

PH eyes \$52M fund for climate resilience

BY JED MACAPAGAL

THE Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), will pursue the development of resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities, post-pandemic as it prepares its portfolio of environmental projects for consideration under the 8th funding replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-8).

The DENR said the Philippines is allocated over \$52 million (roughly P2.83 billion) in funding support, the country's largest allocation to date.

Of the \$52 million, bulk or \$45.51 million will be for biodiversity while \$5.45 million will be for climate change and the remaining \$1.8 million for land degradation, the GEF website said.

"The healthy planet, healthy people framework, as the heart of the overall global GEF-8 architecture, emphasizes the critical connection between humanity and the environment — thus the importance of urgent environmental threats reduction and protection of our natural resources to improve human well-being (cannot be overemphasized)," Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, DENR Secretary



LOYZAGA

said, during a multi-stakeholder dialogue last week.

Loyzaga said the Philippines shall work with the GEF in strengthening national commitments and institutionalizing capacities to translate these commitments to meaningful actions to support sustainable development.

The DENR said under GEF-8, member countries are encouraged to move more of their programming through 11 integrated programs including food systems;

See PH➤ Page A2

DLI

landscape restoration; clean and healthy ocean; circular solutions to plastic pollution; elimination of hazardous chemicals from supply chains; net-zero, nature-positive accelerator; sustainable cities; greening infrastructure development, and wildlife conservation for development.

Projects under GEF-8 will then be implemented by national government agencies, local government units, development partners, non-government and people's organizations, scientific institutions and academe and other stakeholders during the four-year cycle covering 2023 to 2026.

The DENR also said GEFfunded projects are expected to realign private sector capital to achieve a wider scale and impact empowering local communities to harness their resources and capacities to protect livelihoods, uplift socio-economic conditions and enhance resilience.



PHILIPPINE DAILY BARNESS NEWS INQUIRER



PAGE 1 BA

BANNER

EDITORIAL CARTOON

01=23-23

TITLE

experts warn anew vs reclamation, other climate impacts

By Mariejo S. Ramos @MariejoRamosINQ

With the recently concluded World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, Southeast Asian countries are racing against time to adapt to the climate crisis, as scientists point to unplanned development projects in megacities' rapidly urbanizing coastlines.

Joo-Ok Lee, head of the Asia-Pacific agenda of the WEF executive committee, noted that Asean member states "are suffering other climate-related changes, typically in the form of unseasonably heavy rains causing flooding, and this situation can only deteriorate."

"For Indonesia and the Philippines, with their large archipelagos and many island dwellers, the prospect of rising sea levels is devastating," wrote Lee in a WEF article on Jan. 16.

Just last year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report warned that the region "will witness increased losses in coastal settlements and infrastructure due to flooding caused by unavoidable sea-level rise."

Significant barriers to climate adaptation in Asia include fragmented, reactive governance, inadequate evidence on which actions to prioritize and how to sequence them, and lack of finances, said the IPCC.

Massive reclamation

In the Philippines and Thailand, scientists warned that massive reclamation could worsen the impacts of extreme sea level rise (ESLR) in vulnerable communities.

Metro Manila is in a low-lying area facing the sea and is embracing two river systems, making it prone to flooding and disasters.

Some of the coastal ar-

eas of Manila are extremely low-lying, particularly Camanava, a populous subregion of component cities Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela.

Massive reclamation projects cannot only uproot mangrove forests and destroy the marine ecosystem, it can also worsen the rising sea levels in Bulacan and Metro Manila, scientists believe.

In a report published last year, Greenpeace East Asia outlined the projected economic impact of ESLR in seven Asian cities by 2030.

The projection for Manila is damning: Almost 87 percent of the megacity's land area is below the level to which sea water could rise should a 10-year floor occur in 2030, impacting \$39.24 billion of the country's gross domestic product and putting 1.54 million people at risk.

Manila is not alone in this plight.

In Jakarta, almost 17 percent of communities are below the level to which sea water could rise should a 10-year flood occur in 2030, according to Greenpeace.

'Slow onset disaster'

Bangkok, meanwhile, stands to lose around \$12 billion of its GDP and 10.45 million lives due to ESLR by 2030, as the "city's vulnerability to flooding is exacerbated by the fact that the city is sinking due to soft soils, heavy urbanization and land subsidence," according to Greenpeace.

When the sea rises, it results in more in-land coastal flooding and tidal flooding that exposes communities, especially Camanava in Metro Manila, to more hazards, noted geologist Narod Eco, a former researcher for the University of the Philippines' National Institute of Geological Sciences and a member of Agham.









