



ENVIRONMENTAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTER INC.
EASTERN VISAYAS

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Item No.: 38
Date: 24.2026 FEB

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

Province of Leyte

Leyte Provincial Government Complex, Palo, Leyte

Sangguniang Panlalawigan
Province of Leyte
RECEIVED
Date: FEB 18 2026
By: [Signature]

Through:

HON. LEONARDO M. JAVIER, JR.

Provincial Vice Governor and Presiding Officer

Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Province of Leyte

Leyte Provincial Government Complex, Palo, Leyte

Dear Vice Governor Javier,

We write on behalf of Bernardita C. Morcilla, Ruben Y. Manaog, and Patrocenia Rael, representatives of the community organizations Sama Kamo and UNLAD and residents of MacArthur, Leyte, whose communities continue to suffer the adverse impacts of ongoing magnetite sand mining operations.

On 9 February 2026, our clients, Bernardita C. Morcilla, Ruben Y. Manaog, and Patrocenia Rael, formally submitted a letter to your good office outlining urgent concerns arising from the ongoing operations by the MacArthur Iron Project Corporation (MIPC).

The concerns raised include the illegal conversion of land through the encroachment of mining activities into irrigated and irrigable agricultural areas protected under Republic Act No. 6657, as amended by Republic Act No. 9700. Our clients have likewise documented significant environmental degradation, including incidents of soil collapse, ground subsidence, and the progressive loss of land viability in Barangays Maya, Liwayway, and San Pedro. These activities also constitute violations of property rights, as mining operations have allegedly been conducted on CARP-covered lands without the legally required consent of surface owners and agrarian reform beneficiaries. Furthermore, the operations pose serious threats to food security by obstructing irrigation

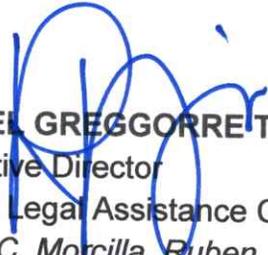
systems and destroying prime rice-producing areas essential to local agricultural sustainability.

That said, we would like to inquire into the actions taken by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in response to these urgent concerns. Given the ongoing nature of the concern, we believe this matter requires an urgent resolution, not only to preserve the environment and the livelihoods of the residents but also to ensure the safety of those involved.

We would appreciate any information regarding the status of our request, and we affirm ours and our client's commitment to assisting your office in any way that we can.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the welfare of the people and the environmental integrity of the Province of Leyte.

Sincerely,



ATTY. RAFAEL GREGGORRE T. PAJARES
Deputy Executive Director
Environmental Legal Assistance Center
for Bernardita C. Morcilla, Ruben Y. Manaog, and Patrocenia Rael