

“We are all bound in the struggle to save the mighty Abra river of our lives.”

August 10, 2012

**LGUs, NGOs and ACADEME INK PARTNERSHIP TO
EVALUATE AND PROTECT THE ABRA RIVER**

Save the Abra River Movement (STARM), together with its affiliate organizations and institution- Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) and Solidarity of Peasants Against Exploitation (STOP Exploitation), and the University of the Philippines Baguio City signed a Memorandum of Agreement on August 10 with local government units traversed by the Abra River before it empties to the West Philippine Sea and the University of Northern Philippines to conduct a research and education campaign for the assessment of the state and protection of river.

The project *“Mangrove Cover and Coral Reef Assessment, Initial Restoration and Environmental Education in Selected Threatened Shoreline Communities in Ilocos Sur”* aims to identify existing mangrove, coral and associated species, socio-economic profiling of the communities, and to compile and analyse the information into a comprehensive and reliable database that can be utilized to make informed decisions in the utilization of community resources. It will be composed of two components – the research component covering the socio-economic and biodiversity profiling and assessment of the coastal and river bank communities of Santa, Caoayan and the City of Vigan. Education and information campaign is the second component which will focus on the current state and threats to the Abra River and possible impacts and measures on climate change and the extractive industry in the area. Support for the project was provided by the Foundation for Philippine Environment.

The partnership is significant and timely to attain the *reef to ridge strategy* for environmental protection and rehabilitation as well as disaster risk reduction and food security mechanisms for the province, especially to the communities that rely on the Abra River for livelihood.

Profs. ErlindaPalagas and Celia Austria from the University of the Philippines Baguio City will head the research teams for the socio-economic and biodiversity aspects respectively.

Reference:

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