

17 December 2022, Saturday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Marcos signs into law 2023 budget, seen to sustain growth, create jobs

By SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA
& JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ

PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Friday signed the P5.268-trillion 2023 national budget, thanking Congress for what he described as the fastest congressional deliberations ever for a national appropriations bill.

Following the record-breaking speed in which the 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA) was signed, President Marcos Jr. said the government is now ready to roll out with its pandemic recovery initiatives next year.

In his speech after the signing of the 2023 GAA, Marcos lauded Congress for delivering to him the "quickest and fastest" passed national budget so far, which he considers as an early Christmas gift from lawmakers.

The GAA is usually signed in the last week of December, such as in the cases of the 2021 and the 2022 national budget. The 2020 GAA was passed into law in January 2020.

Marcos stressed the importance of the fast passage of the 2023 GAA, since it will serve as a government roadmap for the implementation of its programs.

He also noted that their proposed initiatives next year are backed by Congress.

"It is always very important that the GAA has been put together in consonance with all of the plans of the Executive. And that kind of coordination, and that kind of synergy that we will gain from that is going to be an essential part of the way that we move forward," Marcos said.

"That bodes well for us, seeing as we have many, many plans. There are many things that we need to do. There are many things that we would like to do. And we are slowly moving in that direction," he added.

The President said he will be pushing for more legislative amendments for investment and financial policy to boost the country's economic growth.

In a statement, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said the economic objectives outlined in the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) are as follows: 6.5 to 7.5 percent real gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2022 and 6.5 to 8.0 percent real GDP growth annually between 2023 and 2028; 9 percent or single-digit poverty rate by 2028; 3-percent National Government (NG) deficit-to-GDP ratio by 2028; less than 60 percent national government debt-to-GDP ratio by 2025; and the attainment of upper-middle-income status for Filipinos.

'Most important tool'

REACTING to the signing, Speaker



TITLE: MARCOS SIGNS INTO LAW 2023 BUDGET, SEEN TO

PAGE 2/2

SUSTAIN GROWTH, CREATE JOBS.

Martin G. Romualdez said the budget will help the administration implement its Agenda for Prosperity to sustain growth, generate economic activities and jobs, and increase the income for Filipinos.

"It is the most important and potent tool the President, his economic team and the entire government can use to accomplish the goals of the prosperity roadmap," said Romualdez, first cousin of Marcos Jr.

He said the House of Representatives and the Senate deliberated on and approved the President's first full-year budget proposal "in record time."

"As far as I can remember, the 2023 budget is one of the few spending bills signed into law in mid-December, way before the start of its implementation on New Year's Day," he added.

With the early signing, the administration, principally the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), now has enough time to prepare for the release of funds appropriated in the 2023 budget law, Romualdez said.

"The money needed to sustain our economic expansion momentum and keep the country on the high-growth path should be out on January 1. Agencies should be ready to keep up with their programs, activities and projects, while observing transparency and accountability," Romualdez added.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Elizaldy Co said the P5.268-trillion 2023 budget will help the country move forward from the pandemic to prosperity.

"The annual passage of the General Appropriations Act is the single most important task of Congress. This GAA for 2023 will help the Philippines recover from the continuing effects of the pandemic

and move forward to prosperity," said Co.

Angara: Productive investments

SENATOR Juan Edgardo Angara, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee that spearheaded efforts to ensure timely passage of the money measure, said that, "in deliberating on the 2023 GAA, Congress was well aware of the need for the government to make productive investments in human and physical capital in order to empower the people, generate revenues, and address the most pressing needs of our kababayan."

In a statement, Angara said: "As stated by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., this budget is anchored on an agenda for prosperity. We are no longer at a point where we are catching up and reacting to the developments just like the past two years. Now we can lay the foundation for the country to build on towards sustaining economic growth and providing more opportunities for our people."

Majority Leader Joel Villanueva, in a text message to BusinessMirror, said the "timely passage" of the 2023 National Budget into law is "a Christmas gift for the Filipino nation."

Villanueva added, "Our next job in the Senate is to make sure that there is transparency and accountability in the use of public funds. We will not let these funds meant to uplift our people's lives fall to corruption or be squandered."

He recalled that, "While there were disagreements on some issues during the bicameral conference committee meetings, both panels found common ground in the need to ensure that assistance is given to those who require it the most and to keep the momentum going in the country's move towards economic recovery."

With Butch Fernandez



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Manila Standard

A3
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

DEC 17 2022

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Boracay sinkholes increasing in number—MGB

By Rio N. Araja

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) has observed and documented sinkholes in three villages of the world famous Boracay Island since 2018.

