

# CHAPTER III RIGHTS TO ANCESTRAL DOMAINS

SEC. 4. Concept of Ancestral Lands/Domains. – Ancestral lands/domains shall include such concepts of territories which cover not only the physical environment but the total environment including the spiritual and cultural bonds to the areas which the ICCs/IPs possess, occupy and use and to which they have claims of ownership.

SEC. 5. Indigenous Concept of Ownership. – Indigenous concept of ownership sustains the view that ancestral domains and all resources found therein shall serve as the material bases of their cultural integrity. The indigenous concept of ownership generally holds that ancestral domains are the ICCs/IPs private but community property which belongs to all generations and therefore cannot be sold, disposed or destroyed. It likewise covers sustainable traditional resource rights.

SEC. 6. Composition of Ancestral Lands/Domains. – Ancestral lands and domains shall consist of all areas generally belonging to ICCs/IPs as referred under Sec. 3, items (a) and (b) of this Act.

SEC. 7. Rights to Ancestral Domains. – The rights of ownership and possession of ICCs/IPs to their ancestral domains shall be recognized and protected. Such rights shall include:

1. Right of Ownership. - The right to claim ownership over lands, bodies of water traditionally and actually occupied by ICCs/IPs, sacred places, traditional hunting and fishing grounds, and all improvements made by them at any time within the domains;
2. Right to Develop Lands and Natural Resources. - Subject to Section 56 hereof, right to develop, control and use lands and territories traditionally occupied, owned, or used; to manage and conserve natural resources within the territories and uphold the responsibilities for future generations; to benefit and share the profits from allocation and utilization of the natural resources found therein; the right to negotiate the terms and conditions for the exploration of natural resources in the areas for the purpose of ensuring ecological, environmental protection and the conservation measures, pursuant to national and customary laws; the right to an informed and intelligent participation in the formulation and implementation of any project, government or private, that will affect or impact upon the ancestral domains and to receive just and fair compensation for any damages which they may sustain as a result of the project; and the right to effective measures by the government to prevent any interference with, alienation and encroachment upon these rights;
3. Right to Stay in the Territories. - The right to stay in the territory and not to be removed therefrom. No ICCs/IPs will be relocated without their free and prior informed consent, nor through any means other than eminent domain. Where relocation is considered necessary as an exceptional measure, such relocation shall take place only with the free and prior informed consent of the ICCs/IPs concerned and whenever possible, they shall be

guaranteed the right to return to their ancestral domains, as soon as the grounds for relocation cease to exist. When such return is not possible, as determined by agreement or through appropriate procedures, ICCs/IPs shall be provided in all possible cases with lands of quality and legal status at least equal to that of the land previously occupied by them, suitable to provide for their present needs and future development. Persons thus relocated shall likewise be fully compensated for any resulting loss or injury;

4. Right in Case of Displacement. - In case displacement occurs as a result of natural catastrophes, the State shall endeavor to resettle the displaced ICCs/IPs in suitable areas where they can have temporary life support systems: Provided, That the displaced ICCs/IPs shall have the right to return to their abandoned lands until such time that the normalcy and safety of such lands shall be determined: Provided, further, That should their ancestral domain cease to exist and normalcy and safety of the previous settlements are not possible, displaced ICCs/IPs shall enjoy security of tenure over lands to which they have been resettled: Provided, furthermore, That basic services and livelihood shall be provided to them to ensure that their needs are adequately addressed;
5. Right to Regulate Entry of Migrants. - Right to regulate the entry of migrant settlers and organizations into the domains;
6. Right to Safe and Clean Air and Water. - For this purpose, the ICCs/IPs shall have access to integrated systems for the management of their inland waters and air space;
7. Right to Claim Parts of Reservations. - The right to claim parts of the ancestral domains which have been reserved for various purposes, except those reserved and intended for common and public welfare and service; and
8. Right to Resolve Conflict. - Right to resolve land conflicts in accordance with customary laws of the area where the land is located, and only in default thereof shall the complaints be submitted to amicable settlement and to the Courts of Justice whenever necessary.

SEC. 8. Rights to Ancestral Lands. - The right of ownership and possession of the ICCs/IPs to their ancestral lands shall be recognized and protected.

1. Right to transfer land/property. - Such right shall include the right to transfer land or property rights to/among members of the same ICCs/IPs, subject to customary laws and traditions of the community concerned.
2. Right to Redemption. - In cases where it is shown that the transfer of land/property rights by virtue of any agreement or devise, to a non-member of the concerned ICCs/IPs is tainted by the vitiated consent of the ICCs/IPs, or is transferred for an unconscionable consideration or price, the transferor ICC/IP shall have the right to redeem the same within a period not exceeding fifteen (15) years from the date of transfer.

SEC. 9. Responsibilities of ICCs/IPs to their Ancestral Domains. - ICCs/IPs occupying a duly certified ancestral domain shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Maintain Ecological Balance. - To preserve, restore, and maintain a balanced ecology in the ancestral domain by protecting the flora and fauna, watershed areas, and other reserves;

2. Restore Denuded Areas. - To actively initiate, undertake and participate in the reforestation of denuded areas and other development programs and projects subject to just and reasonable remuneration; and
3. Observe Laws. - To observe and comply with the provisions of this Act and the rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 10. Unauthorized and Unlawful Intrusion. - Unauthorized and unlawful intrusion upon, or use of any portion of the ancestral domain, or any violation of the rights hereinbefore enumerated, shall be punishable under this law. Furthermore, the Government shall take measures to prevent non-ICCs/IPs from taking advantage of the ICCs/IPs customs or lack of understanding of laws to secure ownership, possession of land belonging to said ICCs/IPs.

SEC. 11. Recognition of Ancestral Domain Rights. - The rights of ICCs/IPs to their ancestral domains by virtue of Native Title shall be recognized and respected. Formal recognition, when solicited by ICCs/IPs concerned, shall be embodied in a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), which shall recognize the title of the concerned ICCs/IPs over the territories identified and delineated.

SEC. 12. Option to Secure Certificate of Title Under Commonwealth Act 141, as amended, or the Land Registration Act 496. - Individual members of cultural communities, with respect to their individually-owned ancestral lands who, by themselves or through their predecessors-in-interest, have been in continuous possession and occupation of the same in the concept of owner since time immemorial or for a period of not less than thirty (30) years immediately preceding the approval of this Act and uncontested by the members of the same ICCs/IPs shall have the option to secure title to their ancestral lands under the provisions of Commonwealth Act 141, as amended, or the Land Registration Act 496.

For this purpose, said individually-owned ancestral lands, which are agricultural in character and actually used for agricultural, residential, pasture, and tree farming purposes, including those with a slope of eighteen percent (18%) or more, are hereby classified as alienable and disposable agricultural lands.

The option granted under this section shall be exercised within twenty (20) years from the approval of this Act.

---

Revision #1

Created 31 May 2025 04:52:01 by MaharlikanWatchman

Updated 31 May 2025 04:55:48 by MaharlikanWatchman