

05 May 2023 Friday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## DENR bats for 'regenerative' tourism to boost ecotourism

By BELLA CARIASO

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) pushed for a shift to "regenerative" tourism to boost the country's ecotourism sector.

In her speech during the International Ecotourism Forum held recently in Manila, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, who was represented by DENR Undersecretary for legal and administration Ernesto Adobo Jr., defined regenerative tourism as "leaving a place better than it was before."

"It (regenerative tourism) goes beyond the environment and looks at the social and economic development of communities, preservation of local cultures, and protection of biodiversity. It is the understanding that everything is connected and the interactions between every stakeholder throughout the tourism value chain have impacts on each other and our ecosystems," Yulo-Loyzaga said.

Yulo-Loyzaga emphasized the importance of transitioning toward tourism that regenerates the environment.

She noted that the country's tourism

sector faces challenges brought by climate change, extreme weather events, and slow and rapid onset hazards, which impede its potential to be a driver of environmental and cultural protection, economic progress, and social development.

According to Yulo-Loyzaga, the DENR has been at the forefront of ecotourism development through sustainable management of protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System or NIPAS program.

The program promotes sustainable tourism and responsible travel to natural areas through national and localized guidelines and standards, educational conservation, and economic and social development of local communities.

"Equity is central to ecotourism. Development assistance for communities to help them leverage the economic value of their natural assets should be strengthened. Ecotourism can be a powerful tool for conservation, community development, and education, but it requires careful planning and management to ensure that it benefits both the environment and the local communities," Yulo-Loyzaga added.



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# DENR backs regenerative tourism

BY JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has called for a shift to regenerative tourism to further boost the country's ecotourism sector.

In a speech delivered by Undersecretary Ernesto Adobo Jr. at the recently held Inter-

national Ecotourism Forum in Manila, Environment Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga stressed

that regenerative tourism meant "leaving a place better than it was before."

"It goes beyond the environment and looks at the social and economic development of communities, preservation of local cultures and protection of biodiversity," Yulo-Loyzaga said.

"It is the understanding that everything is connected, and the

interactions between every stakeholder throughout the tourism value chain have impacts on each other and our ecosystems."

While the DENR has taken initiatives to address environmental issues, Yulo-Loyzaga also emphasized the need to shift toward a better approach in tourism, which is not only sustainable but will regenerate

the environment.

One initiative the department has taken is the sustainable management of areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System program.

The program promotes sustainable tourism and responsible travel to natural areas through national and localized guidelines and standards, edu-

cational conservation, and economic and social development of local communities..

Yulo-Loyzaga said this was why it was important to help communities to make use of the economic value of their natural assets as part of conservation and community development, which is also integral to ecotourism.



## DENR chief pitches shift to 'regenerative' tourism

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has called for a shift to "regenerative" tourism to boost the country's ecotourism.

In a statement, DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga defined regenerative tourism as simply "leaving a place better than it was before." Pitching the call for regenerative tourism in a speech delivered by DENR Undersecretary for Legal and Administration Ernesto D. Adobo Jr. during the International Ecotourism Forum held in Manila from March 29 to April 2, Loyzaga said regenerative tourism goes beyond the environment and looks at the social and economic development of communities, preservation of local cultures, and protection of biodiversity.

"It is the understanding that everything is connected and the interactions between every stakeholder throughout the tourism value chain have impacts on each other and our ecosystems," she explained.

The DENR chief emphasized the importance of transitioning towards tourism that regenerates the environment and provides economic, social and environmental benefits, and taking into account climate change.

She noted the country's tourism sector faces challenges brought about by climate change, extreme weather events as well as slow and rapid onset of hazard that impede potential to be a driver of environmental and cultural protection, economic progress, and social development.

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"Equity is central to ecotourism. Development assistance for communities to help them leverage

the economic value of their natural assets should be strengthened," Loyzaga stressed.

### Powerful tool

ACCORDING to the DENR chief, ecotourism "can be a powerful tool for conservation, community development, and education, but it requires careful planning and management to ensure that it benefits both the environment and local communities."