Mae Magarzo, MGB chief geologist in Western Visayas, cited the latest geological survey showing that the number of sinkholes in the island has increased.

She fears that the island might collapse as 815 sinkholes have been discovered.

Data showed that the number of sinkholes on the island went up from 798 in 2018 to 801 in 2019, 814 in 2020, and 815 between 2021 and 2022, in barangays Balabag, Manoc-manoc and Yapak.

Magarzo stressed that the island's current physical carrying capacity must be strictly implemented amid increas-

ing number of infrastructures being built on the island.

She raised concern that sinkholes could cause the ground to collapse, and that such occurrence is difficult to determine, unlike the occurrence of landslides through the observation of cracks or lowering elevation.

"We can see that there are more holes. The danger is, if the island is over-capacitated in structures, there would come a time when many (of these) structures might collapse," she said.

Based on the DENR "subsidence susceptibility map," the island in Malay town is highly susceptible to subsidence or ground sinking as it also sits on a fault line.

Magarzo said the island is made of limestone that is vulnerable to sinkholes.

Boracay's carrying capacity assessment in 2018 showed structures built on the island had exceeded the ideal number.

There are at least 10,250 houses on the island or 4,712 units more than the 5,538 real carrying capacity for residential structures.

The island has 2,779 business establishments, 878 units more than the 1,901 RCC for business.

Boracay has a tourist carrying capacity of 19,215 or a daily capacity of 6,405.

Malay, Aklan Mayor Floribar Bautista said Boracay receives about 4,000 tourists daily, which is still within the island's carrying capacity as allowed by the government.

Bautista issued the statement on the heels of the MGB's disclosure that more than 800 sinkholes have appeared on the island.

"Basta hindi tayo bababa sa 4,000 a day...ang mga residents na lang sa Boracay nasa 38,000 yan eh," Bautista told TeleRadyo.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

The Manila Times

A7
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

DEC 17 2022

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE

MGB asked to bare 815 Boracay sinkholes

OFFICIALS of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Western Visayas will meet with Mayor Frolibar Bautista of Malay, Aklan, on Wednesday, December 21, after the DENR-MGB discovered at least 815 sinkholes on Boracay Island.

In a radio interview, Bautista said the meeting will tackle the actions to be taken to ensure the safety of the residents and visitors in the country's top tourist destination.

"I've already received a letter

from the MGB inviting us to a meeting to discuss the action to be taken to ensure the safety of the residents and tourists," Bautista said.

Bautista added that he also requested the DENR-MGB to provide details of the sinkholes, including the location.

"The location of the sinkholes should be identified. I already asked for a map from the MGB so that we can identify the areas affected and if there are structures located in the sinkholes," he added.

According to Bautista, the DENR had set a maximum of 19,000 occupants of Boracay Island. But he admitted that at present, the daily tourist arrivals reach 4,000 while the population of the residents totalled 38,000.

"As of now, the maximum capacity for tourists is at 6,500 daily," Bautista noted.

He said that prior to the pandemic, the occupancy rate of hotels was at 17,000 rooms.

"At present, there are more than 13,000 rooms available, as the others are still undergoing renova-

tion," according to Bautista.

He said that the local government does not allow high-rise buildings on Boracay Island.

"Our maximum is only six-story buildings," he noted.

According to Bautista, the local government offers a program to workers and residents in Boracay to encourage them to transfer to the mainland.

Based on the study of the DENR-MGB, at least 815 sinkholes were found in three villages in Boracay, from the 789 monitored in 2018.

BELLA CARIASO



'Boracay observes capacity limit amid sinkholes'

Rules on the carrying capacity and height limit of structures are being enforced in Boracay after more than 800 sinkholes were found on the resort island.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said it found 815 sinkholes during hazard mapping in the past two years.

Mayor Frolibar Bautista of Malay, Aklan said the average number of tourists to the island is still below the figure set by the government.

"Basta hindi bababa sa 4,000 a day... Ang capacity diyari sa

6,400 or 6,500 tourists a day," he said in an interview over ABS-CBN's *Teleradyo*.

Bautista said the island's jetty port management keeps a list of visitors entering the island.

He said the rules on carrying capacity are observed "because the island is just small and very critical."

Bautista gave assurance that the local government also implements the maximum limit of up to six floors for structures on the island.

He said he would ask for a copy of maps from the MGB to help the local government locate the sinkholes that the agency found. - Ghio Ong



MGB ilantad mga sinkhole sa Boracay - Mayor

KINALAMPAG ni Malay, Aklan Mayor Floribor Bautista ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na maglabas ng mapa ukol sa sinasabi ng ahensya na higit 800 sinkhole na nakita sa isla ng Boracay.

