THE ‘SARONG’ GEOTAGGED REPORT
Evidences of massive forest clearing for oil palm expansion in the Municipality of Bataraza (Palawan)

A report by CALG (Coalition against Land Grabbing) supported by Rainforest Rescue and Forest Peoples Programme (FPP)

CALG is member of

The ICCA Consortium
A. INTRODUCTION

Between 23-24 May 2015, a mission led by the Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG) travelled to Bataraza Municipality (Palawan) to carry out a preliminary field and geotagging reconnaissance about the massive forest clearing on timberland, allegedly being carried out by Agumil Philippines, Inc. for the purpose of converting new areas into oil palm plantations. In a photographic context, geotagging is the process of associating photos with specific geographic locations using GPS coordinates.

The mission was guided into the impacted area by members of the local indigenous Pala’wan communities whose ancestral domain has been largely affected by Agumil’s illegal removal of forest cover. Local IPs have now lost most of the areas they once used for hunting, collection of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), medicinal plants, etc. The local indigenous inhabitants complain that, after their customary forest has been clear-felled, the area has become extremely hot and water sources have dried up. Some indigenous members also complain that oil palm companies have pushed their oil palm plantations also in areas planted by with fruit trees and managed by the local IPs for irrigated-rice (basakan).

The CALG mission has visited a large area being affected by oil palm expansion, although the photographic evidences provided in this report mainly refer to forest removal on indigenous ancestral domain and timberland. Our GPS data overlaid on Google Earth has clearly shown that the areas being cleared were covered by good standing forest until very recently. Thus oil palm companies (e.g. Agumil Philippines, Inc) must be yield responsible for the on going plundering of natural forest. The expansion of oil palm plantations by Agumil Philippines, Inc., and by other companies and enterprises, is taking place without the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the local indigenous communities, and thus in violation of NCIP Administrative Order no.3 of series of 2012 and in contradictions with other key articles stated in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (R.A. 8371) such as the: 1) Rights of Ownership (Chapter III, Sec. 7, item a); 2) Rights to Religious, Cultural Sites and Ceremonies (Chapter VI, Section 33); 3) Right to Develop Lands and Natural Resources. (Chapter III, Sec. 7, item b); 4) the Rights to Ancestral Lands (Chapter III, Sec. 8); 5) the Right to Determine and Decide Priorities for Development (Chap. IV, Sec. 17), etc;

Our findings indicate that forest clearing in Bgy. Sarong and Sandoval has bluntly violated DENR EO 23. It must be pointed out that, as a result of a past joint field appraisal by ALDAW (Ancestral Land Domain Watch) and CENRO, a field investigation was carried out on 23 January 2014 in Sandoval, and specifically in areas allegedly developed by Agumil Phil. Inc and San Andres. During that mission it was established that at least 28,39 ha of Alienable and Disposable land and 2.69 ha of Timberland had been cleared for oil palm plantations (see Annex 1). As result CENRO-Brooke’s did file criminal charges against the above companies for gross violation of section 68 and section 69 of Presidential Decree (PD) 705 (see Annex 2). In spite of such charges, new timberlands continue to be cleared in both Bgy Sarong and Sandoval for oil palm expansion.

This draft report only includes a synthesis of the CALG mission’s key findings and has been prepared mainly to request CENRO-Brooke’s Point to take immediate actions and to closely monitor illegal expansion of oil palm plantations in the above-mentioned locations.
GEOTAGGING EVIDENCES OF FOREST CLEARING IN BGY. SARONG PROPER

The red spots indicate the itinerary carried out by CALG mission.

A close up of CALG mission itinerary on Google Earth with a focus on Bgy. Sandoval (bottom right corner) and Bgy. Sarong (left upper corner).
Satellite photo showing the clearing of a forest area, allegedly by oil palm companies, in Bgy. Sarong

Satellite image showing forest clearing and road opening in Bg. Sarong proper
Forested ancestral land of the Pala’wan of sitio Barankas being clear-cut by oil palm companies

Large scale forest clearing for oil palm plantations in Bgy. Sarong
Open clearing on timberland for oil palm expansion. Note the red dot on Google Earth map showing that the area was previously forested.

Forest clearing for oil palm conversion on Palawan ancestral land in Sarong. Evidence from Google Earth map shows that the area was covered by vegetation which oil palm companies have now illegally removed.
Massive removal of forest on indigenous ancestral land for oil palm expansion

Timberland being illegally cleared for oil palm expansion in Bgy. Sarong proper
Road construction by Agumil Philippines, Inc. in timberland being customarily managed by the local indigenous Pala’wan communities

Evidences of large trees removal by Agumil in Bgy. Sarong
Road construction on timberland being built by oil palm companies in Bgy. Sarong

Forest road construction on timberland in Barangay Sarong proper and, more specifically, on the ancestral domain of the local Palawan community.