Ecotourism development is also supported by the National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan (NESAP) jointly developed by the DENR and the Department of Tourism.

NESAP is currently being updated to incorporate strategies on disaster risk reduction and management, address the impacts of the pandemic, expand its scope from PAs to ecotourism areas, and participate in monitoring and conservation initiatives.

Loyzaga further emphasized that ecotourism serves as an avenue for the participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation in PAs, which is critical to climate change mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

To sustainably manage PAs and biodiversity resources, Loyzaga said the proper valuation of these assets is critical to recognize biodiversity's actual and realized contribution to the economy and true cost of natural capital loss.

Under Loyzaga's administration, the DENR has established a national natural resource geospatial database and a natural capital accounting system, which will significantly aid in the prioritization of investments and actions for the country's environment and natural resources.

The DENR likewise instituted a climate change tagging system in its national budget and crafted legislation on the protection of millions of hectares of forests, wetlands, caves, mangroves, and reefs.

The International Ecotourism Forum is the highlight of the first-ever 2023 International Ecotourism Travel Mart organized by the Asian Ecotourism Network, a regional initiative of the Global Ecotourism Network that showcased practical insights and effective steps on sustainable tourism.



## El Niño won't affect Bulacan, Pampanga rice farms - NIA

By **BELLA CARIASO**

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) has assured rice farm owners in Bulacan and Pampanga that their plantations would not be affected by a decision of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) to suspend water allocation for irrigation starting May 11.

"Based on the report of our regional manager, this (suspension) will not affect the standing (palay) crops," acting NIA administrator Eduardo Guillen said yesterday.

On Wednesday, NWRB executive director Seville David Jr. announced the suspension of water supply for irrigation.

Angat Dam provides for the irrigation needs of some 25,000 hectares of farmlands in Bulacan and Pampanga.

"For the month of May, the NWRB approved 10 cubic meters per second water allocation for one week. We did not request for additional allocation as the amount of rainfall in Bulacan has improved the flow of water to our standing crops," Guillen said.

He said that water supply for farmlands would resume on June 15 for the wet cropping season.

Necessary preparations are being made to mitigate the possible impact of El Niño, he said.

"We are currently reviewing our calendar cropping. We are coordinating with different agencies of the government like PAGASA about forecast regarding El Niño. Our priority will be areas with no access of water. The Department of Agriculture will provide high value crops with

less water requirement," Guillen said, referring to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

He said the NIA has budget for the procurement of water pumps.

"The worst-case scenario will be if 20 percent of the farms will not have access to water. We will shift to high yielding crops. The DA committed to provide us the necessary support," he said.

For his part, David said the NWRB is ready to resume the allocation for irrigation once the planting season starts in June.

"We will wait for the next planting season which will be by middle of June. As of now, these areas in Bulacan and Pampanga don't have water requirement," David said.

He said the NWRB is regularly coordinating with the NIA to prepare the water allocation for irrigation.

"We are discussing their water requirement amid the fears of El Niño," David said.

Meanwhile, fishermen are urging the government to come up with a contingency plan for the agri-fishery sector to cushion the effects of El Niño.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) gave assurance that it is preparing for the dry spell with mitigating measures already in place.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) made the call after the state weather bureau raised an El Niño alert status from June to August until early next year.

- With Danessa Rivera



# Manila Water NRW at par with developed countries

**JANESSA RIVERA**

Razon-led Manila Water Co. Inc. said its non-revenue water (NRW), or the level of its water losses, is now at par with water utilities in developed countries.

NRW is defined as water that is not billed and is lost through leaks or illegal connections.

Manila Water said its NRW averaged 12.69 percent last year, one of the lowest in Asia. This means that for every cubic meter of water produced, only around 0.12 cubic meters are lost. When the company took over the East Zone concession area in 1997, the NRW level was at 63 percent.

The latest NRW level is significantly lower than the standard set by the World Bank at 25 percent.