Ito'y matapos na magbigay ng babala ang MGB na posibleng mabura umano sa mapa ang Boracay kapag lumubog ito dahil sa mga nakita nilang higit 800 sinkhole sa isla.

Babala ng MGB na kailangang obserbahan ang 'carrying capacity' ng Boracay sa mga turista.

Giit naman ng alkalde na dapat tukuyin ng MGB kung saan matatagpuan ang mga sinkhole.

"Manghingi ako ng mga mapa d'yan sa MGB para malaman natin kung gaano kalaki," ani Bautista.

Sa ganitong paraan aniya ay hindi na pata-yuan ng istraktura ang mga lugar kung saan mayroong sinkhole.

Binanggit pa ni Bautista na nasa 4,000 turista ang dumaraing sa Boracay sa loob ng isang araw na saktong pa sa 'carrying capacity' ng isla na pinahihintulutan ng gobyerno.

"Basta hindi tayo

bababa sa 4,000 aday ang mga residente na lang sa Boracay nasa 38,000 yan eh," ayon pa kay Bautista sa isang panayam sa 'Te-leradyo'.

Siniguro pa nito na mahigpit nilang ipinatutupad ang mga patakaran pagdating sa bilang ng mga bisitang pinapayagan sa Boracay.

Tungkol naman aniya sa mga istraktura ay nagtakda sila ng mga regulasyon na hindi dapat masyadong mataas at mayroong maximum height na hanggang anim na palapag lang ang maaaring ipatayo. **(Dolly Cabreza)**



Boracay 'mabubura' sa mapa dahil sa 815 sinkholes

NAGBABALA ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na dapat obserbahan ang carrying capacity sa Boracay dahil sa posibleng peligro ng paglitaw ng sinkholes.

Inihayag ng ahensya na vulnerable sa sinkholes ang isla.

Ayon kay Engineer Mae Magarzo, hepe ng MGB Geosciences Division, land depressions ang sinkholes dahil sa pagtanggap ng suporta sa ilalim dahil sa lindol o dahil sa pagbaba ng tubig sa lupa.

Napag-alaman na limestone ang kabuuan ng Boracay.

Ayon kay Magarzo, nabubuo ang sinkholes sa limestone.

Sa isinagawang Karst

Subsidence Hazard Mapping noong 2018, natukoy sa Boracay ang 789 sinkholes, 801 noong 2019, 814 noong 2022, at 815 mula sa 2021 hanggang 2022.

Nakakalat ang mga sinkhole na ito sa 3 barangays sa isla ng Boracay.

Inihayag din ni Magarzo na ang sinkhole ang "most dangerous type of hazard" dahil walang indikasyon kung kailan ito lalabas.

Sa pag-aaral, dapat nasa 1,085 lamang ang ideal arrival per day.



TIME: _____

PAGE

1/2

DEC 17 2022
DATE

DOH pushes COVID-19 waste management at local level



COVID-19

More than two years into the pandemic, the Department of Health (DOH) is training its sights on the management of hazardous COVID-19 waste—focusing its efforts at the local level, among hospitals and communities around the country.

The pandemic “exacerbated our problem on health-care waste [as it] increased the demand and use of varying health-care products,” DOH officer in charge Maria Rosario Vergeire said on Friday.

This generated “tens of thousands of extra medical waste” which threaten public health, she added.

Vergeire made these remarks at a ceremony in Caloocan City where the Philippine office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) donated an autoclave to the DOH-run Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital—also

known as Tala Hospital after the community there in Barangay 188, District III.

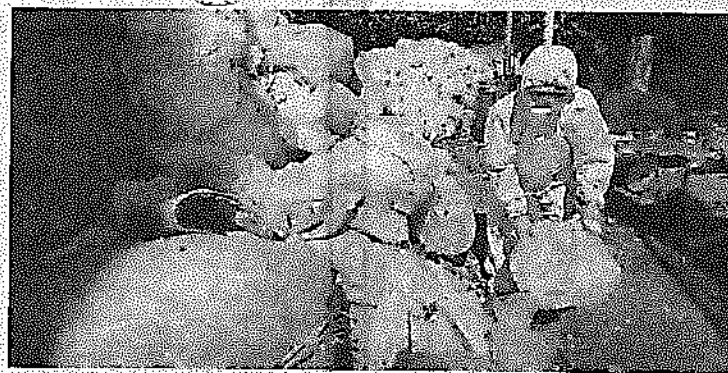
Autoclaves are pressure containers which sterilize, at high temperature, single-use medical implements such as syringes, vials and smaller items of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and goggles.