Forested hillside completely cleared from natural vegetation to allow oil palm expansion
Evidence of large forest trees being felled and burned to convert the area into oil palm plantations

A vast area being cleared for oil palm expansion
Felling of virgin forest allegedly by Agumil Philippines, Inc. on Pala’wan ancestral Domain

Forest clear-cut by oil palm companies in previously trees covered area
A deforested hillside by oil palm companies on indigenous ancestral land

Deforestation for oil palm expansion in Sarong
GEOTAGGING EVIDENCES OF FOREST CLEARING IN BGY. SANDOVAL PROPER

Oil Palm plantation in Okayan

Forest tree removal for oil palm plantations in Bgy. Sandoval
SELECTED IMAGES FROM BGY. Sandoval
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12) LETTER FROM DENR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO CALG, 10-08-2015.
14) LETTER FROM NCIP DIRECTOR RUBEN S. BASTERO TO ENGR. ROLDAN V. PARANGUE – NCIP PALAWAN PROVINCIAL OFFICER.
COMMUNITY RESOLUTION AGAINST FOREST CONVERSION FOR OIL PALM DEVELOPMENT IN SARONG, SUBMITTED TO NCIP PALAWAN OFFICE

Resoluyon na nagpapasabing kilala Chieftain Joseph T. Elng at Chieftain Malangga L. Ella, ng Barangay Sarong, Bataraza. Palawan upang ipigalt at ipapalabas ang karangalan naming mga karagatan Pala’wan sa aring lupang hinunu sa dama na, Palawan lawin sa Agumia.

YAMANG, ang aking karangalan (Sarong) ay ito sa mga barangay sa isla na, Palawan; na nasa ng aking lupang hinunu.

YAMANG, kami binang may – ari ng lupang hinunu ay may karagatan amin, okupahan, gamit, masalinang at manatili sa amin. Lucsding Hinunay ayon sa RA 8371, Indigenous Peoples Rights Act.

YAMANG, ang 36 pigas na nasabing trabas ay nag uutos na aking mang magtayo, nagpapalabas, o magawa maging hula ay sa gobeyerno o pribado; ay kahangang damayan o magtutulungan ang Malyang Hinunu at Mainlang na Pagkakayon ng aking may arin na mga kalikutan Pala’wan.


YAMANG, ang komunidad ng katutubong Pala’wan ay naglabas na ari na ipapalabas ang aking mga karangalan sa aking Lupang Hinunu para sa amin at susunod pang diving; lakad.

NGAYON, SAMAKATULUDAN, sa pagpasa – bang – bang ng mga naging ari na mga pangunahing valerya ay nag aproba at dito ay aking inaprubahan na biyaya ng karangalan at dito ay aking bangalan ng karangalan sina Chieftain Joseph Elng at Chieftain Malangga L. Ella, upang wala naming hiwarawan sa pag – gitn at pag – kalon sa aking karagatan sa aking Lupang Hinunu lhab sa AGUMIA. At kung, kinalnganan ay makapag – ilagay ari ng ari na kalon sa katol lhab sa nasabing kumpanya;

INAPROBAYAN AT NILAGDAY NAMING MGA TRADISIONAL LIDER AT KATUTUBONG PAMAYANAN NA Pala’awan sa Pangunahina ng Mga Tradisional Lider Ngayon sa – 18 na Agosto 2015

PANGALAN

Joseph T. Elng
Palawan

POSITION

Tribo Kayagum

PLACE

Pangaraginan

LAGE

Suggested names
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Republica ng Pilipinas
Kalawangan ng Panakan
Bayan ng Palbanga
BANGGY ORONG

MALATANG SALAYSAY

Ang mga mabiyak na tao na iniulat ng ipilipilado ng mga mabiyak na tao sa Sarong, Palbanga, Palawan.
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SWORN STATEMENT OF IP ELDERS ABOUT FOREST DESTRUCTION FOR OIL PALM CONVERSION IN SARONG

Subject: As pasalubogo ang reyde ng ang dumaluan

por-tulap nasong in kabundutan (Bulusan numero) ng

ayaw nao sa masala at sa pagpatubig ng

ayon nga kumpanya ang kumpanya ng Oil Palm

nina sa aning languag mmm nito ang dahilan ng

por-tulap nga aning naturang yuhat sa doro nga

ayaw languag mmm

Ako nga tahan nga sa Sugbong sa layong sa

Lupa nga Panay Tribe JOSHD. ELINER ning

laho 18 buwan nga Septiyembre tigyan 2015 dito sa

Sarong, Bataog, Palawan

PangAnna = LESTER MENZER

May Salaysay
MEMORANDUM

FOR : The Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer

THRU : The Chief, Forest Management Services

FROM : Forester Franklin M. Aquino
Forest Ranger Bernami M. Manunggay
Admin. Aide III Herman A. Paraiso

SUBJECT : REPORT ON THE ALLEGED ILLEGAL CUTTING / CLEARING OF TREES OF AGUMIL PHILS., INC. AND SAN ANDRESS AT BGYS SANDOVAL AND CULANDANUM, BATARAZA, PALAWAN.

