

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
NO. 23-2008**

**RE : DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL COURTS TO HEAR,
TRY AND DECIDE ENVIRONMENTAL CASES**

In the interest of an efficient administration of justice and pursuant to Sec. 23 of B.P Blg. 129, the following branches of the first and second level courts are hereby designated as Special Courts to try and decide violations of environmental laws, including but not limited to the following:

1. Revised Forestry Code (P.D. No. 705)
2. Marine Pollution (P.D. No. 979)
3. Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste Act (R.A. No. 6969)
4. People's Small-Scale Mining Act (R.A. No. 7076)
5. National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (R.A. No. 7586)
6. Philippine Mining Act (R.A. No. 7942)
7. Indigenous People's Rights Act (R.A. No. 8371)
8. Philippine Fisheries Code (R.A. No. 8550)
9. Clean Air Act (R.A. No. 8749)
10. Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (R.A. No. 9003)
11. National Caves & Cave Resources Management Act (R.A. No. 9072)
12. Wildlife Conservation & Protection Act (R.A. No. 9147)
13. Chainsaw Act (R.A. No. 9175)
14. Clean Water Act (R.A. No. 9275)

committed within their respective territorial jurisdictions.

REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 1, Manila
Br. 41, Manila
Br. 101, Quezon City
Br. 108, Pasay City
Br. 127, Kaloocan City
Br. 58, Makati City
Br. 152, Pasig City (cases originating from Pasig City)
Br. 266, Pasig City (cases originating from Taguig City)
Br. 170, Malabon City
Br. 272, Marikina City
Br. 208, Mandaluyong City

Br. 196, Parañaque City
Br. 201, Las Piñas City
Br. 205, Muntinlupa City
Br. 171, Valenzuela City
FIRST JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 5, Baguio City
Br. 10, La Trinidad, Benguet
Br. 12, Laoag City
Br. 28, San Fernando City
Br. 39, Lingayen, Pangasinan
Br. 44, Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Br. 47, Urdaneta City
SECOND JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 5, Tuguegarao City
Br. 9, Aparri, Cagayan
Br. 17, Ilagan, Isabela
Br. 27, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
THIRD JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 1, Balanga City
Br. 19, Malolos City
Br. 29, Cabanatuan City
Br. 32, Guimba, Nueva Ecija
Br. 36, Gapan City
Br. 41, City of San Fernando, Pampanga
Br. 51, Guagua, Pampanga
Br. 59, Angeles City
Br. 65, Tarlac City
Br. 69, Iba, Zambales
Br. 75, Olongapo City
FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 4, Batangas City
Br. 11, Balayan, Batangas
Br. 88, Cavite City
Br. 20, Imus, Cavite
Br. 27, Sta. Cruz, Laguna
Br. 32, San Pablo City
Br. 36, Calamba City
Br. 51, Puerto Princesa City

Br. 60, Lucena City
Br. 70, Binangonan, Rizal
Br. 71, Antipolo City
Br. 75, San Mateo, Rizal
Br. 78, Morong Rizal
FIFTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 1, Legaspi City
Br. 13, Ligao City
Br. 15, Tabaco City
Br. 25, Naga City
Br. 32, Pili, Camarines Sur
Br. 35, Iriga City
Br. 38, Daet, Camarines Norte
Br. 53, Sorsogon City
Br. 47, Masbate City
SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 2, Kalibo, Aklan
Br. 11, San Jose, Antique
Br. 15, Roxas City
Br. 28, Iloilo City
Br. 44, Bacolod City
SEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 23, Cebu City
Br. 28, Mandaue City
Br. 54, Lapu-Lapu City
Br. 34, Dumaguete City
Br. 47, Tagbilaran City
EIGHTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 9, Tacloban City
Br. 29, Catbalogan, Samar
NINTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 8, Dipolog City
Br. 16, Zamboanga City
Br. 20, Pagadian City

TENTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 4, Butuan City
Br. 10, Malaybalay City
Br. 12, Oroquieta City
Br. 39, Cagayan de Oro City
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 1, Tagum City
Br. 16, Davao City
Br. 18, Digos City
Br. 35, General Santos City
TWELFTH JUDICIAL REGION
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 4, Iligan City
Br. 10, Marawi City
METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS
STATION/BRANCH
Br. 3, Manila
Br. 8, Manila
Br. 36, Quezon City
Br. 48, Pasay City
Br. 49, Kalookan City
Br. 67, Makati City
Br. 70, Pasig City
MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES
FIRST JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 4, Baguio City
Br. 3, Dagupan City
SECOND JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 4, Tuguegarao City
THIRD JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 1, Angeles City
Br. 1, Cabanatuan City
Br. 2, City of San Fernando, Pampanga

