

**WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT**  
**MOVIMIENTO MUNDIAL POR LOS BOSQUES TROPICALES**

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Montevideo, Uruguay, October 15 2014

Most Honorable Jose Chaves Alvarez, Governor of Palawan  
Honorable Dennis Socrates, Vice-Governor of Palawan

Dear Governor and Vice Governor of Palawan,

We are writing on behalf of the International Secretariat of the World Rainforest Movement, an international worldwide network that provides support to indigenous peoples and other local forest-dependent and rural communities who are struggling to defend their territories and forests against several forces that threaten them such as logging, mining and the expansion of industrial tree plantations, like oil palm plantations, in an increasing number of countries a severe threat to their livelihoods.

We have been following with great attention and considerable concern the recent controversies related to the massive expansion of oil palm plantations in Palawan. And as you may recall, we sent you last year a letter on this issue prior to the oil palm Inter Agency meeting that took place in August 2013.

Once again, we want to share our concern, this time about the current plans to expand oil palm plantations into an area of around 20,000 hectares. WRM's experience in several countries in relation to oil palm plantations expansion is extremely sad. By visiting in different countries affected indigenous and local communities that we support in their difficult struggles to protect their livelihoods, we have learned and seen that oil palm plantations are not bringing benefits to communities. On the contrary, deforestation and destruction of the ecosystems on which communities rely to guarantee their livelihoods is the rule. Oil palm plantation expansion leads to an increase of extreme poverty, malnutrition and are also a cause of serious health problems that are linked to the high use of agrotoxins.

We are happy to share all our available documentation from several countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America where this position of our organisation is based on. This might be a useful input to the discussions prior to your decision about the proposal to convert into oil palm plantations the aforementioned area of 20,000 hectares. We have been informed that the Indigenous Peoples' and farmers' call for a Moratorium will be discussed in the course of forthcoming meetings between representatives of

the Coalition against Land Grabbing (CALG) and the various committees at the provincial government level involved in this issue. Hence we hope that such consultations will lead to concrete steps to prevent further negative impacts of industrial oil palm plantations, such as the issuance of a province-wide moratorium on oil palm expansion.

We kindly request your government to respond quickly and responsibly to the recent petition of Indigenous Peoples and farmers, before the adverse and socio-ecological implications of oil palm expansion will become irreversible.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Winnie Overbeek'. Below the signature is a pink rectangular stamp.

Winnie Overbeek  
International coordinator  
World Raiforest Movement.

**Copy Furnished:**

H.E. Benigno C. Aquino III  
President of the Republic

Dr. Marlea Pinor Munez, Executive Director, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)

Mr. Ruben S. Bastero, Regional Director RIV (NCIP)

Dionisia Banua, Commissioner (NCIP)

Hon. Ramon Jesus Paje  
Secretary Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Hon. Proceso J. Alcala  
Secretary Department of Agriculture (DA)

Hon. Euclides G. Forbes and Mr. Carlos B. Carpio (Philippine Coconut Authority - PCA)

Executive Director: Mr. Nelson P. Devanadera  
Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD)

Mrs. Mearl Hilario, PCSD Committee on Tribal Affairs

Mrs. Gilda E. Pico, President and CEO, Land Bank of the Philippines