Moreover, a study conducted by the World Bank showed that the NRW is pegged at 15 percent for developed countries such as Japan, Germany, England and Wales, and Singapore.

Because of the low NRW level, Manila Water said it was able to facilitate the installation of 33,309 new water service connections in the East Zone of Metro Manila and Rizal last year, higher than the 21,680 in the prior year.

The more efficient water network enables more customers to have greater access to water supply through new and regular water service connections.

"Water is not unlimited. It is a finite resource; hence, we see to it that our NRW remains at manageable levels and at par with global standards, if not better. We care for every drop, knowing that every drop we save goes to our customers," Manila Water group director for corporate communications affairs Jeric Sevilla said.

With the low level of NRW

in its distribution network, Manila Water said it also helps its customers avoid water-borne diseases.

The company consistently passes the stringent Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water as set by the Department of Health.

Since 1997, Manila Water said it has put a premium on reducing its water losses, especially since it takes time to develop long-term water sources, which include the construction of infrastructure such as dams and large water mains.

Its approach to reducing NRW includes a multi-pronged approach that puts together a combination of proactive technical solutions, engineering, and social interventions.

Among the technical and engineering solutions adopted by the company are the re-configuration of the network, accurate measurement of supply volumes, active leakage control and repairs, supply and pressure management, along with meter management programs, all using modern and innovative systems and equipment.

Manila Water said it has also strengthened its stakeholder relations with the communities to actively report leaks and illegal connections.

The water company remains vigorous in rehabilitating aging primary lines and maintaining the integrity of its mainlines.

Manila Water has also remained persistent in cracking down on illegal connections, to further minimize NRW and protect the public's health.

Illegal connections are prone to breakages and, therefore, contamination since they are made with substandard materials.

Manila Water said it is also advocating the responsible

and wise use of water to its customers and partners with government agencies, and Sewerage System and the National  
via information drives on social media notably the Metropolitan Waterworks Water Resources Board.



## DENR chief pitches shift to 'regenerative' tourism

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

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"It is the understanding that everything is connected and the interactions between every stakeholder throughout the tourism value chain have impacts on each other and our ecosystems," she explained.

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She noted the country's tourism sector faces challenges brought about by climate change, extreme weather events as well as slow and rapid onset of hazard that impede potential to be a driver of environmental and cultural protection, economic progress, and social development.

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## NWRB chief assures sufficient water supply for farm irrigation, fishery despite draught

By SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA  
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THE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) assured on Thursday that Angat Dam would have sufficient water supply to provide irrigation for farmers in Central Luzon for the start of the planting season next month.

NWRB Executive Director Sevilla D. David Jr. made the assurance after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) announced last Tuesday that El Niño might hit the country as early as June.

During El Niño, the country is expected to experience below-normal rainfall.

"We assured them there will be sufficient water from Angat Dam, which will be released to ensure you will be able to harvest [their current crops] and prepare for the next planting season this June," David said in Filipino in a television interview with PTV last Thursday.

Currently, the NWRB said water level in Angat Dam is at 194.4 meters, which is still over the 180-meter critical level.

### Harvest season

HE said they are reducing the release

of water from Angat Dam for irrigation since almost all of the farmers in the 27,000 hectares farmland in Bulacan and Pampanga have completed their harvest.

"Now, we only have to provide irrigation to 2,000 hectares [of farmland]," David said.

"When they are about to harvest, they don't need much water. That is why for this month, we adjusted their allocation from 30 cubic meters per second last April to 10 cubic meters this month," he added.

NWRB noted they conduct similar reduction in water released from Angat Dam each year.

David, however, said that for this year, he wanted to be more efficient in the use of the water from the Angat Dam due to the anticipated El Niño.

"Because of the concerns on El Niño, we need to prepare and monitor the developments in Angat Dam since we need to see how much water is received during El Niño," David said.

### Enough fish to fry

IN a related development, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has assured the public that it will implement measures to prepare for El Niño, and ensure sufficient food supply.

