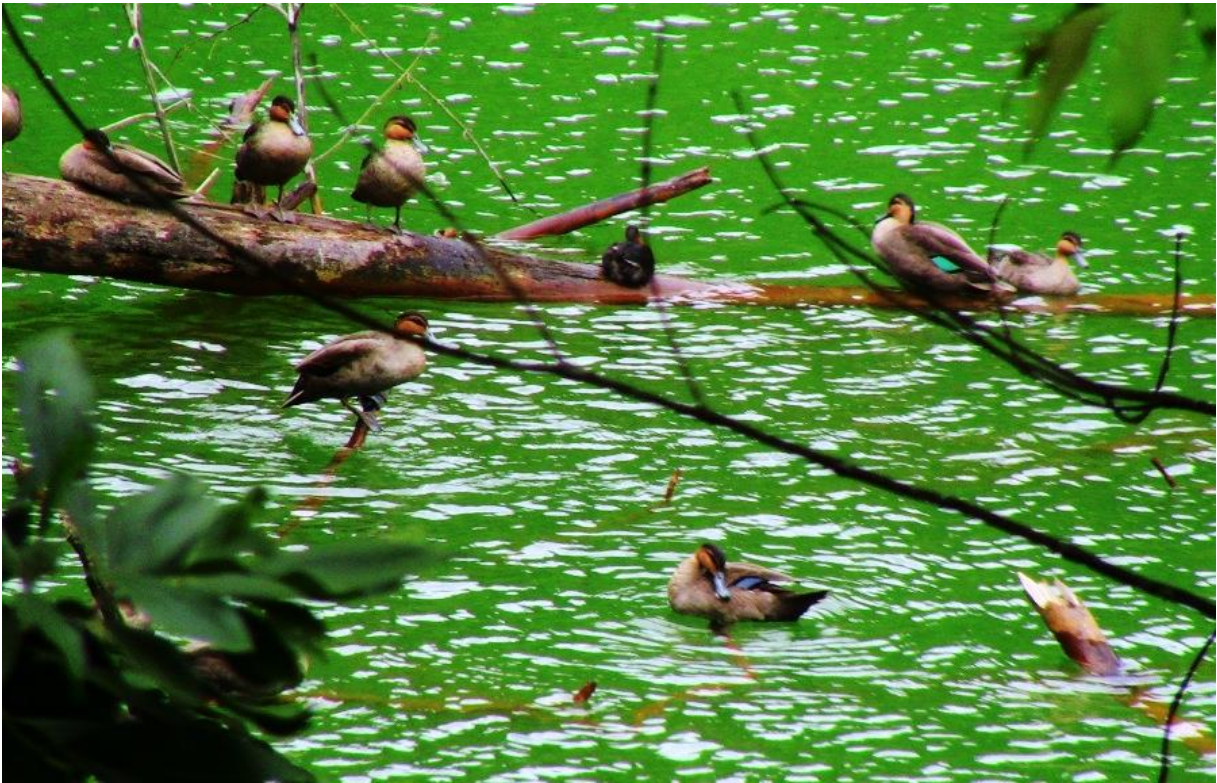


## NEWS RELEASE

### Catholic Priests and Religious Leaders Marvel at Wildlife in TVIRD's Tailings Dam

*DIOPIM delegation witnesses final mine rehabilitation activities in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte*



**Mighty ducks.** A total of 51 species of birds, including wild ducks (in photo) were seen at TVIRD's mining area – particularly in its Tailings Dam, which now resembles a pristine lake. "The ducks are indicators of life," according to an observer.

**Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte / March 2019** – "Wow, wild ducks!" an amazed member of a 12-member delegation composed of priests, nuns and lay ministers of the Roman Catholic Church from the Diocese of Dipolog, Ozamiz, Pagadian, Iligan and Marawi (DIOPIM) said when he saw the migratory birds swim and frolick in the calm waters of TVIRD's Sulphide Tailings Impoundment Facility.

Astonished by the local wildlife, the religious group was also stunned by the beauty of the dam that now resembles a pristine lake.

“The ducks are indicators of life,” commented another one, while Father Ramil Corong, the leader of the group, silently observed and looked around.

The priest was joined by Sister Maria Melba Bongalos, a nun who was on a ‘site visit’ in Canatuan after receiving a report that the dam has allegedly leaked. However, the team did not find seepage in the dam, but instead discovered that wild ducks and other birds are now permanent fixtures of the dam.

The dam was built by TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD) in Sitio Canatuan, Barangay Tabayo of this municipality in 2012 to store tailings generated from its copper and zinc processing. It is based on Philippine regulations, which include analyses and design for a Maximum Credible Earthquake (8.5 magnitude) and a Probable Maximum Flood (at 24-hr maximum precipitation of 1,635mm).

