

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DENR remains steadfast in performing its mandate to conserve, manage, develop and use properly the country's environment and God-given natural resources through the implementation of various programs and projects anchored on the six-year program of President Rodrigo Duterte, otherwise known as Program for Environment and Natural Resources for Restoration, Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD).

In 2020, despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the DENR vigorously pursued its priority programs to address ENR issues and achieve the current administration's thrusts of 1) Social Justice in Land Titling, (2) Good and Effective Governance in Environmental Protection, (3) Restoration of Forest and Protected Areas, (4) Adaptation to Climate Change and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources, and (5) Conservation of Coastal and Marine Resources embodied in the PRRD.

This Report underscores the achievements of the Department in the implementation of Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's Priority Programs, as follows: Manila Bay and Boracay Rehabilitation; Clean Air; Clean Water; Solid Waste Management; Enhanced National Greening Program; Intensified Forest Protection and Anti-Illegal Logging; Enhanced Biodiversity Conservation; Scaling Up of Coastal and Marine Ecosystem; Geohazard, Groundwater Assessment and Responsible Mining; and Improved Land Administration and Management.

As shown in this Report, there were several policies issued as well as strategies and innovative efforts undertaken to address the ill effects of the pandemic to the program/project operations. These, not to mention the unwavering commitment of the DENR workforce and strong support of our partners, resulted in the realization of most of the planned targets in CY 2020. In addition to the active participation of stakeholders, the use of online platforms for meetings and learning events and other activities have helped in accomplishing the program targets and objectives.

Among the significant accomplishments were the planting of 47,299 hectares, posting a 100% accomplishment rate; apprehension/seizure of about 4.16M board feet of illegally-cut and transported logs and lumber in close coordination with other law enforcement agencies and the LGUs; issuance of 16,405 agricultural and 32,580 residential free patents to target beneficiaries, registering 124% and 99% accomplishment, respectively; conduct of groundwater resources and vulnerability assessment in 50 cities/municipalities (114%); maintenance and management of 412 ecotourism facilities (108%); 47 marine protected area networks (MPANs) supported for scaling up of management in the next five years; provision of technical assistance to 74 LGUs on Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) (114%); and 114 POs assisted (113%) with 1 PO granted with financial assistance of 2.8M. In addition, the forest areas within the Zambales Mountain Range within the municipality of Mangataram were declared as critical habitat for the conservation of threatened wildlife through DAO 2020-17.

In spite of the parlous effects of the pandemic, the conduct of Manila Bay and Boracay rehabilitation activities and delivery of services and outputs were sustained by maximizing operational capacities within the DENR and among partner agencies, local governments, and stakeholders. Relentless and collaborative efforts were undertaken by the Department in its firm resolve to win the "Battle for Manila Bay" and at the same time restore the pristine condition of Boracay Island which was once regarded as a "cesspool" by President Duterte.

In consonance with the enactment of Republic Act 11469, known as the "Bayanihan to Heal as One Act" (Bayanihan 1) and Republic Act 11494 or the "Bayanihan to Recover as One Act" (Bayanihan 2), the Department implemented various projects and activities that seek to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 to the socio-economic condition of its employees, the frontliners, and upland communities. These include the donation of confiscated lumber for the construction of temporary health facilities; allowing the use of DENR facilities to serve as temporary isolation areas for Persons Under Investigation (PUI), quarters for frontliners and staging areas for food distribution; provision of relief goods, PPEs, face masks, alcohol and other hygiene and sanitation items; and production of vegetable crops/seedlings from Mechanized and Modernized Forest Nurseries (MMFN) to contribute to food security in the uplands.

Indeed, the DENR was confronted with difficulties and struggles in the wake of the pandemic. Nevertheless, it gave opportunities to innovate, formulate strategies and identify prospects towards a more efficient and effective program/project implementation in the year ahead.