From masks to helmets

But there are other kinds of COVID-19 waste, as the World Health Organization (WHO) noted in a report early this year on pandemic waste management. These range from face masks and swabs to medical safety boxes as well as helmets and laboratory coats, which are also part of PPE.

Gerardo Mogol, an engineer of UNDP assigned to its waste management program, explained that autoclaves have a capacity of 200 kilograms and can operate eight to 10 hours a day.

He said the temperature for sterilizing the single-use materials could be set to as high as



ALL THAT TRASH Dressed in personal protective equipment, a janitor at the storage area of Tala Hospital in Caloocan segregates trash bags, many of which contain infectious waste. The hospital said it piles up 1,600 kilos of garbage a day, compared with 2,700 daily last year. Tala has also tapped the services of a “treatment, storage and disposal” provider to collect the garbage, which the hospital sprays with disinfectant. An autoclave donated on Friday is sure to help in disposal, but it won’t be operated until a structure is built as a designated area for the machine, the hospital said. —LYN RILLON

93 degrees Celsius (equivalent to 200 degrees Fahrenheit).

After that procedure, those items go through “shredding,” then they’re disposed, he said.

Edwine Carrié, deputy resident representative of UN-

DP-Philippines, said his office has also donated an autoclave to the Pasig City General Hospital.

‘Number one problem’
Besides providing equipment to hospitals and technical sup-



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

A4
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

TITLE: DOH

PUNCHES COVID-19 WASTE MANAGEMENT

PAGE 7/2

DEC 17 2022

DATE

AT LOCAL LEVEL

port and training to health-care professionals, UNDP-Philippines aims to help improve the country's response to medical waste management, Carrié said.

According to the WHO, one in three health-care facilities in the country does not have a safe disposal system.

Fritz Bonite, pollution control officer of Tala Hospital, said that was its "number one problem," especially at the height of COVID-19 in 2020.

"There were times when our ... storage could not accommodate them (the hazardous materials) anymore, so these were just left outside," he said.

'What we'll be doing'

Also around that time, the Pasig City General Hospital had a daily average of 300 to 500 kilos of garbage, according to Josie Flores, officer in charge of environmental group EcoWaste Coalition.

Early this year, Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the country had about 1,000 metric tons of health-care

waste—equivalent to around 166 trucks—being collected each day.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) appealed at that time to the local governments to do their part in managing the collected garbage, after it was reported in January that seven children in Legazpi City, who were playing with used syringes and tubes from a trash bag found on the city shores, became infected with COVID-19.

The DENR had noted then the "increasing amount of improperly discarded household health-care wastes," apart from those disposed by hospitals.

Vergeire said on Friday that the DOH is keen on "capacitating local government units (LGU), especially the LGU facilities at the lower level of care."

"They don't have proper training or guidance on how they can properly manage their health-care waste, so that is what we'll be doing ... in the years to come," she said. —KATHLEEN DE VILLA INQ



Hukay sa Bilibid idineklarang illegal quarrying ng DENR – BuCor

IDINEKLARA ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang hukay sa New Bilibid Prison (NBP) na illegal quarrying.

Ayon kay Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) Officer-in-Charge Gregorio Catapang, magsasampa sila ng kaso laban sa mga sangkot sa naturang quarry.

Nanindigan naman si suspended BuCor Chief Gerald Bantag na ang NBP excavation ay para sa scuba diving pool na pinondohan ng Agua Tierra Oro Mina Development (ATOM) Corporation.

Pero ayon kay ATOM President Virgilio Bote, umurong siya sa kasunduan kay Bantag.

Nang tanungin kung kasama sa sasampahan ng kaso si Bantag, sinabi ni Catapang na posible ito.

Samantala, inihayag ni Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla na personal na sinabi sa kaniya ni Bantag na naghuhukay siya upang hanapin ang Yamashita treasure sa NBP.



Baguio, QC, Ifugao native top DENR awards

BAGUIO City, Ifugao province and Quezon City emerged as the top winners in climate and disaster resiliency recognition awards.

The disaster risk reduction and management offices of Baguio City and Quezon City, and an Ifugao native emerged as top winners in the climate and disaster resiliency recognition awards organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The KLIMA-Iikasan Awards, organized by the DENR Climate Change Service (CCS) and Gender and Development Office, and in partnership with telecommunications giant Globe Telecom, seeks to recognize the stories of individuals, groups and provincial local government units (LGUs) in addressing climate change and disasters in communities.

"The stories that we received from 16 regions in the country only say one thing: there are already significant actions happening on the ground. We need to take note of them, document them, map them and see how we can scale up the initiatives to expand to other areas in their community," DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change Analiza Rebuelta-Teh said.