Br. 3, Olongapo City
Br. 1, San Jose del Monte City
FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 1, Antipolo City
Br. 2, Lipa City
Br. 1, San Pablo City
FIFTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 2, Legaspi City
Br. 2, Naga City
SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 3, Bacolod City
Br. 9, Iloilo City
Br. 2, Roxas City
SEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 7, Cebu City
Br. 3, Mandaue City
Br. 1, Tagbilaran City
NINTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 2, Zamboanga City
TENTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 2, Butuan City
Br. 5, Cagayan de Oro City
Br. 3, Ozamis City
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 7, Davao City
Br. 1, Gen Santos City
TWELFTH JUDICIAL REGION
Br. 1, Iligan City

The following guidelines shall be observed:

1. In multi sala stations where no branches of the first and second level courts are herein designated to try and decide environmental cases, the cases shall

be raffled among the branches thereat which shall try and decide such cases according to existing issuances.

2. All single sala first and second level courts are considered special courts for the above purpose.

3. The Special Courts herein designated shall continue to be included in the raffle of cases, criminal civil and other cases.

4. The branches thus designated as Special Courts shall continue to perform their functions as such within the purview of this Administrative Order even after the retirement, promotion, dismissal suspension, transfer or detail of the judges appointed/designated to preside over them. Their successors whether permanent or temporary, shall act as Presiding Judges of these Special Court unless the Supreme Court otherwise directs.

5. All environmental cases covered by this Order wherein pre trial in case of civil cases has already commenced and when the accused is already arraigned in case of criminal cases shall remain in the branches where they are originally assigned, otherwise these cases shall be assigned by raffle in case there are two or more designated Special Courts or when there is only one (1) in the station, the cases shall be unloaded to the said Special Court. The transferred environmental cases shall be considered as raffled cases to the Special Courts hence the branch which unloaded the environmental cases shall be assigned newly filed cases to replace the cases removed from said branch.

6. In the event of inhibition of the presiding judge of the Special Courts, the following shall be observed:

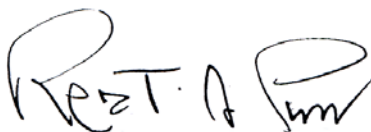
- a. Where there is only one (1) Special Court in the station, the pairing system for multi branch stations under Circular No. 7 dated September 23, 1974 shall apply;
- b. Where there are two (2) Special Courts in the station, the Executive Judge shall immediately assign the case to the other Special Court; and
- c. Where there are three (3) or more Special Courts in the station, the Executive Judge shall immediately assign by raffle to the other Special Courts.

In case all the Presiding Judges of the other Special Courts are also disqualified or inhibit themselves, the case shall be forwarded to the pairing judge of the Special Court which originally handled the said case. If the pairing judge is also disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the case shall be raffled to the other regular courts. At the next raffle, a newly filed case shall be assigned to the disqualified or inhibiting judge to replace the case so removed from his/her court.

- d. Where a judge of a single sala first level court is disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the Order of Inhibition shall be referred to the Executive Judge who shall assign the case by raffle among the judges in his administrative area of supervision, the assigned judge shall try and decide the same in the court where it was originally filed;
- e. Where the judge of a single sala RTC is disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the Order of Inhibition shall be referred to the Executive/Presiding Judge of the nearest RTC station. If the nearest station is a multi sala branch, the Executive Judge shall assign the case to the same Special Court in the station, if there is any. If the presiding judge of the Special Court is disqualified or inhibits himself/herself, the case shall be raffled among the judges in the station. In all instances, the case shall be tried by the assigned judge in the court where the case was originally filed

This Order shall take effect upon its issuance.

January 28, 2008



REYNATO S. PUNO
Chief Justice



LEONARDO A. QUISUMBING
Associate Justice
Chairperson, Second Division



CONSUELO YNARES-SANTIAGO
Associate Justice
Chairperson, Third Division

(Per Revised A.M. No. 99-12-88-SC)

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TCB/AO-green benches/cde/1-2008