

EMBARGOED TILL 8.00 WEDNESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019 PHT / 01.00 WEDNESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019 BST / 20.00 TUESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2019 EDT

Revealed: Del Monte Philippines' growers implicated in violent attacks against indigenous activists as attacks against land and environmental defenders escalate

- New Global Witness investigation uncovers the connections between Del Monte Philippines, one of the world's biggest and best-known fruit producing brands and major exporter to the United States, and a pineapple grower, local rancher and current Mayor Pablo Lorenzo III of Quezon, Bukidnon who activists suspect of ordering attacks on them.
- The food and beverage company failed to identify historic land conflicts and maintained its agreement with Lorenzo despite violence against indigenous activists on his ranches, including the murder of Renato Anglao in 2017.
- The investigation follows [recent revelations by Global Witness](#) that another major agribusiness company - Dole Philippines - has been linked through its suppliers to allegations of fraud and coercion to remove indigenous people and make way for a banana plantation.

Wednesday 18th September 2019 – A new Global Witness investigation has reveals how Del Monte Philippines maintained an inappropriate business relationship with a Mayor in Bukidnon, Philippines. This Mayor is accused by local people of ordering attacks on protestors and threatening indigenous activist Renato Anglao prior to his unresolved murder.

In 2017 Renato Anglao, the secretary-general of TribalIndigenous Oppressed Group Association (TINDOGA), was shot dead after demanding local rancher and current mayor Pablo Lorenzo III return the community's land, which Lorenzo's company – the Montalvan Ranch – was using for agribusiness plantations. Nobody has been prosecuted for the killing, in which Anglao was shot in the head while travelling home by motorcycle with his wife and five year old son.

The investigation reveals how for many years Del Monte Philippines had a business agreement with Pablo Lorenzo to grow pineapples for them.

They also employed him as a consultant, and renewed their contracts with him even after evidence of violence associated with his ranches came to light and a government commission backed community claims.

This means they effectively failed to do adequate due diligence before and during entering into contracts with him and his company. Del Monte Philippines is a major exporter of pineapples to Del Monte Foods Inc in the United States. The company said it had moved to end the growership agreement when it discovered their supplier was also a public official but had never become aware of the community claims or violence.

The revelations follow a recent Global Witness report, which not only exposed that the Philippines was the country with the highest number of killings of land and environmental defenders in 2018, but that another major global agribusiness brand, Dole Philippines, has also been linked via its suppliers to allegations of fraud and coercion to remove indigenous people from a banana plantation in Mindanao.

Both stories highlight how international agribusiness companies are still not doing enough to avoid conflicts in their supply chains – particularly in countries like the Philippines, where laws on land and indigenous rights are often not enforced.

“As demonstrated by the allegations of corruption and violence around a nearby plantation run by global food giant Dole, this story surrounding Del Monte is, tragically, far from an exception: it shows that corporate greed is not being held to account in the Philippines, with those standing up and speaking out being silenced without consequence” Global Witness Senior Campaigner Ben Leather said.

“It could not be clearer that international companies are still not carrying out proper due diligence to avoid conflicts in their supply chains – particularly in countries like the Philippines, where laws protecting land and indigenous rights are often not enforced. In spite of President Duterte’s promises to protect citizens from the abuses of vested interests, ‘business at all costs’ continues as usual, while those standing up for land rights and the environment are threatened and even killed,” Leather added.

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Notes to editors:

1. **Interviews:** Available on request. Please e-mail hiqbal@globalwitness.org to arrange.
2. **Video B-Roll & Photographs:** Of the Dole Philippines case study highlighted in this press release [can be found here.](#)
3. A full briefing which goes into more detail on this case [can be found here.](#)