PAGE 1 STORY

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EDITORIAL CAR

01-23-23

PAGE

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'Green procurement' review underway

BY JOM GARNER @tribunephl_jom

The Department of Budget and Management's Procurement Service on Sunday announced the establishment of a panel that will review the current process of green public procurement in the country.

PS-DBM executive director Dennis Santiago said the newly-formed Inter-Agency Technical Specifications Review Committee will be tapped by the agency to implement the GPP in the country.

The GPP is a process whereby public authorities seek to procure

goods, and services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.

Santiago said the IATSRC will allow the agency to assess, review and evaluate existing Common-Use Supplies and Equipment Technical Specifications to adhere to and comply with local and international standards.

"The establishment of an IATSRC is one of the reform initiatives we spearheaded in PS-DBM to take government procurement to a sustainable

track," Santiago said

He said the panel will also take into account the environmental, social, and economic aspects of public acquisition, alongside Sustainable Development Goal 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production.

"GPP provides an opportunity for government agencies to infuse environmentally friendly parameters and requirements in the products that we procure, and in the process avoid the use of toxic substances; prioritize alternative green materials; reduce energy and water consumption during use; and recycle at the end of the useful life of the product," he added.

Meanwhile, Budget Secretary

Amenah Pangandaman commended the plan, citing how green procurement also means "responsible procurement."

"Integrating green choices in public procurement puts us closer to our ultimate goal of ensuring sustainable management and use of natural resources by 2030,"

Pangandaman said.

Apart from PS-DBM, the members of the IATSRC include the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Science and Technology the Department of Information and Communications Technology, and the Department of Energy.







PAGE



PAGE 1 STORY BANNER

DITORIAL CARTOO

01-23-23

DATE

BBM ups budget for climate change programs by 48%

By HELEN FLORES

President Marcos has increased the funds allocated for climate change programs this year by about 48 percent, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairman and executive director Robert Borje said yesterday.

Borje said yesterday.

Marcos has said climate action is particularly important to the Philippines, especially since the country is regarded as "one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change."

The President chairs the CCC.

Under Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009, government agencies are mandated to allot funds for climate change-related activities, according to Borie.

ing to Borje.

"We call that climate change expenditure tagging and under this government, that increased by around 48 percent," he said in an interview with radio sta-

tion dzBB.

"We have to ensure that various government agencies and various government institutions not just plan, but actually implement these climate change programs," he added.

The CCC official earlier said a total of

The CCC official earlier said a total of P453.1 billion has been allotted this year by national government institutions (NGIs) for climate change expenditure to be used for adaptation and mitigation programs.

He said the figure represents a 56-percent increase from the climate change expenditure tagged for Fiscal Year 2022 of P289.7 billion, with 83 percent for adaptation and 17 percent for mitigation.

He added that NGIs' adaptation and mitigation projects must be anchored on the following National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) thematic priorities: food security, water sufficiency, human security, environmental and

ecological stability, sustainable energy, climate smart industries and services, and knowledge and capacity development.

knowledge and capacity development.
The NCCAP, developed by the CCC in consultation with relevant government agencies, outlines the country's strategic direction

from 2011 to 2028 as a response to the current situation and projected impacts of climate change.

Borje also welcomed the inclusion of an accelerated climate change agenda in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, saying this will further strengthen the commitment of the Philippine government to deliver on key climate actions.



TITLE

INQUIRER





PAGE 1

BANNER

ORIAL CARTOO

01-23-23

DATE





DOCUMENTATION Noel Lagunday, a researcher from the Central Mindanao University, takes a photo of a new pitcher plant species, now named "Nepenthes candalaga" (right), during the biodiversity expedition with environment officials on Mt. Candalaga, Davao de Oro province, in April 2021. — PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES-DAVAO REGION

NEW SPECIES

PITCHER PLANT FIND BOOSTS MT. CANDALAGA'S PROTECTION BID

By Germelina Lacorte @InqNational

DAVAO CITY—The discovery of the newest pitcher plant species endemic to Davao de Oro mountain will boost Davao region's campaign to declare Mt. Candalaga as one of Mindanao's protected sites, environment officials said on Sunday.

Nepenthes candalaga,
Davao de Oro's newest pitcher plant species found thriving near the summit of Mt.
Candalaga, has been named after the mountain in Maragusan town revered by the Mansaka indigenous peoples and which top Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) officials had been eyeing to be included in Davao region's protected sites.

Noel Lagunday, lead author of the July 2022 article published in Phytotaxa, a peer reviewed international journal of botanical taxonomy, referred to Nepenthes candalaga as the 38th Nepenthes species found in Mindanao and has been tagged as critically endangered according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature criteria.