DATE : January 27, 2014

This pertains to your Memorandum dated January 17, 2014 and received by the undersigned on January 20, 2014 regarding the above-cited subject. Please be informed that the undersigned Forest Officers conducted an actual investigation with the following information, facts and recommendations to wit:

1. That the team, thru cellphone coordinated to the representative of Nagkakaisang Tribong Palawan (NATRIPAL) and to the Chairman of Ancestral Domain Watch (ALDAW) as to the schedule of joint investigation;

2. That on January 23, 2014 together with the representatives of ALDAW Mr. Charlito M. Nilasa and Mr. Daniel Sinta informed/coordinated to the Barangay Sandoval and Agumil Phils., Inc Field office, Barangay Sandoval regarding our purpose;

3. That the team proceeded to the subject area together with the representatives of the above-mentioned Barangay for the above-mentioned purpose;

4. That the team observed in the area that allegedly the Palm Oil Planters in the area are continuously clearing/cutting all naturally grown trees/vegetation ranging from 30-80 centimeters diameter of Apitong Balau, Apitong Baboi and Misc. Species within their acquired lots, without necessary permit from DENR (Please see attached geo-tag pictures);
5. That the team initially surveyed the newly developed/cut/cleared area allegedly of Agumil Phils., Inc within Alienable and Disposable Land with an area of 19.21 hectares and 2.69 hectares within Timberland. And allegedly the San Andres Farmers Cooperative newly developed /cleared 9.18 hectares within Alienable and Disposable Land (Please see attached digitized Maps).

6. That the team recommends the survey of all their area cut/cleared/developed and 100% stump inventory of all the trees cut in order to determine the damages and prejudice to the government;

7. That the team recommends the filing of appropriate criminal charges against the above mentioned companies for gross violation of Section 68 and Section 69 of Presidential Decree (PD) 705 as further amended after the survey and inventory of all the area cut/cleared/developed;

For his information and further appropriate instruction.

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY  
HERMAN A. PARAIÑO

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Satellite / Google Earth Image taken last March 07, 2010 now cleared / developed into Palm Oil Plantation allegedly by Agumil Philippines, Inc. located at Sitio Pasi-Pasi, Barangay Culandananum, Bataraza, Palawan

Plantation Area

Latitude: 8° 36' 50.92"  Longitude: 117° 24’ 57.59” (WGS 1984) (Center of the Plantation)

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 36' 50.92"  Longitude: 117° 24' 57.59" (WGS 1984)  
(Center of the Plantation)

North

East

South

West

HERMAN A. PARAISO  
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGAY  
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO  
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 36' 50.92"  Longitude: 117° 24' 57.59" (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

Panorama 180 North to South

Panorama 180 South to North

Panorama 360

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMi M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
Satellite / Google Earth Image taken last March 07, 2010 now cleared / developed into Palm Oil Plantation allegedly by Agumil Philippines, Inc. located at Barangay Culandananum, Bataraza, Palawan

Plantation Area

Latitude: 8° 38' 16.4"  Longitude: 117° 26' 39.4" (WGS 1984)

HERMAN A. PARAISO  
Admin. Aide III

BERNAM M. MANUNGGAY  
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO  
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Way point 1

Way point 2

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGCA
Forest Ranger

FRANKIE M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Way point 3

North

East

South

West

Panorama 180 North to South

HERMAN A. PARAI SO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Way Point 4

Way Point 5

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGSAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forêster I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Way Point 6

Way Point 7

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNARD M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Way Point 8

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA
Way point 9

North

East

South

West

Panorama 180 North to South

Panorama 180 South to North

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
### TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

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### LOCATION MAP

- **Province of Palawan**
- **Area**: Showing the area allegedly covered/cleared by AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC.

Located at Barangay Culandanan, Bataraza, Palawan

**AREA**: 7.29 Hectares

**SCALE**: 1:7500

**Projection**: Universal Transverse Mercator - Zone 50 (N)

**Datum**: World Geodetic 1984 (WGS84)

### LEGEND

- **Area**
- **Corner**

### CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this is the true and correct map of the area Palm Oil Plantation as described herein.

This map was prepared based on GPS survey, compilation map and other references available in this Office.