In a statement, DA's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) National Director Demosthenes Escoto said that the weather phenomenon, forecasted to emerge starting in June, has positive and negative impacts on the local supply.

He said El Niño might be favorable to archipelagic species such as tuna and sardines because these organisms prefer warmer water temperatures.

On the other hand, the weather phenomenon may be challenging to land-based aquaculture species like bangus and tilapia since lower water levels may also mean scarcity of dissolved oxygen in their habitats, Escoto added.

The good news, he said, is that local fisherfolk could cushion the impact of El Niño on their catch by following good aquaculture practices.

The DA-BFAR is encouraging fisherfolk to practice good aquaculture practices like having the appropriate stock or number of fingerlings in their cages so they won't lack oxygen, thus lessening the probability of fish kill occurrence, Escoto said.

Moreover, the national director has assured the public that the agency's mitigating measures are in place to boost aquaculture production ahead of El Niño.





# BBM, US senators discuss defense, climate change

By ALEXIS ROMERO

WASHINGTON - President Marcos met with some US senators yesterday to tackle various issues, including defense, agriculture and climate change mitigation and to express his intention to further strengthen the Philippines' ties with its treaty ally, Malacañang said yesterday.

During the meeting, Marcos, a former lawmaker, said engagements between Manila and Washington should not just take place at the executive branch but also with members of Congress.

He praised the US for its willingness to work with the Philippines "as an equal, sovereign partner" and noted that defense and security engagement remains the "key pillar" of their bilateral relations.

"The President also expressed the Philippines' intention to deepen cooperation with the US in the areas of supply chain, health and health security, environment, energy security, and interconnectivity," the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said in a statement.

According to the PCO, Marcos and the senators discussed a wide range of issues that include security, defense, agriculture and climate change mitigation, economic cooperation and cyber security. It did not elaborate on the points raised during the meeting, which was held after Marcos' engagement with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin III at the Pentagon.

The President thanked Sen. Robert Menendez, chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, and other members of the panel for welcoming his delegation to Capitol Hill and for the "frank" and "productive" discussions on the state of bilateral relations between Manila and Washington.

Aside from Menendez, present during the meeting was Sen. James Risch, a ranking mem-

ber of the Senate foreign relations committee. Also present were Speaker Martin Romualdez, Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo, Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno, Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla and Trade Secretary Alfredo Pascual.

Earlier this week, Marcos had separate meetings with US President Joe Biden and US Vice President Kamala Harris to reaffirm the longstanding alliance between the Philippines and the US.

In his previous speeches, Marcos cited the need to strengthen and update partnerships and alliances to enable the Philippines to cope with new challenges.

In a related development, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said the US and the Philippines will co-host in Manila the 6th annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum next year with the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA).

Romualdez, meanwhile, stressed the role of the legislature in efforts of the Philippines and the US to strengthen relations.

"We, at the House, welcome the suggestion of President Marcos Jr. that efforts to boost the longstanding bond of friendship between the Philippines and the US should also involve the respective legislative branches of the two countries," the House leader said.

"We are ready to take up that challenge and we look forward to more engagements with our counterparts in the US in the future," Romualdez said.

"While the conduct of foreign relations is largely the domain of the executive, engagements between the lawmakers of both countries would be of immense value in, for instance, harmonizing the legal framework governing their bilateral relations," he pointed out.

"We have actually taken the initiative to move toward the direction suggested by President Marcos," the Speaker added.

In April, Romualdez, along with several members of the House, flew to the US and met with key congressional leaders to lay the groundwork for the official visit of President Marcos.

- With Delon Porcalla, Pia Lee-Brago



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**LETTERS**

# SIMPLE THINGS WE CAN DO AS CITIZENS TO HELP MITIGATE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

YEARLY, the Philippines experiences about 20 typhoons because the country is located near the equator where the ocean water is warm, which typically forms storms. For the past 10 years, due to global warming, we've experienced supertyphoons which destroy lives, properties, and infrastructure. This is an alarming environmental issue that we should address before its effects become irreversible.

