

Saving the Benguet Watersheds for Water

"Saving the Benguet Watersheds for Water" is funded by the European Union and implemented in Benguet Province from August 2011 to August 2013. The project sites are: Tublay (Ambassador); Bokod (Poblacion); Atok (Poblacion); Kibungan (Sagpat); Buguias (Tuba) & Sablan (Banangan). (Location: Benguet, Philippines)

This project is implemented by the Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation Inc. (JVOFI) in partnership with the Benguet Provincial Government headed by Governor Nestor B. Fongwan, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Benguet State University (BSU) and Cordillera Network of NGOs and POs.

The total project cost is €434,000 of which 85%, or €368,900 (equivalent to ₱22.48M) will be funded by the European Union. The remaining 15% of the project cost will be the contribution of Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation, Inc. and the Peace and Equity Foundation.

The "Saving the Benguet Watersheds for Water" project shall increase participation of local government units & stakeholders in forest/watershed management through empowered and strengthened partnerships. It will demonstrate how devolution of forest management from the DENR to LGUs could take place in the framework of existing legislation (e.g. RA7160, DENR-DILG Joint Memorandum Circulars 98-01 & 2003-01 and DENR DAO 30). Municipalities, in collaboration with the DENR and Benguet Provincial Government shall be guided on how to undertake forest resource profiling, mapping & delineation; preparation of forest management plans and enactment/enforcement of forest protection policies.

The Municipal Environment and Natural Resource Council (MENRC), a multisectoral council participated by local stakeholders shall be organized and strengthened to ensure implementation of forest management plans and forest protection policies. Local communities and barangay leaders shall be trained and deputized by the DENR to conduct forest patrols and apprehend forest law offenders (illegal logging, forest fires, encroachment). The project shall also include the construction of onewatersystem in each project site. Community Water Associations shall be strengthened to assume management of their watersystem and contribute to forest protection as a mean to ensure sustained water supply in their respective communities.

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