

**MGB redistributes geohazard maps in Western Visayas.**



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Region 6, has distributed anew copies of geohazard maps with scale of 1:50,000 to local government units in Western Visayas.

DENR-Region 6 Executive Director Adeluisa Siapno said the redistribution of the maps was in accordance with the instruction of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon J. P. Paje to level up the department's technical assistance to local government units to reduce the impact of natural disasters on people, the environment and infrastructure.

“Geohazard maps identify the level of susceptibility of an area to not only flooding but also to landslides. With the maps at their disposal, the local leaders and their constituents can already work on strategies to minimize the impact of calamities,” Siapno said.

Prior to this, in 2011, the DENR has already distributed geohazard maps to the LGUs, including the conduct of the orientation workshops on the use of the maps.

She also stressed that the MGB continuously issues landslide and flooding advisories to local

officials as soon as the weather bureau confirms the existence of weather disturbance. “Unfortunately,” she said, “we continue to suffer in grief from loss of lives and properties due to inadequate preparations.”

The MGB represents the DENR in the Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Committee of the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (RDRRMC). The RDRRMC is an inter-agency council created by virtue of Republic Act 10121, otherwise known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, tasked not only to inform the public about incoming calamities such as typhoons but also to help communities reduce the risk of disasters.

The said law acknowledges that part of disaster risk reduction and management is the need to “identify(ing) hazard-prone areas and other factors which contribute to people’s exposure to disasters.”

“This is where geohazards maps play a valuable role, for it contains an accurate guide on areas where flooding and landslide will mostly likely to occur in case a typhoon strikes, so as to reduce the loss of lives and properties brought about by natural disasters,” Siapno said.

In a related development, DENR-Region 6 geologist Mae Magarzo disclosed that the MGB is now in the process of completing digitizing all geo-hazard maps with scale of 1:10,000, and in checking the identified relocation sites for landslide susceptibility.

