

MFN 9/14

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 213

CONSTITUTING THE NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE
ON COCONUT TREE CONSERVATION

WHEREAS, Republic Act (RA) 8048, also known as the "Coconut Tree Preservation Act of 1995," mandates the regulation of the cutting of coconut trees and the conduct of a sustainable and efficient replanting program;

WHEREAS, a coordinated effort must be undertaken to ensure that the cutting of coconut trees as well as the processing, transport, sale, and disposal or utilization of coconut trees by coconut lumber traders, dealers, sawmill or chainsaw operators, processors, end-users and exporters, are done strictly pursuant to the provisions of RA 8048 and other relevant statutes as well as the guidelines of the Philippine Coconut Authority; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the preservation and development of the coconut industry, there is need to constitute a national task force to ensure effective and timely coordination among government agencies, local government units, and the private sector;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order :

SECTION 1. Constitution of the National Enforcement Task Force on Coconut Tree Conservation. The National Enforcement Task Force, hereinafter referred to as NETFORCE, is hereby constituted. The NETFORCE shall be composed of the following:

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| Secretary, Department of Agriculture | Chairman |
| Administrator, Philippine Coconut Authority | Co-Chairman |
| Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform | Member |
| Secretary, Department of Justice | Member |
| Secretary, Department of Environment | Member |



and Natural Resources Secretary, Department of the Interior and Local Government	Member
Chief, Philippine National Police	Member
Commissioner, Bureau of Internal Revenue	Member
Commandant, Philippine Coast Guard	Member
Administrator, National Mapping and Resource Information Authority	Member

The NETFORCE shall invite representatives of accredited coconut farmer organizations and non-government organizations concerned as deputized support groups of the NETFORCE.

SECTION 2. Duties and Functions. The NETFORCE shall perform the following functions:

- a. Formulate plans of action to control the rampant cutting of coconut trees in violation of the provisions of RA 8048 and its implementing rules and regulations;
- b. Organize Regional Composite Teams composed of the member-agencies under the overall supervision of the Chief of the Philippine National Police to carry out and execute the plans of action. The Department of Justice shall designate investigators or prosecutors as members of the Regional Composite Teams to investigate reports and assist in the filing of the appropriate complaints for violations of the Philippine Coconut Authority rules and regulations, RA 8048 and its pertinent implementing rules and regulations; and
- c. Establish such number of detachment stations and designate roving inspectors and patrols to: (i) monitor and report the cutting, processing, transport or movement of coconut lumber by land, sea or air and determine whether such activities are strictly complying with the requirements of pertinent laws, rules and regulations; (ii) inspect and inquire into the proper establishment, operation and registration of sawmills, chain/power saws, lumberyards, lumber dealers and other persons or entities dealing with the cutting, processing, transport, use or sale of coconut lumber and to report their findings to the Regional Composite Team; (iii) cause or effect the arrest of violators and, pending investigation, seize or confiscate the illegally cut coconut tree



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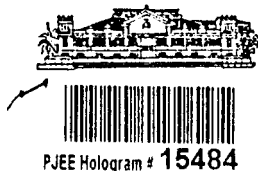
or processed lumber as well as the power saws, chain saws or other implements used in the cutting or processing of the seized coconut trees or lumber and vehicles used in the transport thereof.

SECTION 3. Authority of Local Government Units. The local government units in whose jurisdiction the illegally cut or processed coconut trees are transported shall have the authority to verify the authenticity or validity of the cutting permits as well as the type and volume of the coconut trees or lumber covered by such permit. Pursuant to the Local Government Code (RA 7160), the local government units shall have the authority to apprehend violators, and to seize or confiscate illegally cut or processed coconut trees, including the implements used in the illegal cutting or processing, and the vehicles used in the transport or movement thereof.

SECTION 4. Administrative Penalties. The responsible Philippine Coconut Authority official or barangay chairman/official or both, found to have permitted, allowed or otherwise tolerated any violation of the provisions of RA 8048 or its implementing rules, or have connived, conspired, or have otherwise given special treatment, privilege, favor or consideration to any party in the commission of such violation, shall be suspended or dismissed from office in accordance with the disciplinary provisions of the Omnibus Rules implementing Book V Subtitle A, of the Administrative Code of 1987 and/or the provisions of the penal sanctions of RA 8048.

The responsible Philippine Coconut Authority provincial manager, coconut development officer and the barangay chairman/official shall jointly ensure that any area in the barangay where coconut trees are cut shall be replanted with replacement seedlings within the period of three (3) months from the date of cutting. Failure on the part of the aforesaid officials to cause the replanting of the affected area shall constitute prima facie evidence of violation and shall be sufficient to charge the responsible Philippine Coconut Authority and/or barangay officials under this Section.

SECTION 5. Support Fund for Operation. The Philippine Coconut Authority shall allocate sufficient funds from its corporate operating budget, which shall be augmented by at least ten percent (10%) from its share of the fees collected from the issuance of cutting permits to support the operations of the NETFORCE, the regional




composite teams and detachment stations, teams of inspectors and patrols organized pursuant to this Order.

SECTION 6. Implementing Guidelines. The NETFORCE shall adopt such implementing guidelines as may be necessary to implement this Executive Order.

SECTION 7. Effectively. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 30th day of January, in the Year of our Lord, Two Thousand.


JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA

By the President



RONALDO B. ZAMORA
Executive Secretary



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