For her part, DENR CCS Director Elenida Basug said the contest aims to feature the long track record, and important contributions and initiatives in the environment, climate change and disaster risk management.

Six entries bagged the first and second places of KLIMA-Iikasan Awards under three categories (individual, group and LGU), while another six received special citations — Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment, Climate Change Award and Climate Technology for Resilience Award.

The Baguio City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office bagged the first place and the Climate Technology for Resilience Special Citation under the LGU category. It received a P80,000 cash prize.

Its winning entry, "The Baguio City Smart and Gender-Inclusive Flood Early Warning Information

and Mitigation System," took a holistic, nature-based, gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approach to address the city's challenges.

On the other hand, the Quezon City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Office ranked first place and the Climate Technology for Resilience Special Citation under the group category for its "IRISE UP" (Intelligent, Resilient and Integrated Systems for the Urban Population) entry.

IRISE UP is an early warning system that organizes and streamlines the DRRM information system of Quezon City so advisories are quickly disseminated to communities. The Quezon City DRRM Office received a P60,000 cash prize.

In the individual category, Moses Butic won first place and got a cash prize of P30,000 for his entry "The Ifugao Muyong: Perpetuating a Forest Legacy."

Ifugao Gov. Jerry Dalpog nominated Butic, whose story is about the indigenous practice inherited by the Ifugaos from their ancestors called "Muyong System," which is a forest management system that supports biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation.

Among the awardees included provincial local government unit of Cagayan for "Restoring Cagayan River: A HOPE to Build Back Life Better," second place, LGU category who received P40,000 cash prize; Kabasalan National High School's Youth for Environment in Schools Organization of Balintawak, Pagadian City for "Adopt-a-watershed program," second place, group category who got P30,000 cash prize; Mayor Leopoldo Bataoil of Lingayen, Pangasinan for "The Rebirth of our Philippine Ylang-ylang," second place, individual category, P20,000 cash prize.

The DENR received 60 entries from 16 regions in the country. The winning stories will be submitted to the Good Stories Movement, a global initiative led by people who aim to recognize the good stories of good people who are caring for the land, air and water of life.

BELLA CARIASO



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



3
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

DEC 17 2022
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE

Tapping Israel, Netherlands help in solving PH water issues eyed

HOUSE Committee on Ways and Means chairman Albay 2nd District Representative Joe Sarte Salceda announced that his office is working with the embassies of the State of Israel and the Kingdom of the Netherlands to address issues in the country's water sector.

Salceda is the chair of the technical working group (TWG) crafting the House's bill creating a Department of Water Resources (DWR).

He said Israeli ambassador Ilan Fluss expressed his "enthusiasm for your interest in Israel's technology and innovation" in the water sector.

The ambassador also offered to collaborate with Salceda on water issues and invited the House leader to a study tour in Israel on the matter.

Salceda said he is also communicating with the embassy of

the Kingdom of the Netherlands on the matter.

"These two countries are the best partners to learn from. One had too little water and is now an agriculture giant in the Middle East. The other is in an existential battle against too much water, and is now the world's most important source of water management technology. They handled the extremes. So, they would have the best insights into both a lack of water and an excess of it," Salceda said.

"I also hope to invite technical experts, encourage the hiring of their experts so we can do knowledge transfer, and bundle our partnership into some big multi-year package with our multilateral partners," Salceda added.

RPP



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

DEC 17 2022

THE: CONSERVE NOW OR NEVER

PAGE 1/3

DATE

Today, we celebrate World Wildlife Conservation Day. Never in the history of our world have human beings been working together as urgently as now to avert a global catastrophe, as we try to save our wildlife, our forests, our ecosystem from the effects of climate change.

In many parts of the world, this is a real-life crisis. And the region of Asia and the Pacific bears much of the brunt as it accounts for more than 80 percent of the global loss of life, both human and animal, due to disasters that are mainly man-made.



MYOBING NIEVA CARRION

To quote Black Elk, the Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux tribe: "One should pay attention to even the smallest crawly creature, for these too may have a valuable lesson to teach us." I absolutely agree with this wise advice of the Indian sage, as the American Indians have long been acknowledged as keepers of the land with special focus on animals.

In the Philippines, disaster risks abound as the country is an archipelagic state located in the western edge of the Pacific Ocean and directly situated within the Ring of Fire. We constantly face the risk of typhoons, drought, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. Today, because of climate change, we are also confronted with extreme weather changes.