Surveyed by:

[Signature]

Digitized by: HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III
Satellite / Google Earth Image taken last March 07, 2010 now cleared / developed into Palm Oil Plantation allegedly by San Andres Palm Oil Plantation located at Barangay Sandoval, Bataraza, Palawan

Plantation Area

Latitude: 8° 36' 16.27"
Longitude: 117° 25' 19.18" (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGAN
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 36' 16.27"
Longitude: 117° 25' 19.18" (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

North

East

South

West

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 36' 16.27"  Longitude: 117° 25' 19.18" (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

Panorama 180 North to South

Panorama 180 South to North

Panorama 360

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAM M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
MAP
showing the area allegedly covered / cleared by

SAN ANDRES PALM OIL PLANTATION

located at Barangay Sandoval,
Bataraza, Palawan

AREA: 9.18 Hectares

SCALE: 1:4000
0 >1 m

Projection: Universal Transverse Mercator - Zone 50 (N)
Datum: World Geodetic 1984 (WGS84)

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this is the true and correct map of the area
Palm Oil Plantation as described hereon.

This map was prepared based on GPS survey, compilation map
and other references available in this Office.

Surveyed by:

Digitized by:

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Alde III
Satellite / Google Earth Image taken last March 07, 2010 now cleared / developed into Palm Oil Plantation allegedly by Agumil Philippines, Inc. located at Sitio Song-Song, Barangay Culandananum, Bataraza, Palawan

Latitude: 8° 38’ 12.72”   Longitude: 117° 26’ 58.91” (WGS 1984)   (Center of the Plantation)

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 38' 12.72"  Longitude: 117° 26' 58.91" (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

North

East

South

West

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAL
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
GEO TAG PICTURES OF THE AREA

Latitude: 8° 38’ 12.72”  Longitude: 117° 26’ 58.91” (WGS 1984)
(Center of the Plantation)

Panorama 180 North to South

Panorama 180 South to North

Panorama 360

HERMAN A. PARAISO
Admin. Aide III

BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY
Forest Ranger

FRANKLIN M. AQUINO
Forester I
The map was surveyed and plotted by the Office of the Surveyor General. The map is subject to errors due to the nature of the survey. The surveyor's affidavit is attached for reference.

CERTIFICATION

Surveyor:

LEGEND

Area: 4.56 hectares

AGRIPLATIS, INC.

Showing the area surveyed/conveyed/ cleared by

MAP

S

E

W

N

BEARING

Crow's Foot

Location Map

Technical Description

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PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Complainant

Versus

VIOLATION OF SEC. 77 (Formerly Section 68 of PD 705 as amended by E.O. 277 SERIES OF 1987 and R.A. 7161)

MANUEL LUIS Y DOMINGUEZ
General Manager
Representing
AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC.
Municipalities of Bataraza and Solronic España,
Province of Palawan

DANTE CARBA
Area Manager
AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC.
Brgy. Calasaguas, Brooke’s Point, Palawan

Charlie Jacob; Choly Basila;
Oloy Catague; James Galicia;

Respondents

x---------------------------x

COMPLAINT

The undersigned accuses the above-named person MANUEL LUIS Y. DOMINGUEZ representing AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC. as General manager, DANTE CARBA Area Manager AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC. Brgy. Calasaguas, Brooke’s Point, Palawan. Charlie Jacob; Oloy Catague; James Galicia; Choly Basila, for VIOLATION OF SECTION 77 (Formerly Section 68 of PD 705 as amended by E.O. 277 SERIES OF 1987 and R.A. 7161).

That on January 23, 2014, the CENRO Brooke’s Point Forest Officers together with the representatives of ALDAW and Barangay Officials proceeded at Sitio Pasik-Pasik and Sitio Song-Song, Bataraza, Palawan and within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court, the above-named accused without any authority under license or permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources did then and there willfully and criminally cut, cleared and transport One Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Seven (1,337) naturally grown trees of various species such as Apalong Babat; Apitong Balau, Agoho, etc... with a total volume of Five Hundred Eighteen Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Four and 8/100 board feet (518,424.8 board feet) resulting to a total damages of One Hundred Seventeen Million, Eight Hundred Forty Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Six pesos (P 117,840, 436.00) Philippine currency representing total market value, total Environmental damage, total Forest fines, total 300% surcharge, all to the prejudice and damage of the government.

This is an environmental case.