According to the United Nations, the earth's temperature is about 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than in the late 1800s. Based on records, the last decade from 2011 to 2020 was the warmest so far.

The increasing temperature is the result of climate change. Climate change is attributed mostly to human activities such as the creation of landfills, deforestation, and the burning of fossil fuels.

Landfills, where our garbage is dumped, produce methane, one of the greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Deforestation meanwhile means less trees to absorb carbon dioxide. When old trees are chopped down, they release into the atmosphere all the carbon dioxide they've absorbed for years. Finally, the burning of fossil fuels to produce electricity contributes largely to carbon dioxide emissions that increase green-

house gases in the atmosphere. These gases allow sunlight to pass through; however, they also prevent heat from sunlight from leaving the atmosphere, thus resulting in global warming.

Global warming has serious effects on our lives. Intense heat on earth causes the melting of polar ice caps, rising sea levels, the formation of strong typhoons, and long droughts. With these destructive natural disasters, we cannot afford to be complacent and just shrug our shoulders while we witness fellow Filipinos' houses and agricultural crops submerged by floods after heavy rains. We cannot just stay in the comfort of our own homes, deaf

\* to the desperate cries of other people suffering from disasters caused by climate change.

How then can we address this problem? We cannot just depend on government, but must also do our part—mainly through mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation means reducing the harmful effects of climate change by lessening our carbon footprint, by a reduction in our electrical consumption, participating in the community's tree planting project, following the government's mandate of reusing and recycling plastic bags, and minimizing food leftovers that produce methane gas when they

are thrown into trash bins and eventually, into landfills.

Adaptation, according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, means "adjusting to actual or expected future climate." If your family is planning to buy property for your own house, make sure that the place is not flooded nor located near a shoreline. If you have a farm, identify which crops can be planted considering the changing climate in our country so that you can expect a plentiful harvest. During summer, to avoid the harmful effects of heat waves, avoid going out from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wear light clothes during sum-

mer and drink water more often to avoid dehydration.

Mother Earth gets depleted each year and cries for environmental protection through people's collaborative efforts at restoring our forests and reducing carbon emissions in the atmosphere. Unless we work together in reducing our carbon footprint, the earth will continuously get warmer and its effects might be irreversible. If we don't do our share, sooner or later, human life may no longer be sustainable.

MARIA CEQUEÑA,  
academic department head,  
Catholic Filipino Academy  
Homeschool



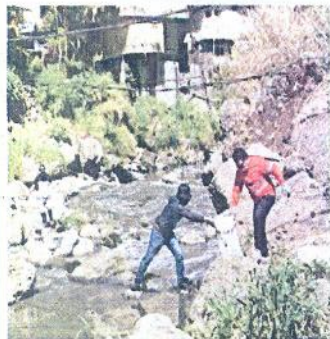
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The surface of our tiny, blue dot in the vast universe is made up of about 70 percent water. Water is crucial for the sustenance of all living things on the planet, most obvious perhaps with that of marine life. While we humans are naturally surface-dwellers, modern day heroes scout the life aquatic by virtue of a profound purpose: the care and protection of our common home.

In celebration of Earth Day, employees of AboitizPower Corporation (AboitizPower) in different parts of the country dedicated their time and the best of their abilities in making a better and cleaner Earth for all humans and animals.



AboitizPower employees and community members from La Trinidad, Benguet team up for the Balili River Clean-up.

The Balili River Clean-up

In northern Luzon, AboitizPower renewable energy subsidiary Hedcor, Inc. acted on their environmental protection goals with the collection of almost 246 kilograms of waste in its Balili River Clean-up Drive last March 24, a joint project with the Municipality of La Trinidad, Benguet.

The Balili River became infamous when it was pronounced biologically dead in 2004 by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). According to accounts of local old-timers, the river used to be so pristine that fishes thrived in it abundantly. An indigenous people's mandatory representative from Barangay Balili even recalls washing her white school uniform in the river in the 1960s.