Around the world, we realize the clear injustice for us to end up as victims and witnesses to the devastating impact of climate change being borne by the poorest groups, who have the least responsibility for having caused it and the least capacity to adapt to the wrenching changes. I strongly believe that industrialized countries must compensate for this inequality as governments around the world commit deep cuts in their greenhouse emissions and support adaptation programs in poor, vulnerable countries.

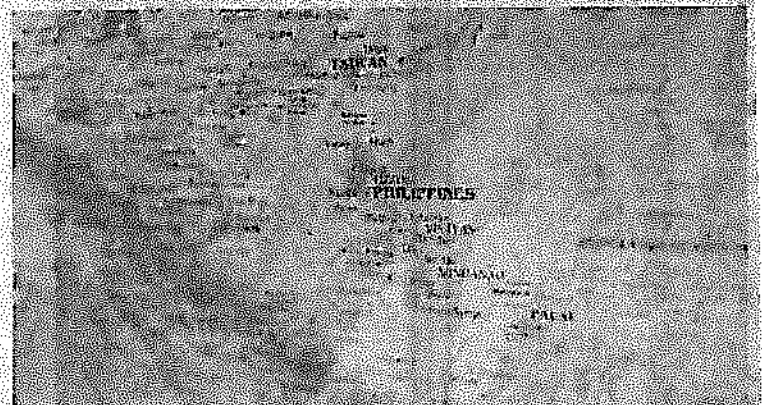
We need to challenge world leaders and decision-makers from the regional to local levels to redefine development — a kind of redevelopment that transcends traditional and economic benchmarks like GDP, the kind that values the social, cultural, and natural capital of countries; and the kind founded on sustainability and socioeconomic progress, ecosystems protection,

cultural resilience, and good governance.

We can, altogether, relive, challenge, and strengthen the humanitarian spirit within us that wants to change the world and make it a livable, environmentally sound, and better place for everyone to live in. While we are gifted with intelligence, innate goodness, practical knowledge, insight, and power of the human will, we have to work hard and be united to reverse the onslaughts to life, as we

work to bring back the forested mountains, verdant hills, clean air, clean rivers, gurgling brooks, powerful waterfalls, animals frolicking in the forests, birds chirping in song, and abundant fish in oceans that we owe the next generations.

Let it be said that during our lifetime, we did our share. And maybe, just maybe, with prayers, hard work, political will, and focused determination, we will be able to make a difference.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PEXELS/NOTHING AHEAD

THE region of Asia and the Pacific bears much of the brunt as it accounts for more than 80 percent of the global loss of life.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR • WITHOUT FAVOR