CONTRARY TO LAW
Brooke’s Point, Palawan, Philippines
May 26, 2014

RANDY L. SUENO
Program Director
Department of Natural Resources

BERNARDO F. CASTILLO
Forester III, Chief Forest Management Services
Department of Natural Resources-CENRO Brooke’s Point, Palawan

WITNESSES:
1. CHARLITO M. NILASA- ALDAW Member
2. DANIEL SINTA- ALDAW Member
3. FANKLIN M. AQUINO- DENR-CENRO Brooke’s Point, Palawan
4. BERNAMI M. MANUNGGAY- DENR-CENRO Brooke’s Point, Palawan
5. HERMAN A. PARAISO- DENR-CENRO Brooke’s Point, Palawan
6. TOMAS A. DELA TORRE- DENR-PENRO Office/ PENRO Reaction Force

EXHIBITS:
1. On-site report in the conduct of investigation
2. Tally sheet of inventoried cut trees
3. Statements of total damages of trees cut/felled.
4. Pictures of the original vegetation of the damaged area thru satellite - Google Earth Image
5. Pictures of trees cut using Geo-tagging.
6. Letter request/complaint dated 26 July 2013 and 22 August 2013 of MR. RODRIGO EMAG (NATRIPAL President)
7. Sworn statement of Forester Franklin M. Aquino, FR Bernami M. Manunggay, Admin Aide Herman A Paraiso in question form

CERTIFICATION
I hereby certify that I have personally examined the affiants and I fully satisfied that the Affiants have read and understand the allegation in the complaint and they have voluntarily executed the complaints.

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 25th day of May 2014, at Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

[Signature]

NESBA S. JAMION- BACUTENG
ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL PROSECUTOR
August 22, 2015

DR. RICARDO CALDERON
Director
Forest Management Bureau (FMB)
DENR - Visayas Avenue, Dillman, Quezon City

OBJECT: URGENT INQUIRY ON WHETHER 'SPECIAL USE PERMITS' HAVE BEEN RELEASED BY DENR-FMB TO AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC

Dear Director Calderon,

Greetings of peace!

The Group Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG) is a Palawan-based organization composed of indigenous people and farmers, which is legally registered with SEC (re. no. CN201502720). We are the people calling for a moratorium on oil palm expansion province-wide in Palawan and, on 29 September 2014, we submitted a petition signed by more than 4,200 members of oil palm impacted communities to the Provincial Government. Since then, our struggle to expose the environmental crimes and illegalities committed by oil palm companies in our province continues.

Between 23-24 May 2015, a mission led by our organization travelled to Bataraza Municipality to carry out a preliminary field and geotagging reconnaissance about the massive forest clearing on timberland, allegedly being carried out by Agumil Philippines, Inc. for the purpose of opening new areas for oil palm plantations. The expansion of oil palm plantations by Agumil Philippines, Inc. is taking place without the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the local indigenous communities, and thus in violation of NCIP Administrative Order no.3 of series of 2012 and in contradictions with other key articles stated in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (R.A.-8371).

We have undisputable photographic and GPS evidences showing massive forest clearing and tree felling allegedly by Agumil in Barangay Sarong (Municipality of Bataraza). Please, see attached geotagged report by CALG. The enclosed findings have been further corroborated by CENRO foresters during a recent field appraisal jointly carried out with CALG staff on 30 June 2015.

From what we have been able to establish, the forest area being cleared in Barangay Sarong does not fall within ECC R4B0901 024 3909 covering oil palm plantations in Bgys. Sandoval, Tarusan and Igang Igang (Municipality of Bataraza). Evidence shows
that Agumil Philippines, Inc. without any authority under license or permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has wilfully and criminally cut, cleared and transport hundreds of naturally grown trees of various species such as Apitong baboi, Apitong Balau, Agoho, etc. This is in blatant violation of Section 77 (formerly Section 68 of PD 705 as amended by E.O 277 Series of 1987 and R.A. 7161).

We are disconcerted and extremely preoccupied by the fact that conversion of one the last remaining lowland forest of the Philippines is being allowed in Palawan (a UNESCO Declared Man & Biosphere Reserve), also in violation of the national ban on the cutting of trees in timberlands and residual forest.

We would be very grateful, if the FMB could inform us on whether Agumil Philippines, Inc. has received 'special use permits' from your office. In case such special use permits have actually been released could you kindly provide us additional specifications (numbers, dates in which they were released, target locations, etc.)?

We look forwards to receiving your response within 5 to 10 working days from receipt of this letter, as established by R.A. no. 9485 ("Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007").

Very best wishes

Marivic Q. Bero
Secretary General

Copy Furnished

His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino, President of the Republic of the Philippines
Leonard Caluya - PENRO – Palawan
Juan dela Cruz, PENRO - Palawan
Nelson P. Devanadera, Executive Director, Palawan Council for Sustainable
Jose Chaves Alvarez – Governor of Palawan
Mr. Ruben S. Bastero, Regional Director RIV (NCIP)
Ronald Parangue Provincial Officer, NCIP Palawan
August 22, 2015

MR. JUAN MIGUEL CUNA
Director
Environment Management Bureau (EMB)
DENR - Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

OBJECT: URGENT REQUEST TO VERIFY THE STATUS/EXISTENCE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE (ECC) COVERING BARANGAY SARONG (MUNICIPALITY OF BATARAZA) AND ALLEGEDLY ISSUED TO AGUMIL PHILIPPINES, INC.

