



SAVE PALAWAN: THE PHILIPPINE'S LAST FRONTIER

Palawan Island, also known as the “Last Frontier”, is one of the most bio-diverse regions in the Philippines. In order to preserve its biodiversity, UNESCO declared the whole Province a Man and Biosphere Reserve in 1990. Included are two World Heritage Sites: The Tubbataha Reef Marine Park and the Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park. UNESCO set up the Man and Biosphere Reserve programme in order to protect people's ancestral lands and culture as well as the diversity of flora and fauna from exploitation and destruction.

The importance of this measure in Palawan is demonstrated by the fact that 49 of the animal and 56 of the plant species living there are globally threatened with extinction, according to the international conservation organisation IUCN.

See video

http://www.youtube.com/user/ALDAWpalawan#p/u/14/_wJLi27NK-U

and ALDAW info on facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/Aldaw.network.palawan.indigenous.advocacy?v=wall>

Palawan, is also the home of three main ethnic groups: The Palawan, the Tagbanua and the Batak. The southern part of the main island, where most mining activities are concentrated, is also the home of vulnerable indigenous communities living in partial isolation. Their livelihood is based on swidden cultivation, hunting and gathering, and commercial collection of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs).

See Video

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ALDAWpalawan#p/u/13/4MpnbcXU6gl>

In 1992, a Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan (SEP) was drawn up through massive support from European Union and, ultimately, became a law (Republic Act 7611) governing the sustainable development and protection of

Palawan Island. The European Union also invested 17 million Euros in the Palawan Tropical Forestry Protection Programme (PTFPP), a 7-year special project having the objective of assisting forest preservation in Palawan through catchment approach, with sustainable development strategy implemented by the communities.

In spite of all previous conservation efforts and investments, the Provincial Government of Palawan is favouring the intensification of mineral exploitation on the island, in compliance with the policy of mining revitalization passed in 1995. The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), the provincial government body in charge of ensuring the sustainable development of the island is not fulfilling its mandate and, rather, releases clearances to mining corporations for exploring protected 'core' and 'restricted' zones.

See article

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/nation/view/20110207-318887/Guardians-or-opportunists>

MacroAsia, Ipilan Nickel Mining Corporation and LEBACH concession areas include protected zones and cultivated land, where they have already excavated test-pits and made deep drilling-holes. Specifically, this has also occurred in the upland forests of Brooke's Point Municipality, which are home to indigenous communities.

See video:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ALDAWpalawan#p/u/0/YhKXvKan1tA>

and geotagged report:

<http://participatorygis.blogspot.com/2010/01/counter-mapping-in-philippines-gantong.html>

Further south, Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corporation (RTNMC) has already built roads across the Bulanjao mountain range, thus undermining the integrity of a unique biodiversity hotspot. The indigenous network ALDAW (Ancestral Land Domain Watch) has documented this.

See video

http://www.youtube.com/user/ALDAWpalawan#p/u/10/l_cKJOF1dOA

and geotagged report

<http://participatorygis.blogspot.com/2010/01/bulanjao-geotagged-report.html>

Aside from the above mentioned companies, other corporations such as

Citnickel Mining Corporation in Narra and Espanola Municipalities and Berong Nickel in Quezon Municipality present a serious threat to Palawan forest. There are other large-scale mining companies that have not yet started operations but already entered into agreements with the government, and they are working in partnership with the Canadian MBMI

See article

<http://intercontinentalcry.org/indigenous-peoples-unite-against-mining-in-palawan/>

The mining applications of Narra Nickel Mining and Development, Inc. (NNMDC), Tesoro Mining and Development, Inc. (TMDI), and McArthur Mining, Inc. (MMI) - approved through a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) in partnership with MBMI will surely lead to the devastation of precious watersheds, indigenous ancestral territories and productive rice-land.

While the Philippine Government is planning to massively expand mining on the Philippines' Last Frontier, UNESCO and IUCN Director Generals have already forwarded their respective concerns to the appropriate authorities.

The struggle to Save Palawan has reached momentum after the ominous murder of Environmental campaigner and radio journalist Gerry Ortega who was shot dead on 24th January, just after leaving his radio station DWAR Palawan. Local campaigners are in no doubt: Ortega was murdered because he had publicly and repeatedly spoken out against the government's mining plans.

See <http://www.intellithink.com.ph/wordpress/doc-gerry-had-a-dream/>

The local indigenous network ALDAW, together with other local organizations and NGOs in Palawan and the Philippines are supporting the **No-2-mining-in-Palawan-Petition** launched on February 3rd by the **Save Palawan Movement**, a multi-sectoral coalition of concerned environmental, legal religious and other civic groups.

The campaign aims at raising ten million signatures to deliver a strong message to the Philippine and Palawan governments so that they would finally say no to mining in Palawan and help protect one of the Philippines' last remaining treasures. PLEASE SIGN IT TODAY AND CIRCULATE THE LINK TO FRIENDS AND PEOPLE OF YOUR NETWORK



<http://www.intellithink.com.ph/wordpress/>

See Campaign Videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv5peKCKlXk>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Xru79SxbFE>