DL
PAGE

✓
HUPER
FLOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

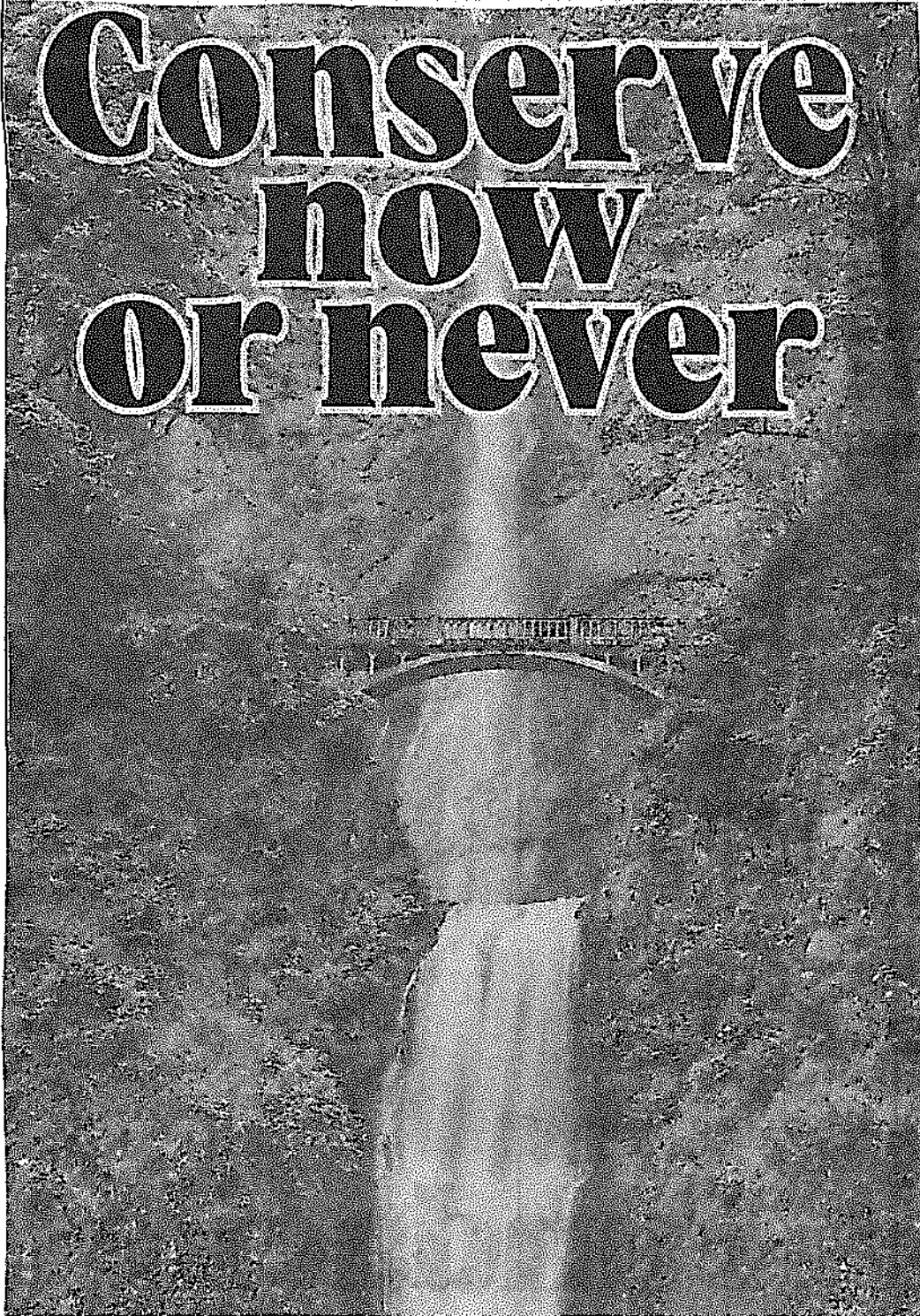
EDITORIAL

CARTOO

DEC 17 2022
DATE

THE:

PAGE 2/3



WE have to work hard to bring back powerful waterfalls.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UNSPLASH/RAV FINISSETTI



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR & WITHOUT FAVOR

06
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOO

DEC 17 2022

DATE

DOC:

CONSERVE NON OR NEVER

PAGE

2/3

We constantly face the risk of typhoons, drought, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. Today, because of climate change, we are also confronted with extreme weather changes.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF FUNDACION SANSO
THE Radiance of Prayer by Noreen Alfonso



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
ARMY
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

DEC 17 2022
DATE

Pilipinas Shell unveils employee care and sustainability strategies

At the heart of the strategy is sustainability. Locally, we zoned in on our operations and real estate and adjusted them so that they are ready for the future by greening our offices and our communities.

Pilipinas Shell Corporation President and CEO Lorelie Quiambao-Osial shared the key strategies that helped the company navigate the pandemic at the recent Philippine Digicon 2022, one of the most prestigious digital thought leadership events in APAC.

She discussed Shell's nation-building measures ranging from reducing carbon emissions while tapping renewable energy sources and customer-centered products that encourage community growth and prosperity; to equipping employees digitally for remote work.

Discussing sustainability, Osial spoke of Innovation and the "need to dare to reimagine the future." At the same time, she also mentioned the importance of adaptability in a prolonged crisis. "Our biggest challenge is that we were going through a crisis of uncertainty in all aspects," Osial continued. "As a woman and a leader, I anchor on the roles I play as a mother, a daughter, and a wife to address various challenges and adapt to different situations."

The Philippine Digicon 2022 hosted global thought leaders

and technology experts from all industries in a gathering that "discussed new technologies, evolving strategies and novel ways of doing business." Osial shared the "Women Leaders Panel" with three other women who have made significant contributions within their industries through their bold leadership: Cecilia Borromeo of Landbank, Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng of the Gokongwei Group and Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Sustainability at the heart

One of the ways Shell has responded to global changes is by implementing a plan towards decarbonization called "Powering Progress" by providing cleaner energy through which the company hopes to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

"At the heart of the strategy is sustainability. Locally, we zoned in on our operations and real estate and adjusted them so that they are ready for the future by greening our offices and our communities," Osial said.



The good, bad, and ugly for SEA forests

COMMENTARY

REGAN PAIROJMAHAKIJ
AND DAVID GANZ

The United Nations climate conference (COP27) last month could be called largely uninspiring, a plateau in progress marked by periodic bright points. It also represented an effective transition to a new dynamic as the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) moved beyond negotiations to a broader coalition of those willing to implement agreements from previous UN climate talks.

For local communities and forests in Southeast Asia, the mood may be more upbeat. From cases of leadership on Article 6 and ratcheted up nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to continued attention on forests and the brokering of large-scale deals, some Southeast Asian and Pacific countries have been noteworthy actors on the stage of COP27.