Dear Director Cuna,

Greetings of peace.

The Group Coalition against Land Grabbing (CALG) is a Palawan-based organization composed of indigenous people and farmers, which is legally registered with SEC (Re. no. CN201502720). We are the people calling for a moratorium on oil palm expansion province-wide in Palawan and, on 29 September 2014, we submitted a petition signed by more than 4,200 members of oil palm impacted communities to the Provincial Government. Since then, our struggle to expose the environmental crimes and illegalities committed by oil palm companies in our province continues.

Between 23-24 May 2015, a mission led by our organization travelled to Bataraza Municipality to carry out a preliminary field and geotagging reconnaissance about the massive forest clearing on timberland, allegedly being carried out by Agumil Philippines, Inc. for the purpose of opening new areas for oil palm plantations. The expansion of oil palm plantations by Agumil Philippines, Inc. is taking place without the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the local indigenous communities, and thus in violation of NCIP Administrative Order no.3 of series of 2012 and in contradictions with other key articles stated in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (R.A. 8371).

We have undisputable photographic and GPS evidences showing massive forest clearing and tree felling allegedly by Agumil in Barangay Sarong (Municipality of Bataraza). Please, see attached geotagged report by CALG. The enclosed findings have been further corroborated by CENRO foresters during a recent field appraisal jointly carried out with CALG staff on 30 June 2015.
From what we have been able to establish, the forest area being cleared in Barangay Sarong does not fall within ECC R4B0901 024 3909 covering oil palm plantations in Bgys. Sandoval, Tarusan and Igang Igang (Municipality of Bataraza). Evidence shows that Agumil Philippines, Inc. without any authority under license or permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has wilfully and criminally cut, cleared and transport hundreds of naturally grown trees of various species such as Apitong baboi, Apitong Balau, Agoho, etc. This is in blatant violation of Section 77 (formerly Section 68 of PD 705 as amended by E.O 277 Series of 1987 and R.A. 7161).

We are disconcerted and extremely preoccupied by the fact that conversion of one the last remaining lowland forest of the Philippines is being allowed in Palawan (a UNESCO Declared Man & Biosphere Reserve), also in violation of the national ban on the cutting of trees in timberlands and residual forest.

We would be very grateful, if the FMB could inform us on whether Agumil Philippines, Inc. has received an ECC from your office, covering Barangay Sarong. In case such ECC has actually been released could you kindly provide us additional specifications (numbers, dates in which it was released, target locations, etc.)?

We further expect that your office will take all necessary legal remedies to enforce DENR laws against tree cutting and forest conversion by Agumil Philippines, Inc. and request the above mentioned enterprise to Cease and Desist from any activity causing damage to and depletion of forest resources. We further request that oil palms planted by Agumil in areas previously covered with forest be removed and endemic Palawan tree species be replanted in such areas.

We look forwards to receiving your response within 5 to 10 working days from receipt of this letter, as established by R.A. no. 9485 ("Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007").

Very best wishes,

Marivic Q. Bero
Secretary General

Copy Furnished

His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino, President of the Republic of the Philippines
Leonard Caluya - PENRO – Palawan
Juan dela Cruz, PENRO - Palawan
Nelson P. Devanadera, Executive Director, Palawan Council for Sustainable
Jose Chaves Alvarez – Governor of Palawan
Mr. Ruben S. Bastero, Regional Director RIV (NCIP)
Ronald Parangue Provincial Officer, NCIP Palawan
OBJECT: REQUESTING YOUR INTERVENTION TO STOP MASSIVE FOREST DESTRUCTION BY OIL PALM COMPANIES IN BGY. SARONG (MUNICIPALITY OF BATARAza)

August 22, 2015

SEC. RAMON J.P. PAJE
Secretary
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DENR - Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Dear Secretary Paje,

On May 23 to 24, 2015, upon the request of the members of the Palawan Tribe in Bgy. Sarong (Municipality of Bataraza) Palawan, the members of Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG) sent a field team to the impacted community to conduct preliminary field and geotagging reconnaissance with regards to massive forest destruction allegedly being carried out by Agumil Philippines, Inc. for the purpose of opening new areas for oil palm plantations.

Our findings during the field mission indicate that there exists massive forest destruction within the indigenous ancestral domain in Brgy. Sarong, which clearly violates DENR E.O. 23 and Sec. 59 of R.A. 8371 (please see attached geotagged report and people’s resolution). Worse, the clearing activities continue unabated threatening the rich biodiversity of the area and its various ecosystem services which have already been lost thus compromising the sustainable livelihood of local communities in the area. Community leaders who are trying to defend their forest from large-scale oil palm plantations are now receiving threats from individuals who are supporting the illegal land clearing being allegedly pursued by Agumil Philippines, Inc.