Design, supervision and monitoring of the 48-hectare facility were done by US-based consultants, Smith Williams and Knight Piesold (established 1921) – a global consulting firm that serves the mining, power, infrastructure, water resources, and oil and gas industries. It has built dams worldwide, including the country’s San Roque Dam.

### **Eco tourism in Zamboanga**

“How I wish our government would turn-over TVI’s mining concession area to us because I would propose to the local government that we’ll transform it into a tourist destination,” said Sangguniang Bayan (SB) Member Jovie Guardarama, chair of the committee on environment and agriculture of Siocon Municipality.

Fellow SB Member Joseph Garcia wants to add a floating restaurant, zip line, cottages and a trail that leads to the reforestation area.

It was learned, that the night before, Engr. Felizardo Canama, one of the members of the external Multi-partite Monitoring Team (MMT) also assured Fr. Corong and his delegation that there was no truth to the reported ‘leak’ since a week before, he and other MMT members were in Canatuan conducting their monitoring activities as mandated by the country’s Mining Law.

“We were there for almost a week. We did not find anything unusual in the dam,” he told the priests and the lay ministers.

The MMT, which regularly monitors the company’s final mine rehabilitation project, has members that come from the national and local governments, as well as the private sector. TVIRD’s host Subanon community is also well-represented in the team.

Canama, Siocon’s Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer, represents the local government unit in the team.

### **Final Mine Rehabilitation**

During the open forum, TVIRD's Community Relations Officer Lullie Micabalo made it clear that the company is no longer operating.

"We are still here because the last phase of mining is 'final mine rehabilitation.' We are rehabilitating the areas that we disturbed during our operations. You did not see our processing plant anymore because it was decommissioned in 2014," she explained.

The company has almost completed the active phase of the final mine rehabilitation. More than 4,000 trees were already planted in the disturbed areas and its environmental crew is now focusing on the former surface mine area.

"This is the area where gold and silver ores were mined – the same area that copper ores were taken," said crew supervisor Cristopher Tolentino. Monitoring records of the MMT and that of MGB-IX show that TVIRD is actually nearing the completion of the active phase rehabilitation.

MMT member and Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) representative Manuel Berberio, Jr. highly speaks of the company's rehabilitation efforts. "I would say, the company is doing great in its rehabilitation work," he said.

### **Keeping Siocon safe**

In a 2017 report to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), a total of 51 species of birds were seen at TVIRD's Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) area. These were witnessed by SGS, a third party commissioned by the company to conduct regular monitoring of wild animals and plants in its area.

TVIRD assured the visiting clerics that like them, the company is very much concerned with the health, and well-being of the townfolks. The company's Sulphide Tailings Dam underscores this commitment.

The dam embankment height at the completion of Stage 4 construction is at 85 meters – approximately the equivalent of 28 storeys – with a maximum impoundment volume of 6.5 million cubic meters.

With approximately 2.5 million cubic meters of tailings deposited during the company's operations, a mere 38% of the impoundment storage capacity is utilized – further ensuring the safety of Siocon town and its citizens.

TVIRD has been in the Zamboanga Peninsula since 1994 and has successfully concluded its gold-silver project in 2008 and its copper-zinc project in 2014. It is also the first mining company in the country to embark on a final mine rehabilitation program under the guidance of the Philippine government.

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**Press photos:**



**1** Mine tour participants include Mayor Julius Lobrigas (center), SB Members, a Siocon Parish Priest, NGO members, nuns, priests and lay ministers from the Diocese of Dipolog, Ozamiz, Pagadian, Iligan and Marawi (DIOPIM).



**2** Rev. Fr. Ramil Corong, Director of the Social Action Center (SAC) of the Diocese of Dipolog, was assured by MMT Member Engr. Felizardo Canama of the TVIRD Tailings Dam's integrity.



- 3** *Five times greener.* TVIRD planted and grown close to 400,000 trees during its operations in Canatuan – which is five times higher in terms of forest density compared to before the company operated.



- 4** *Nearly 140,000 Cash Crops are planned as part of TVIRD's Final Rehabilitation, which will transition Canatuan's economy back to agriculture.*



- 5 Water monitoring.** *In partnership with the MMT, TVIRD regular conducts monitoring activities in surrounding bodies of water in Canatuan, including the company's Tailings Dam to ensure its quality for Siocon residents. Water samples are sent to accredited laboratories for periodic analysis in order to ensure compliance.*

#### **About TVI in the Philippines**

*TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. ("TVIRD"), is the local affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration, development and production of precious and base metals from district-scale, large-system, high-margin projects located in the Philippines. Concurrent ownership of ventures is shared with partner company, Prime Resource Holdings Inc.*

*The commercial operations of Agata Mining Ventures Inc. (AMVI) mark the third successful mining project that TVIRD brought on-stream in a period of 10 years. The company is committed to exploration and mining practices that promote transparency, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the inalienable rights to life, dignity, and sustainable development of its host communities.*

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