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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



SIKRETO SA TAGUMPAY NI HENERAL CIMATU



February 28, 2021 @ 12:20 AM 1 day ago

SA likod ng isang matagumpay na lalaki ay ang sumusuporta at matatag na babae.

Ang babaeng hindi lamang laging anino bagkus siya ay kakaiba at maaaring nakagawa ng pagbabago.

Ang namayapang si Fe Aguillon-Cimatu na kilala rin sa tawag na Ma'am Fe ay hindi ordinaryong babae.

Siya ang babaeng katuwang sa buhay ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, na retiradong heneral at dating chief-of-staff ng Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Kilala sa pagiging "hands-on," si Ma'am Fe na rin ang punong-abala sa kanilang kasal.

Siya mismo ang naging wedding planner.

Ang heneral na noo'y nakatakdang ikasal ay nasa Marawi para sa military operation apat na araw bago ang kanilang kasal.

Tiniyak ni Ma'am Fe na nasa ayos na ang lahat at sinabi pa nito na "ikaw na lang ang kulang."

Ang pagiging asawa ng isang militar ay hindi madaling tungkulin ngunit hindi ito naging hadlang sa kanilang buhay mag-asawa.

Sa ilang combat operations ni Heneral Roy ay binibisita ito ng mapagmahal na asawa.

May mga pagkakataon pa na nagmamadaling bumalik sa barracks ang mister upang makita ang kanyang nami-miss na misis.

Matatagpuan niya ito sa malapit na public market na bumibili ng sariwang gulay na kanilang pagsasaluhan sa hapunan habang nagkukwentuhan.

Palagi ring nasa kanyang tabi ang responsable at mapag-alagang asawa hindi lamang para saksihan ang kanyang tinatahak bagkus ay nagsisilbi pa itong cheerleader sa pagkuha niya ng matataas na posisyon.

Hindi rin mahilig lumabas ng kanilang bahay ang tahimik na misis kung saan ay nilalaan nito ang kanyang oras sa kanyang katuwang sa buhay. Mas nais nitong mamalagi sa kanilang bahay upang matiyak na malinis ang tahanan at mag-alaga ng halaman sa kanilang maliit na hardin.

Si Ma'am Fe ay isang dedikadong housekeeper na sa halip na kumuha ng kasambahay, ay personal nitong pinangangasiwaan ang pangangailangan ng kanyang mister.



Palagi nitong tinitiyak na laging nakahanda ang kinakailangan kahit na hindi pa sinasabi sa kanya.

Isa rin itong negosyante ngunit tinitiyak nito na magiging prayoridad ang pagkakaroon ng maayos at masiglang married life.

Malaki rin ang isinakripisyo nito sa panahon ng military days ng kanyang mister kung saan hindi sila magkasama ng mga panahon na iyon.

Dalawang beses na ring sinamahan ni Ma'am Fe ang kanyang mister sa out-of-the-country assignment nito.

Una ay sa Libya nang italaga itong bilang special envoy para sa delikadong tungkulin, personal nitong ibinibigay ang mga pangangailangan ng asawa.

Pangalawa ay sa Poland para muli sa special assignment.

Sa parehas na pagkakataon ay pinilit ni Ma'am Fe na samahan ang mister kahit na alam nito ang panganib na kanyang kahaharapin.

Mula sa pagiging Heneral Roy hanggang maging Secretary Roy, mula sa pagiging asawa ng heneral hanggang maging asawa ng Philippine government civilian official ay palaging naroon si Ma'am Fe.

Hindi lang siya palaging nakikita bagkus ay nararamdaman din ito.

Ito ang tamang pagkakataon upang pag-usapan ang mga sakripisyo at hirap ng babae, katulad ni Ma'am Fe, upang magkaroon ng magaling na kapareha ng magiting na lalaki.

Ngayong ipagdiriwang ng bansa ang National Women's Month ay angkop lamang na bigyang-pugay ang mga babaeng malaki ang naiambag sa matagumpay nilang mister.