In view of this, and on the behalf of the impacted communities, we request your Good Office, as well as FMB and EMB (see attached letters) to take urgent and decisive actions to stop the conversion of primary and secondary forest for development of oil palm plantations in Barangay Sarong, (Municipality of Bataraza) Palawan, and initiate concrete legal actions to halt forest destruction and apprehend the people/companies responsible for such crimes against nature and culture.
We look forwards to receiving your response within 5 to 10 working days from receipt of this letter, as established by R.A. no. 9485 (“Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007”).

Sincerely yours,

Marivic Quinto-Bero  
Secretary General

Copy Furnished

His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino, President of the Republic of the Philippines  
Ricardo Calderon, CESO III, Director Forest Management Bureau (FMB)  
Juan Miguel Cuna, Director Environment Management Bureau (EMB)  
Leonard Caluya - PENRO – Palawan  
Juan dela Cruz, PENRO - Palawan  
Nelson P. Devanadera, Executive Director, Palawan Council for Sustainable  
Jose Chaves Alvarez – Governor of Palawan  
Mr. Ruben S. Bastero, Regional Director RIV (NCIP)  
Ronald Parangue Provincial Officer, NCIP Palawan
OBJECT: REQUESTING YOUR INTERVENTION TO STOP FOREST DESTRUCTION BY OIL PALM COMPANIES IN THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN

August 22, 2015

HON. BENIGNO SIMEON C. AQUINO, III
President
Republic of the Philippines
Malacanang, Manila, Philippines

Dear Mr. President:

May genuine PEACE reign in our land!

This is with reference to our letter dated February 23, 2015 and being sent to your Good Office in Malacañang via LBC. The letter was entitled: "URGENT REQUEST TO THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE ALL APPROPRIATE ACTIONS AND REMEDIES TO RESPOND TO THE PETITION CALLING FOR A PROVINCE-WIDE MORATOTIUM ON OIL PALM EXPANSION IN PALAWAN BEING SIGNED BY 4,200 OF FARMERS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WHO HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY OIL PALM DEVELOPMENT"

We are wondering whether the staff of your good office has been able to assess the content of people's petition that was attached to such letter, and have therefore approached the concerned government authorities in Palawan to respond to this matter.

There have been various multi-sectorial meetings being conducted with regard to the said petition calling for an oil palm moratorium in Palawan and, since 2013, several inter-agency meetings on the violations committed by oil palm companies and on the adverse impact of oil palm development have also been held in Puerto Princesa City. Sadly, in spite of escalating opposition to oil palm expansion, the local government authorities have not taken concrete remedies to respond to farmers and indigenous peoples' requests highlighted in such petition. Presently, we feel that all local remedies to resolve this issue at the Provincial level have been exhausted and, therefore, we have decided to approach you again on this issue hoping that, through your intercession, the Provincial Government will finally address the legitimate concerns being raised by the oil palm impacted communities of southern Palawan.
Forest clearing activities by oil palm companies continue unabated especially in the Municipality of Bataraza (Barangay Sarong), threatening the rich biodiversity of the area and its various ecosystem services which have been largely lost, thus compromising the sustainable livelihood of local communities in the area (see copy of our most recent geotagged report and petition from the indigenous people of Bgy. Sarong, as well as copies of letters to DENR Secretary, to DENR EMB and FMB). Community leaders who are trying to defend their forest from the threats of large-scale palm oil plantations are now receiving threats from individuals who are supporting the illegal land clearing being allegedly pursued by Agumil Philippines, Inc.

The exponential decline of forest cover due to massive oil palm expansion is likely to lead to environmental collapse and social instability and this, we believe, runs against the principles of inclusive economic growth and sustainable development which are amongst the milestones of Your administration.

On the behalf of the farmers and Indigenous Peoples of Palawan, we appeal to your benevolent intervention to ensure that the sustainable future of our ‘Last Frontier’ will not be jeopardized by oil palm expansion.

We look forward to your favorable response on this matter within 5 to 10 working days from receipt of this letter, as established by R.A. no. 9485 ("Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007").

