

Republika ng Pilipinas  
PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN NG PATUBIG  
(National Irrigation Administration)  
Lungsod ng Quezon

MC No. 50 s, 2004

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**

TO : THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, ASST. ADMINISTRATORS,  
DEPARTMENT/REGIONAL/ OPERATIONS/PROJECT  
MANAGERS, PROVINCIAL IRRIGATION ENGINEERS,  
IRRIGATION SUPERINTENDENTS, DIVISION MANAGERS  
AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : **ESTABLISHING THE BASIC POLICY STATEMENT AND  
PRINCIPLES FOR UPLAND AGRICULTURE  
DEVELOPMENT**

Quoted hereunder in full for your information and guidance the Memorandum Circular issued by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture dated October 19, 2004.

"Republic of the Philippines  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City  
(02) 9288741-65 loc. 2408, 2409 & 2410

19 October 2004

Memorandum Circular  
No. 09  
Series 2004

Re: **ESTABLISHING THE BASIC POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES FOR  
UPLAND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.**

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This Memorandum Circular lays down the general statement of policy for the establishment and development of upland agriculture as one of the DA's major programs, and shall serve as guiding principles for current DA initiatives and interventions being implemented in the uplands. The formulation of this guidelines is consistent with Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-Point Legacy Agenda, particularly in facilitating the development of 1 to 2 million hectares of land for agri-business purposes and its capacity to support the generation of 6 to 10 million jobs in the countryside.

**I. The Concept and Vision for Upland Agriculture**

**A. Scope and Definition**

The uplands are fragile, but has vast productive landscapes within the watershed. Crop and livestock productivity and even freshwater fisheries in the upland environment are generally dependent on the effective and efficient harvesting, storage, management and utilization of rainwater resources. The upland ecosystem includes all rain dependent farm areas with various slope levels and land elevations except in declared protected and environment sensitive areas by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The uplands are located in land elevations generally not served by either national or communal irrigation systems.

## B. Development Principles and Potentials

In recognition of its economic potentials and in support of the preservation of agrobiodiversity, upland agriculture shall provide opportunities for balancing development and environment.

The landscapes of uplands while environmentally sensitive can be managed in a sustainable manner that can support a wide range of agricultural activities and rural development initiatives.

The uplands are the ultimate expansion areas for future sustainable and modern agricultural development and would require special and location specific technologies and production systems. The highlands, for instance is an outstanding upland area which has high potential for the development of high value semi-temperate crops, herbs and ornamentals, livestock and even freshwater fisheries.

The Department of Agriculture affirms the principle of sustainable agriculture development, in designing its program on upland agriculture. This principle as stated in RA 8435 or the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act reads: *"The State shall promote development that is compatible with the preservation of the ecosystem in areas where agriculture and fisheries activities are carried out. The state shall exert utmost care and judicious use of the country's natural resources in order to attain long-term sustainability."*

## C. Poverty and Destruction of Resources in the Uplands

The uplands are home to marginalized communities characterized by poverty and malnutrition, and where land and water resources have been subjected to misuse and abuse resulting in a state of varying degrees of land degradation and decline in soil fertility that urgently requires rehabilitation and management.

Desertification is an impending threat to our agricultural lands. The process of desertification, which is characterized by loss of land productivity to support basic human need, is already a critical problem of the uplands that needs immediate attention. The management of the upland requires a watershed ecosystem approach with the active involvement and commitment of multi-stakeholders in planning and implementation of development programs.

## D. Convergence for Development

Upland agriculture development provides the proper venue for the framework of convergence of sustainable agriculture and rural development programs of the Department of Agriculture with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on environmental concerns; with the Department of Science and Technology on strategic research and development; with the Department of Land Reform on integrating community concerns with development; the National Commission on the Indigenous People on issues on ancestral domain; and with the Department of Interior and Local Government and Local Government Units in the implementation of the vision for upland agriculture.

# II. Charting Directions for Upland Agriculture Development

This concept and vision for upland agriculture shall serve as DA's interim policy statement for upland agriculture development and shall guide the work of the DA Technical Working Group created by Special Order No. 224 Series of 2004 towards their completion of a DA Administrative Order establishing upland agriculture development as one of DA's priority programs.

All DA operating units, including the Banner Program directorates, are hereby enjoined and encouraged to participate, and involve their respective offices in all activities that will be initiated by the Technical Working Group, including consultations and discussions on upland developments strategies, land use, land care and property rights issues, assessment of upland carrying capacity and agro-biodiversity, site identification and planning, and formulation of policies. Further, the preparation and the crafting of the Administrative Order shall be done in consultation with all relevant agencies of the executive branch.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.

For the guidance of all concerned.

(Sgd.) ARTHUR C. YAP  
Secretary"

Be guided accordingly.



JESUS EMMANUEL M. PARAS  
Administrator

December 15, 2004