"The river used to be clean and unpolluted," a local shared. The state of the river gradually deteriorated when establishments and settlers in La Trinidad grew exponentially.

This inspired the personnel of Hedcor to support the Balili River Clean-up.

"At Hedcor, we are taking concrete steps to further environmental sustainability for future

Beyond the Bottom Line AboitizPower eco-warriors at work

generations," said Hedcor official Jay Kabamaian. "Hedcor recognizes that the health of the environment is vital to the well-being of local communities. As such, Hedcor aims to create a culture of environmental stewardship and encourage people to take responsibility for their surroundings"

Hedcor's efforts were conducted in partnership with the local Municipal Environment Natural Resources Office (MENRO) and the Benguet State University (BSU). Hedcor also supports Barangay Balili's local ordinance mandating its officials and residents to conduct a clean-up drive every first Saturday of the month. To date, Hedcor has collected over two million kilograms of waste, all of which were properly disposed.

Scubasureros

The "scubasureros" of AboitizPower subsidiary Therna Visayas, Inc. (TVI) conducted a coastal clean-up activity at the Bato Marine Sanctuary in Brgy. Bato, Toledo City in Cebu. The idea behind this environmental project came from TVI employees who are also scuba diving enthusiasts.

"Scubasurero is a portmanteau combining 'scuba diving' and 'basurero' or garbage collector," explained Therna South, Inc. (TSI) Reputation and Stakeholder Management Manager Lou Jason Deligencia. "We conducted this activity as part of our personal advocacy to help protect marine life."

The Bato Marine Sanctuary is a marine-protected area in the host community of TVI, and is home to various fish species, corals and marine creatures. With the increasing upsurge of marine pollution due to plastic and other non-biodegradable waste, the TVI scuba divers saw the need to support the Bato Marine Sanctuary and preserve the area's marine life through the reduction of solid waste on the sanctuary's sea bed.

The Scubasurero project is being managed in close coordination with the DENR - Janon Strait Protected Seascape (TSPS), the Toledo City local government through the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), as well as the Toledo City Agriculture Office, Bantay Dagat, and the Philippine Coast Guard. The TSPS is the biggest National Integrated Protected Areas System - Marine Protected Area (NIPAS-MPA) in the

Philippines covering 534,589 hectares.

"Scuba divers and free divers from the local community, local fisherfolk and members of the Philippine Coast Guard continue to support us in this endeavor," said TVI Vice President and Facility Head Neil Cabahug, who also partook in the activity being a scuba diving enthusiast himself.

In total, 230 kilograms of garbage were collected which is composed of 167 kg of residual waste and 113 kg of biodegradable waste.

Nursing endangered sea turtles back to health

Another AboitizPower subsidiary, Davao Light and Power Co., Inc. (Davao Light), along with Aboitiz Foundation Inc. and in partnership with the DENR Region XI, continues to support the conservation efforts for sea turtles at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park which is a pawikan rescue center facility.

Out of the seven sea turtle species in the world, three species of pawikan — the olive ridley, the green sea turtle, and the critically endangered hawksbill sea turtle — are at the park. The park is a known nesting ground for the hawksbill turtle and has released over 7,000 hatchlings since 2015.

There are currently seven rescued pawikans under the care of the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park. The latest addition is a female hawksbill sea turtle (scientific name Eretmochelys imbricata) that was turned over to the eight-hectare ecological preserve and biodiversity conservation site at Sitio Punta Duralag, Matina Aplaya, Davao City. The turtle was found caught weakly floating in a fish trap by fisherfolk led by Kagawad Ronel P. Simo in the sea near Purok Libra, Sitio Tambangan, Lasang, Davao City.

In coordination with the DENR Region XI, the endangered reptiles are provided with veterinary care and are being observed at the facility until they are fully recovered and can be released back into the wild.