One notable exception was the relative silence of Southeast Asian countries on the high-ticket agenda item of loss and damage, a rallying point for their African and Pacific counterparts. Only three out of nine Asean member states, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor Leste, called for loss and damage in the speeches delivered at the high-level plenary sessions. Vietnam did not present or speak at the high-level segments of the summit. Myanmar was absent from COP27.

Despite the muted role of the region in the lead-up to the loss and damage agreement, some countries in Southeast Asia demonstrated moments of progress and leadership, occasionally making headlines.

Indonesia was featured in the cover story of *The Economist* one week after the COP. The interest in Indonesia is due in part to the potential natural resource goldmine it sits upon, with nickel deposits essential for batteries in the booming electric vehicle industry. Indonesia and a group of wealthy countries and private sector actors agreed to a \$20-billion package for Indonesia to transition away from coal and toward renewable energy.

Another example of climate leadership from the region is the submission of strengthened NDCs ahead of COP27. The Glasgow Climate Pact called for countries to issue stronger targets within the year. By COP27, very few countries had done so, and of those that had, fewer still demonstrated increased ambition.

According to Climate Action Tracker, only 29 of the 196 countries signatories to the Paris agreement submitted revised NDCs. Of these, only five are considered to have demonstrated

a ratcheting up of ambition. Three countries are from the Asia-Pacific region: Asean member states Thailand and Singapore, and Australia from the Pacific.

A further sign of the agility and initiative within the region is Thailand's deal with Switzerland reached earlier this year. It is one of the first bilateral agreements under the recently finalized Article 6.2 on the international trading of greenhouse gases.

Despite the dim progress globally in strengthening NDC commitments, some countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific region are taking their commitments seriously. They are carefully weighing their options to meet these, particularly where the land use sector is involved. Countries concerned that carbon credits associated with voluntary carbon market projects would be subtracted from national carbon inventories are cautious about making carbon trading allowances until confident they can deliver on NDC commitments to reduce emissions.

At the same time, the volume of carbon credits traded in the voluntary carbon market grew by 89 percent in 2021, with 45 percent of all credits coming from forestry and land use projects. There is a clear interest in benefiting from the international trade in carbon credits.

The impetus to develop national carbon markets and then to align these with international standards such as VERRA, as Thailand has done, suggests a long-term intention to move toward global trading of carbon credits. This is in line with studies that show the Asia-Pacific region has the highest concentration of the most profitable carbon projects, with returns on investment at close to \$25 billion per year.

Forests remained high on the agenda at COP27, but they were less visible than at COP26. This year ushered in several multicountry initiatives for tackling deforestation and enhancing restoration. The UK announced the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership, a group of 27 countries that represents a third of the world's forests. The group members will meet twice a year to track commitments emerging from the

Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests to halt and reverse forest loss by 2030.

The partnership includes Singapore and Vietnam. Indonesia expressed interest to join. The United Kingdom committed 1.5 billion pounds (\$1.84 billion) finance for forests including an envelope of 65 million pounds to enhance the role of indigenous people and local communities in forest protection.

Another milestone of this year's COP is the new pact between Brazil, Indonesia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, together home to half of the world's remaining tropical forests. The three rainforest giants have signed a statement calling for the negotiator of new payment mechanisms to preserve remaining forests by tackling deforestation, increasing the carbon storage of their forests and strengthening biodiversity conservation.

Finally, Asean reaffirmed the importance of forests to mitigation and adaptation in a joint statement at the COP, noting the need for "promoting sustainable management of forests, including through the implementation of UNFCCC decisions on REDD+." The Pacific countries sounded a more urgent warning. In the Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration 2022, they urged heavily emitting countries to commit to net zero emissions by 2050 and to submit enhanced NDCs.

The subsequent agreement on loss and damage was seen by the Pacific countries as evidence of the power of people in demanding climate justice.

A tremendous effort at this COP went into maintaining the ambition and agreements attained at Glasgow, highlighting the challenges inherent to the UNFCCC architecture to address the climate crisis effectively and swiftly. There seems to be a growing refocus on parallel and complementary processes that relate to the multilateral banking institutions, with the private sector and initiatives countries undertake on their own. Southeast Asian and Pacific states are demonstrating what climate initiatives can look like, both within and outside of the UNFCCC. *The Jakarta Post/Asia News Network*

Regan Pairojmahakij is a senior program officer on landscapes in a changing climate and David Ganz is executive director at RECOFTC.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer is a member of the Asia News Network, an alliance of 22 media titles in the region.