

Occidental Mindoro bamboo growers seek IP rights over unique products and designs

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4 MINUTE READ



Beautiful Filipino engineered bamboo for finishing, flooring or walling.

A bamboo community in Occidental Mindoro has filed with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for intellectual property (IP) rights over their distinct bamboo crafts that have raised their income opportunities.

The filing is expected to protect the business interest of the Ansiray Tree Planters Development Association Inc. (ATPDAI) as they developed their own products and designs.



Ansiray community developed its own designs for bamboo crafts.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) implemented the “Handicraft Industry for Sustainable Community Development and Environmental Protection” in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

As the DENR project helped maximize their production of bamboo, ATPDAI was able to produce 31 types of bamboo products.

These are four types of lampshades, two types of wine holders, two types of centerpiece table, placemats, hamper, mobile speaker, tower racks, curtains, pitcher, cup, necklace, earrings, bracelet, key chains, ballpen holder, and tray.

There are also two types of baskets, accessory organizer, Chinese design bamboo sala set, bilao, television rack, modern crib, modern style sala set, and mugs and pitcher.

The government is promoting the use of bamboo as a substitute to wood as it is as durable as any wood, and it contributes to deforestation.

The Ilin Island in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro has abundant natural stands of bamboo. Ansiray, one of the island's barangays, has been known for its bamboo furniture-making community.

More than 30 households possess furniture-making skills. Eighteen households, on the other hand, are engaged in bamboo tree production.

The DENR initiative, with a project cost of P868,000, included capacity building, enterprise development and marketing, operations management, and project management.

The project generated a product trademark and label that qualify for IPR and a business plan for the bamboo enterprise operations.

The local government unit (LGU) of San Jose provided an area in San Jose población to be used by ATPDAI as display area to showcase their bamboo products.

The San Jose LGU has also been planning to establish a bamboo eco-park in Ilin Island. It has been committing to engage in a project on diversification of the use of bamboo.

Another collaborator, the Divine Word College of San Jose-Occidental Mindoro, is extending training for the community's financial and technical literacy.

DENR's attached agency, Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB), is training the Ilin islanders on bamboo propagation and best practices in bamboo farming.

Bamboo has huge benefits to the environment—one major function is fighting soil erosion, along with carbon sequestration.

Bamboo can be used for posts, roofs, walls, floors, beams, trusses and fences. It is also a raw material for mats, baskets, tools, handles, hats, toys, musical instruments and furniture. Bamboo shoots are considered a delicacy in some communities.

Most bamboo species are fast growing. But its use has not been increasing in the same pace.

Lack of investment, weak institutional framework, and limited skilled people in the bamboo craft are among the reasons blamed for the slow growth of the bamboo industry.

The absence of reliable raw material source also discourages investments in bamboo processing.

Barangay Ansiray has a total of 224 households with an average of eight members per household with a usual income per capita of P3,000 per month. With the DENR project, the households have been observed to have raised their income.

Almost 60 percent to 70 percent of Barangay Ansiray's agricultural area is planted with bamboo.

DENR is promoting sustainable kind of forest management in Occidental Mindoro as the forests are heavily threatened with illegal human activities such as charcoal making and kaingin. These result in degradation of soil and forest destruction.

ATPDAI has a tenure over 382.15 hectares of forestland under DENR's Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA). They have 152 hectares of bamboo plantation that are now under the management of the National Greening Program.

DENR's city environment and natural resources office (CENRO) in San Jose has conceived the bamboo project as the community's income from beds and sala set, their traditional products, is not enough to sustain their livelihood.

DENR is asking assistance from other government agencies in maximizing business opportunities of ATPDAI. Department of Science and Technology (DOST) can lend assistance in machineries and product design.

Bamboo is a very versatile construction material that some experts have developed "engineered, laminated bamboo." It is beautiful design of wood finishing for flooring and walling that can command a high price in the market.

Infrastructure should also be improved in Ansiray as their production area is in an island. As such, they need a boat for the efficient transportation of their products.

Image courtesy of DOST

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/08/21/occidental-mindoro-bamboo-growers-seek-ip-rights-over-unique-products-and-designs/?fbclid=IwAR0P3cAmAM6QYODY7IH3IMMVXCm_XnvvEyVvKDhgZxWEYX4I9lozfJrdNzA