"Pawikans are known to return faithfully to the same beach where they were born or previously nested," said Davao Light President and Chief Operating Officer Rodger S. Velasco. "With the sea turtles coming back and laying eggs through the years, the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park has successfully

lived up to its objective of protecting and preserving the area and its flora and fauna, despite daily environmental threats such as pollution and soil erosion"

The pawikan protection efforts, along with coastal clean-up and tree planting activities conducted frequently at the park, are aligned



(Upper) A female hawksbill sea turtle rescued by local fisherfolks is brought to the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park to be nursed back to health. (Lower) Visitors to the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park see a rare and diverse ecosystem which includes a mangrove forest, marine turtle habitat and nesting area, and a fish sanctuary.

with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) [14], which aims to conserve life below water.

According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), sea turtles help maintain the health of seagrass beds and coral reefs. The critically endangered hawksbill sea turtles live on coral reefs, eating the overgrown sponges that suffocate slow-growing corals, resulting in a healthy reef and also helping to prevent the overpopulation of jellyfishes in the ocean.

The care and protection of the planet, our common home, is a joint human responsibility. Working together and taking responsibility is vital in ensuring a healthy and sustainable future for ourselves, the generations to come, and the animal kingdom.

"This year's Earth Day theme, 'Investing in our future,' highlights the importance of dedicating our time, resources, and energy to the care of our environment," said AboitizPower President and CEO Emmanuel Rubio. "We are happy that we are afforded with opportunities to help and contribute in leaving a positive impact to its protection."



(Left and middle) Scubasureros carefully remove garbage and other debris from corals. (Right) On land, volunteers from TVI, TSI, and the local community work together to collect trash.



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
AND  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



PAGE



UPPER  
LOWER



PAGE 1  
STORY



BANNER  
STORY



EDITORIAL



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# 5.5-quake jolts Isabela

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An earthquake measuring magnitude-5.5 on the Richter scale rocked Isabela province on Thursday morning, May 4, said the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

Phivolcs said the quake, which was initially measured as a 5.8-magnitude tremor, occurred at 8:49 a.m.

Its epicenter was 29 kilometers northeast of Maconacon, Isabela.

The tremor was felt at Intensity V (strong) in Enrile, Peñablanca, and Tuguegarao City in Cagayan province; Intensity IV (moderately strong) in Balbalan, Pinukpuk, and Tabuk City in Kalinga, Batac City in Ilocos Norte, and Maconacon; Intensity III (weak) in Marcos and San Nicolas in Ilocos Norte; and Intensity II (slightly felt) in Pasuquin, Bacarra, and Laoag City in Ilocos Norte and Saguday in Quirino.

Phivolcs' instruments recorded the quake at Intensity IV in Gonzaga, Cagayan; Intensity III in Ilagan, Isabela; Intensity II in Casiguran in Aurora; Pasuquin in Ilocos Norte, Laoag, and Batac, Vigan City in Ilocos Sur, Santiago City in Isabela, Tabuk in Kalinga, and Madella in Quirino; and Intensity I in Bangued in Abra, Dipaculao and Baler in Aurora, Narvacan in Ilocos Sur, and Bayombong in Nueva Vizcaya.

It said the earthquake was tectonic, caused by the movement of an active fault near the area.

Phivolcs advised the public to stay vigilant as aftershocks may occur.

## No extensive damage

No extensive damage to property was recorded in the province of Cagayan from the earthquake, the Cagayan Provincial Information Office said.

Rueli Rapsing, head of the

Cagayan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO), said only visible hairline cracks were found in the buildings of the provincial government in Tuguegarao City.

Staff and patients of the Cagayan Valley Medical Center (CVMC) were evacuated from the fourth floor of the hospital in Tuguegarao due to the earthquake.

Dr. Cherry Lou Antonio, chief medical professional staff, CVMC, said their engineers immediately conducted an inspection of their buildings to ensure the safety of staff and patients.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) said that their power transmission services in Luzon were unaffected by the earthquake.

"The Luzon grid remains intact as there are no reports of power interruption and damaged transmission facilities," NGCP said.