Highest concentration

The discovery of the plant species also marked the island of Mindanao as having the highest concentration of pitcher plants in the country.

Lagunday, a researcher for the Central Mindanao University (CMU) center for biodiversity research and extension, first signted the plant during the biodiversity expedition to the mountain in April 30 to May 3, 2021, along with a team of CMU researchers and DENR officials.

The expedition, led by DENR regional director Bagani Fidel Evasco, aimed to gather data on the state of flora and fauna in the area to support the region's proposal to declare the 2,100-meter Mt. Candalaga as a protected site or a critical habitat of threatened species, the DENR said in a statement.

Jayvee Jude Agas, chief of the DENR Davao regional strategic communication and initiatives group, said in an interview on Sunday that they considered the discovery and naming of the plant one of the highlights of the DENR's campaign to protect biodiversity.

However, she said it would still take a long process before Mt. Candalaga would be declared a protected site. INQ



TITLE :





UPPER

PAGE 1 STORY



DITORIAL CARTO

03 -23 -23

Newly hatched turtles released in Quezon

CATANAUAN, Quezon - Some 115 newly hatched Olive Ridley Sea turtles were released in Sitio Paraiso, Barangay Cutcutan here recently.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) officer Ramil Gutierrez said their release was witnessed by DENR Undersecretary Ernesto Adobo Jr.

Gutierrez said that the eggs were regularly monitored by the technical staff of CENRO-Catanauan until a resort owner reported that the hatchlings have emerged from their nest.

These hatchlings were identified as Olive Ridley Sea turtles (Lepidochelys olivacea) based on the number of carapace scutes with six to seven pairs in an irregular pattern.

A total of 121 eggs were seen in the nesting site within the resort. Four were unhatched, two died, and 115 hatchlings successfully hatched and released. (Daniel Estacio)









PAGE 1

BANNER

01-23-23

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

Wildlife trafficker

nabitag

Timbog ang isang 47-taong gulang na lalaki sa Lucena City dahil sa pagbebenta ng mga endangered bird species.

Simabi ng Quezon police kahapon na ang suspek na si Marlou Tiña, ay naaresto nang mabuking ang pagbebenta nito ng "kilyawan" (Black-naped Oriole) sa halagang P500 sa isang undercover police officer sa Perez Park.

Nabatid na bago ito nadakip ay isinagawa muna ang deal online.

Ang black-naped oriole (Oriolus chinensis) ay itinuturing na bahagi ng wildlife endangered species.

species.
Sa ngayon ay nahaharap ang suspek sa paglabag sa Republic Act 9147, o ang Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.
Ang nabanggit namang ibon ay nai-turnover na sa local office ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources. (Catherine Reyes)









PAGE 1 8/ STORY S

BANNER EDI



01=23-23

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE



MAN carries his pig-nosed turtle down Yaowarat Road on the eve of the lunar new year in the Chinatown area of Bangkok, Thailand. The International Union for Conservation of Nature lists the pig-nosed turtle as vulnerable and trade of the species is restricted.



The Manila Times

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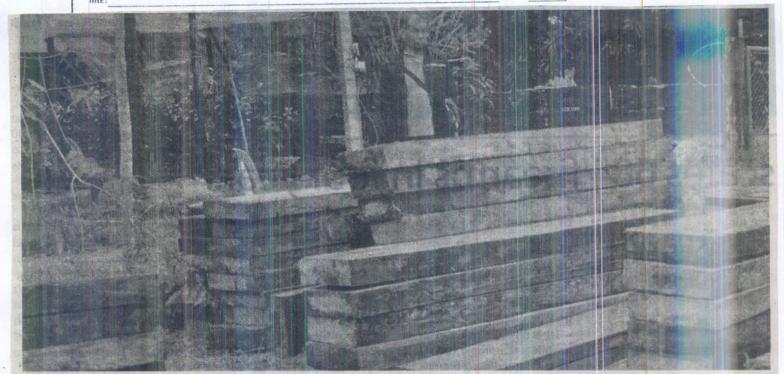
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01=23-23

DATE

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More than 4,000 board feet of lumber worth P2 million are seized from a suspected illegal-lumber transporter in a town in Nueva Vizcaya on January 21, 2023. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'Hot-log' trader faces P20-M fine

ARITAO, Nueva Vizcaya: The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) of the Department of Environment Natural Resources (DENR) here has imposed a fine of P20 million on a suspected illegal transporter of forest product intercepted in Bambang town.

