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# **NEWS ALERTS**

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



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## Solidum-led PH group back from study tour

SCIENCE and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum led the Philippine delegation in a series of scientific visits to Western Australia from March 27 to 30.

The visit, organized by the Australian Embassy and the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, was organized simultaneously with the inaugural Manila-Perth direct flight of Philippine Airlines. Joining Solidum in the visits were Philippine Ambassador to Australia Maria Hellen de la Vega, Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna, former Foreign Affairs secretary and Ambassador to Australia Delia Domingo-Albert, and business delegates led by Chamber of Mines of the Philippines Chairman Michael Toledo.

Solidum met with Western Australia Deputy Premier and Minister for Science Roger Cook and Minister for Environment and Climate Action Rebecca Whitby, where they discussed priorities of both the Philippines and Western Australia's priorities in science, technology and innovation, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation. "We had a great discussion about balancing the need for mining with the imperative to protect our environment. ... we need to mine for the minerals and resources that will enable us to transition to a green energy future, while minimizing the impact on our unique natural environment," Whitby said on his Facebook page.

Solidum also visited the University of Western Australia-Oceans Institute and Institute of Agriculture, Murdoch University-Harry Butler Institute and Curtin University-Western Australia School of Mines, where they discussed possible partnerships in research and capacity-building

activities in sustainable marine and agricultural resources, health and biosecurity, and mining and mineral resources.

The science chief also held discussions with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization Marine Debris Research group to discuss continuous innovation backed by science-based policies and tools to mitigate plastic pollution in the marine environment.

The delegation also visited Super Pit, one of Australia's largest open pit mines located in Kalgoorlie, a mining town nearly 600 kilometers east of Perth, the state's capital.

The visit was aimed to gain understanding of the mining operations in the pit, benchmark the latest mining technologies and equipment, and learn how operators adhere to sustainable mining policies such as mine rehabilitation.

It was facilitated by Curtin University-Western Australia School of Mines, Minerals, Energy and Chemical Engineering, where some Filipino students are studying.

Solidum also addressed the Filipino community and business leaders in the state through an economic spotlight event organized by the Australia-Philippines Business Council, the Philippine Embassy in Australia, and the Philippine Trade and Investment Center.

In his speech, Solidum showcased the country's opportunities in science and technology and showcased the priority programs, services, facilities and innovations of the DoST.

He also encouraged Filipino scientists, technologists and experts in Australia to share their experience via the Balik Scientist Program.

RED MENDOZA