



MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR No. 23
Series of 2026

TO : THE SENIOR DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATORS, DEPARTMENT MANAGERS, REGIONAL MANAGERS, PROJECT MANAGERS, DIVISION MANAGERS, AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND MONITORING & EVALUATION OF THE INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN (IWRMP) UNDER THE REHABILITATION AND PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES SUPPORTING IRRIGATION SYSTEMS (RPWRSIS)

In accordance with the urgent need to standardize operational procedures to ensure full compliance and mitigate recurring audit deficiencies, as acknowledged in the endorsement dated October 24, 2025, and our Administration's commitment to institutionalize effective and comprehensive watershed management practices, the **Guidelines on the Formulation and Implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management Plan (IWRMP) with Monitoring and Evaluation under the Rehabilitation and Protection of Water Resources Supporting Irrigation Systems Program (RPWRSIS)** is hereby promulgated. See link <https://tinyurl.com/rmy78mzy>.

I. Program Overview and Phases

The present guidelines serve as the official Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the R&P WRSIS Program. They aim to provide comprehensive guidance and set clear, uniform standards for all National Irrigation Administration (NIA) personnel and stakeholders involved in the following program phases:

- 1. Formulation (Planning and Design):** Including watershed characterization using GIS-based remote sensing (NDVI, BSI) and hydrological modeling (SWAT+), socio-economic profiling, and the systematic development of an IWRMP.
- 2. Implementation (Execution):** Covering the establishment of nurseries, plantation establishment, maintenance and protection (Corrective and Preventive), and the strategic deployment of green-gray interventions.
- 3. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Encompassing multi-level monitoring (IMO, RIO, CO), the establishment of specialized R&D plots (Soil Erosion, Water Quality, Biodiversity), and standardized reporting procedures (Monthly, Quarterly, and Annually).

II. Regional Scope of Watershed Management

This comprehensive document is intended to ensure uniformity and clarity in all watershed management activities, moving the agency from reactive water management to a proactive, ecosystem-based approach that strengthens dams, improves climate resilience, and secures the long-term sustainability of irrigation systems.



In addition, **MC 21 s. 2023**, which outlines the guidelines for *Climate Change Adaptation Works (CCAW) funding for watershed management* specifically for UPRIIS and MARIIS, has been amended by **MC 09 s. 2026**. This amendment expands the applicability to include all regions (CAR, 1, 2, 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13) implementing watershed management under the R&P WRSIS Program, as further detailed in the current guidelines.

Furthermore, these guidelines are mandatory for ensuring full compliance with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) for projects required to formulate an IWRMP. Coordination with the appropriate EMB Office (Central or Regional) is required for the development of such plans to ensure compliance with project-specific components required in the NIA-formulated IWRMP.

III. RPWRSIS Implementation Conditions

1. The RPWRSIS program focuses on developing and implementing management plans for all critical watersheds per NIA-DENR MOA (s. 2019). The program's scope has expanded, based on the Regional Irrigation Master Plans (RIMP), to cover virtually all NIA irrigation systems across all regions (CAR, 1, 2, 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13). However, criticality of NIS outside Annex A & B lists of the MOA is subject to screening, validation, and approval of the Project Planning Division.
2. While MARIIS and UPRIIS were historically autonomous with their own environmental units, an agreement with the Operations Department and the Administrator's approval now subjects them to supervision by the Project Planning Division, encompassing *review of funds, management works, and monitoring*. To this effect, they will formulate an updated IWRMP through in-house, with these RPWRSIS Guidelines serving as the basis for their transition and subsequent activities.
3. In adherence to Section 1.6 of the approved RPWRSIS Guidelines (refer to the link provided above), it is important to note that the RIMP undergoes regular updates. Therefore, it is recommended to integrate the most current files when utilizing such data in the formulation of the NIA in-house IWRMP, thereby ensuring consistency and alignment with the current program scope. Moreover, the official NIA website should be consulted to verify RIMP-related files and documents, ensuring both regularity and transparency, especially since the Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) with the Department of Agriculture (DA) is still awaiting approval.
4. In accordance with Sections 7.2 and 7.3 of the approved RPWRSIS Guidelines, while performance is critical for budget allocation, it is essential to note that budgetary allocation and subsequent final release of funding are contingent upon the availability of funds and must strictly adhere to the existing rules, regulations, and policies set forth by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

For strict compliance.

ENGR. EDUARDO EDDIE G. GUILLEN
Administrator

Date 03 MAR 2026