A complaint was filed against suspect Enrico Palomo Gonzales, 53, married, and a resident of Camias, San Miguel, Bulacan, charging him for alleged violation of Section 77 of Presidential Decree (PD) 705 known as the "Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines."

PD 705 prohibits the transport of forest products without any lawful permit. Seized from the suspect include a 10-wheeler Isuzu Giga Dump Truck registered as NBS 6514 that was loaded with undocumented 207 pieces of narra lumber.

Cenro-Aritao cited Section 10, Item 4 of Department Administrative Order (AO) 97-32 which allows the filing of actual damages in an amount equivalent to the value of illegal forest products confiscated.

AO 97-32 also allows moral and exemplary damages against the violators for prejudice to the environment in an amount equivalent to 10 times the value of the forest products confiscated.

Also the driver of the apprehended dump truck, Cenro-Aritao said Gonzales was already subjected to inquest proceedings at the provincial prosecutor's office in Bayombong town.

It was on Jan. 16, 2023, at

2:40 p.m. when operatives of the Provincial Field Unit-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and Regional Special Operation Team-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, Regional Field Unit when the suspect was apprehended.

Then stationed at Barangay Macate in Bambang town, the operatives said they were undertaking "operation illegal logging and timber poaching" which led to the apprehension of the said vehicle loaded with undocumented forest products.

In a scaling conducted by Cenro-Aritao, the apprehended forest product was valued at more than P2 million with a total volume of 4,153.03 board feet.

According to Cenro-Aritao, the forest product originated from

Paracelis Mountain Province and was scheduled to be consigned for commercial purposes to a San Miguel, Bulacan-based individual whose identity has been withheld.

The apprehended dump truck and illegal forest product were placed under the custody of Cenro-Aritao for custody and proper disposition pending further legal action, according to Cenro officials.

Meanwhile, DENR Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) executive director Gwendolyn Bambalan thanked the apprehending police operatives in Bambang town headed by Maj. Jay Calderon and Maj. Ariel Gabuya for their successful operation.

Bambalan also lauded the tipster for reporting the unwarranted forest product transport.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO





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PAGE

UPPER

PAGE 1 STORY BANNER

ORIAL CARTOO

01-23-23

DATE

Digital transformation bills House priorities

The House of Representatives is set to resume its session today after its month-long Christmas break

BY JOM GARNER @tribunephl_jom

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House Speaker Martin Romualdez on Sunday identified the bills that would hasten the country's digital transformation as top priority bills in the chamber — particularly the E-Governance/Government Act—once it resumes sessions.

"We will expedite the passage of these measures to implement the pronouncements of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in Davos, Switzerland on his desire for the country to catch up with other nations in digital evolution," Romualdez said.

The proposed E-Governance/ Government Act seeks to shift the bureaucracy to digital platforms for faster and more efficient and transparent services.

The House of Representatives is set to resume its session today after its month-long Christmas break.

Romualdez issued the statement after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. — who made his inaugural participation at the World Economic Forum

in Switzerland — said that he would work to address slow Internet connectivity and cybersecurity issues, as well as the digitalization of the bureaucracy.

He added that the House would work with the Senate for the expeditious enactment of various bills the larger chamber had approved on the third and final reading before Congress started its Christmas recess last month, including the Internet Transactions/E-Commerce Bill.

The House Speaker also said that the Internet Transactions Bill would also be tackled, stressing that it will contribute to attaining the president's digital transformation goal.

Romualdez said House priorities for this year also include the 11 other important bills the Executive and Legislative branches had agreed on in October during the meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council.

He said these proposals are likewise among those enumerated by the President in his first State of the Nation Address in July.

"These measures are

components of the President's Agenda for Prosperity, which we fully support," said Romualdez, adding that top priority bills include the National Land Use Act, National Defense Act, National Government Rightsizing Program Bill, Budget Modernization Bill, and the Department of Water Resources Bill.

The House will also hasten the deliberation on the proposed law establishing Negros Island Region, Magna Carta for Filipino Seafarers, the proposal to establish regional specialty hospitals, enabling law for the natural gas industry, and amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.









PAGE 1 STORY BANNER

ITORIAL CARTOO

01-23-23

TITLE

PAGE

DAT



MISMONG mga siyentipiko na ang nagsasabi kabilang ang ating Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) na magiging mas mainit ang darating na summer season sa bansa at sa buong mundo ngayong taong 2023 dahil eepekto na ang El Niño phenomenon. Ang nararanasan nating mahihina hanggang sa malalakas na ulan ngayong unang buwan lalo na sa Visayas at Mindanao, at paminsanminsan sa Metro Manila ay indikasyon na malapit nang matapos ang umiiral na La Niña phenomenon.

