[DATE]

[NAME]

[TITLE/POSITION]

[INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION]

Copy furnish:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

National Bureau of Investigation

Philippine National Police

**RE: MARINE TURTLES IN CAPTIVITY**

Dear [NAME]:

It has been reported that you have [QUANTITY] marine turtles ([INSERT SPECIES AND CONSERVATION STATUS HERE IF KNOWN]) in your possession.

[INSERT PHOTOS OF THE ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY IF APPLICABLE]

It is illegal to keep any marine turtle in confinement for any reason. According to the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act (Republic Act 9147), it is illegal to possess wildlife. Article 1, Section 8 of the law states that, “no person or entity shall be allowed possession of wildlife unless such person or entity can prove financial and technical capability and facility to maintain said wildlife.” Under Article 4, Section 27, “collecting, hunting or possessing wildlife, their by-products and derivatives” is considered unlawful. The penalty for violating this provision is one to four years in prison, and a fine of PhP30,000 to PhP200,000, depending on the conservation status of the species.

Only turtles under rehabilitation can be kept in captivity in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centers authorized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), where they are not allowed to be displayed and are prepared for release. We urge you to release the turtles immediately in cooperation with the DENR for proper assessment and disposition. These turtles may still need to be reintroduced to the wild.

Marine turtles play an important role in the marine ecosystem. While these species are protected by Philippine laws, they continue to face a number of natural and manmade threats – including captivity. These turtles belong to the sea, not in a small cage.

Yours truly,

[NAME]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]