and the vice mayor of Aroroy say they see this project as a vehicle to develop Aroroy into a model municipality that hosts a minesite while operating in a green economy. Aroroy became a first class municipality from fourth class status because of its considerable share in the Internal Revenue Allotment because of the operations of Filminera and PGPRC.

“This is for the people of Aroroy. It will be a vehicle where we can be able to empower them while upholding responsible mining,” says Aroroy Vice Mayor Eric Castillo.

The Aroroy MOA brings together the LGU, DENR, FRC, and PGPRC into a partnership to develop and run an IADP for Aroroy where a multi-sectoral group will be consulted to ensure the participation of all stakeholders and other local government units. The process will include: Gathering baseline data on the socio-economic cost of industries within Aroroy; conducting a multi-sectoral consultative workshop to plan the development of the municipality; formulating an investment priority program to identify priority projects and match these with potential investors; creating social enterprises that will sustain the economy of the municipality during mining and milling operations, and post mining or closure plans; showcasing successful projects in the municipality as a model for other host mining communities; and incorporating development models and best practices from other mining communities.

<http://business.mb.com.ph/2017/03/30/denr-filminera-phil-gold-and-lgu-sign-aroroy-integrated-area-devt-plan-moa/>