Kaya ngayon pa lamang ay panay na ang pagpapaalala ng pamunuan ng National Water

MAS MAINIT NA PANAHON, ASAHAN DAHIL SA EL NIÑO

Resources Board (NWRB) sa pangunguna ni executive director Dr. Sevillo David, Jr. sa mga nasa National Capital Region at Greater Manila Area para sa tama at responsableng paggamit ng tubig.

Mangangahulugan kasi na ang sobrang mainit na panahon ng bakasyon sa bansa ay mas mataas na pangangailangan sa malinis na tubig kung saan ay nasa dalawang concessionaires sa NCR at GMA ang namamahala – ang Manila Water Company

at ang Maynilad Water Services.

Sa pinakahuling pagsilip natin sa antas ng tubig sa Angat dam, nasa 213.79 meters, nalagpasan ang normal operation level nito na 212 meters.

Pero sa tantiya naman ng NWRB ay sasapat ang tubig sa Angat dam sa kabuuan ng summer season sa bansa.

May El Niño man o wala dapat pa rin naman tayong responsablle sa paggamit ng malinis na tubig.

Ika nga ni ED David,

bahagi dapat ito ng ating mga moral yalues, ang pagmamalasakit sa kalikasan at kapaligiran.

Sinasabayan naman ng pagseseguro ng Manila Water at Maynilad Water na malaki na ang nababawas sa nasasayang na tubig.

Tayo rin kasing mga kostumer ang siyang

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at "SHARE".

nagbabayad ng water losses ng dalawang water concessionaires na ito kaya dapat kapag may nakita tayong tagas ng tubig sa mga kalsada ay ipagbigay-alam kaagad ito sa barangay para maitawag sa nabanggit na water companies.



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PAGE



PAGE 1



01 = 23 - 23

DATE

Protest China's

harassmer of fisherfolk, gov't urged

By ELIZABETH MARCELO

The fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas has urged the National Task Force West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) chaired by National Security Adviser Eduardo Año to protest the recent harassment of Filipino

Turn to Page 4

Protest From Page1

fishermen by the Chinese Coast Guard in Ayungin Shoal (Second Thomas Shoal)

The video of the incident taken by our Filipino fishermen is enough to prove the presence and intimidation of the Chinese Coast Guard of the Filipinos in our own waters. This video is a strong basis for the government to file a diplomatic protest be-fore the Chinese government," Pamalakaya national chairperson Fernando Hicap said in Filipino.

The group issued the state-ment after the Philippine Coast Guard confirmed that it received a report from Filipino fisherman Lito Al-os that their vessel was driven away by a CCG vessel while they were fishing in the vicinity of the

Ayungin Shoal last Jan. 9. Al-os said they departed Ayungin Shoal but the CCG vessel "continued to shadow" their boat while on their way to Rajah Soliman Reef (Boxall Reef).

The PCG said it is already

investigating the incident.
The Pamalakaya maintained that the Ayungin Shoal is well within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) and thus, what the CCG did was a clear form of harassment and intimi-

"The NTF-WPS must immediately draft a strong protest against China as this recent harassment of our Filipino fishers is a manifestation of a serious treat on our national sovereignty and security," Hi-

cap said.

The group also reiterated its call to Año to lay out his security plan to protect the WPS against foreign aggressors, especially China.

"We want to remind Año, who also heads the NTF-WPS, that his primary mandate is to protect our national sovereignty against any foreign invaders, Hicap said in Filipino.

"This can be done by crafting the administration's strategic policies on national sovereignty which are anchored on International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, an international law that recognizes the Philippines' rights over its maritime territory," he added.





PAGE







01-23-23

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FROM A2

For scientists, sea level rise and land subsidence due to the overextraction of groundwater for at-risk communities.

year. It's a slow onset disaster can form a dangerous combo that is difficult to see in real time, same with strong typhoons that "Sea level rise's order of are low frequency but high immagnitude is in millimeters per pact events," said Eco.

ence is "more pronounced" and ties in Camanava and Bulacan "more urgent," as it is measured in centimeters per year.

But he said land subsid- showed that coastal communiare the most severely affected "Previous study that we did with reclamation in these areas,

you're putting up development directly on those areas where it is dangerous to do so, with all by land subsidence. Coupled those hazards and possible disasters," he added. INQ









PAGE 1 STORY





01-23-23

DATE

PAGE

LOIC VENANCE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE DOZENS of volunteers look for plastic beads, also called 'mermaid's tears,' on a beach in Pornic, after a large quantity of them were washed ashore polluting the area in western France.