Very truly yours

Marivic Quinto-Bero
Secretary General

Copy furnished

Ramon Paje, Secretary Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Ricardo Calderon, CESO III, Director Forest Management Bureau (FMB)
Juan Miguel Cuna, Director Environment Management Bureau (EMB)
Leonard Caluya - PENRO – Palawan
Juan dela Cruz, PENRO - Palawan
Nelson P. Devanadera, Executive Director, Palawan Council for Sustainable
Jose Chaves Alvarez – Governor of Palawan
Mr. Ruben S. Bastero, Regional Director RIV (NCIP)
Ronald Parangue Provincial Officer, NCIP Palawan
27 August 2015,

MS. MARIVIC QUANTO-BERO
Secretary General
Coalition Against Land Grabbing
C/o Awat Law Office
2nd Floor Basay Building
Junction 1, Barangay San Miguel
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

Dear Ms. Quano-Bero:

This pertains to your letter dated 22 August 2015 requesting for DENR’s intervention to stop the conversion of primary and secondary forest for development of oil palm plantations in Barangay Sarong, Bantura, Palawan.

Please be informed that we have referred the matter to the Office of the Regional Director in DENR, R-4B, Roxas Boulevard, Manila for their appropriate action. Said office will inform you of action taken on the issue.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

ATTY. ANALIZA REBUELTA-TEH
Undersecretary
Chief of Staff

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The Regional Director
DENR R-4B, Roxas Boulevard, Manila
The Undersecretary for Legal Affairs
MEMORANDUM

TO : The Regional Director
DENR, R-4B, Roxas Boulevard, Manila

FROM : The Chief of Staff

SUBJECT : REQUEST TO STOP MASSIVE FOREST DESTRUCTION BY OIL PALM COMPANIES IN BATARAZA, PALAWAN

DATE : 27 August 2015

This pertains to the letter dated 22 August 2015 from Ms. Marivic Quintos-Bern, Secretary General, Coalition Against Land Grabbing, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. They are requesting for DENR’s intervention to stop the conversion of primary and secondary forest for development of oil palm plantations in Barangay Sarong, Bataraza, Palawan.

May we refer the matter to you for your appropriate action subject to existing laws, rules and regulations. Kindly inform Ms. Bern of action taken on the same copy furnish this office.

ATTY. ANALIZA REBUELTÀ-TEH
Undersecretary

Let’s Go Green!!!
Ms. Marivic Quinto-Bero  
Secretary General  
Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG)  
2nd Floor Basaya Bldg., Junction 1  
Brgy. San Miguel, Puerto Princesa City  
Palawan  

Dear Ms. Bero:  

This refers to your letter dated 22 August 2015 verifying the status of an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) covering Barangay Sarong, Municipality of Bataraza which is allegedly issued to Agumai Philippines, Inc.  

Based on our records, there is no issued ECC or pending application in Barangay Sarong, Municipality of Bataraza for an Oil Palm Plantation. We also forwarded your concern to EMB Region 4B for their appropriate action.  

Thank you.  

Sincerely,  

ATTY. JUAN MIGUEL T. CUNA  
DENR Assistant Secretary  
and concurrent EMB Director  

Copy furnished: EMB Region 4B
Office of the President
PRESIDENTIAL ACTION CENTER
Malacañang, Manila

August 28, 2015

Atty. ANALIZA R. TEH  
Undersecretary and Chief of Staff  
Office of the Secretary  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

Dear Madam:

We are transmitting the attached letter dated August 22, 2013 with enclosures, addressed to His Excellency President Benigno S. Aquino III from Coalition Against Land Grabbing represented by its Secretary General Ms. MARIVIC Q. BERÓ Office A Taw Law Office, 2F Basaya Bldg., Junction 1, Brgy. San Miguel, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. Inasmuch as the subject matter contained therein may be best addressed by that Office, we leave the action to your sound discretion.

A reply directly to the party concerned, copy furnished this Office, citing Code Number GL CAM 8-26-2015-013 will be highly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Atty. MARIA ESTRELLITA R. REYES, CESO IV  
Acting Director IV

GAMA Bldg., Minerva corner Jose P. Laurel Sts., Malacañang, Manila  
Telephone Number: 784 4286 local 4568; Fax Number: 736 8621  
Email Address: pace_op@malacanang.gov.ph; pace_op@yahoo.com.ph
Memorandum Order No. 2014-2-OIC
Series of 2014

TO: ENGR. ROLDAN V. PARANGUE
Provincial Officer

FROM: THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR
This Office

SUBJECT: ANCESTRAL DOMAIN AREAS OVERLAPPED BY PALM OIL PLANTATIONS

DATE: December 1, 2014

This pertains to the letter of Atty. Nesario G. Awat of CALG Law Office concerning the ancestral domain of the Tagbanua and Pala’wan ICCs being overlapped by palm oil plantations.

In view hereof, you are hereby requested to submit the list of barangays being covered by the plantation.

Attached herewith is a copy of the letter:

For your strict compliance,

RUBEN S. BASTERO, CESO III

CC:
1. Coalition Against Land Grabbing
   2nd Flr. Basaya Bldg., Junction 1
   Brgy. San Miguel, P.P City
2. Office of the Executive Director
3. TMSID
4. Records