Kaya ng kababaihan ang gumawa ng pagbabago.

Ito ay nagawa ni Ma'am Fe.



DENR cites FDC Misamis' carbon capture project

(The Philippine Star) - March 1, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau in Region 10 (DENR-EMB 10) has cited the success of the forest management and reforestation programs of FDC Misamis Power Corp. (FDC Misamis) to capture carbon emissions and maintain air quality in Misamis Oriental.

Established in 2018 in partnership with DENR-EMB 10 and Barangay Sambulawan in El Salvador City, FDC Misamis' Carbon Sink Management Program (CSMP) covers 140 hectares of forest lands. So far, over 80 hectares have been planted with indigenous tree species like anan, tipolo, maribojoc, bangkal, acacia, alim (alum), magtangali, rattan, and kalikoy, among others. Meanwhile, an additional 40 hectares were populated with mangium and bagras species.

Through its first major carbon sink project, the power firm was able to establish a manmade forest that helps sequester carbon emissions to maintain air quality in the province.

After a recent site inspection, DENR officials said FDC Misamis' project is "a show window of a successful carbon sink for coal-fired power plants in the region."

In particular, DENR recognized the company for the suitability of its CSMP area, management and supervision scheme of existing forested areas, and planted species' highly adaptive characteristics.

The management of FDC Misamis expressed gratitude for the recognition.

"It is encouraging to know that DENR-EMB 10 sees our efforts, which is more than for compliance purposes. This project, along with many other social development programs, is our way of giving back to Mindanao. It is consistent with Filinvest's desire to make a difference in the lives of Filipinos," FDC Misamis president and CEO Juan Eugenio Roxas said.

"The disruption brought by the COVID-19 pandemic may have given the planet some breathing space, temporarily improving air quality worldwide. But as we move forward in the post-COVID era, environmental stewardship must be prioritized to truly mitigate greenhouse gas emissions," he added.

FDC Misamis is a subsidiary of FDC Utilities, Inc., the Gotianun-led Filinvest Development Corp.'s utilities and power arm. It operates a 3x135-MW circulating fluidized bed coal thermal plant in Villanueva town, one of Northern Mindanao's biggest. Since its commercial operations in 2016, the facility has been supplying stable and cost-effective power. The company plays a vital role in ensuring the stability of the Mindanao grid throughout the pandemic.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/03/01/2080972/denr-cites-fdc-misamis-carbon-capture-project>



Philippine eagle sightings prompt Sarangani town to protect forest

By: [Bong S. Sarmiento](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 05:02 AM February 28, 2021



RAPTOR HOME Conservationists last year recorded the sighting of a young Philippine eagle believed to be the offspring of Sarangani Pride (left), a rescued raptor released back to the wild in 2017 in Dakeol Forest, which the municipal government of Maitum, Sarangani province, recently classified as a critical habitat. —SARANGANI INFORMATION OFFICE

MAITUM, Sarangani, Philippines — Encouraged by local sightings of the endangered Philippine eagle, and with experts attesting to the land's rich biodiversity, the municipal government here has declared a 3,000-hectare forest area as a critical habitat requiring more state resources for its study and protection.

Mayor Alexander Bryan Reganit said the municipal council passed last December a resolution granting such a status to Dakeol Forest, and that the town was looking forward to the national government making a similar declaration.

In passing the resolution, the council acted in line with Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001. It now awaits a corresponding move in the form of an administrative order from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Reganit said.

Having the DENR order would facilitate cooperation among government agencies, the local community and other stakeholders in securing and managing the forest ecosystem.

“Dakeol Forest is home to our national bird, the mighty Philippine eagle, and other plant and animal species that need to be protected,” the mayor noted.



Dakeol forest PHOTO BY BETH RAMOS



Sarangani Pride

According to Vice Mayor Tito Balazon Sr., local legislators agreed to seek more protection for the forest in Barangay Batian to preserve its indigenous flora and fauna. The area has long been known to host red lauan trees, wild orchids and ferns, and various species of insects, bats, monkeys and birds.

But the main catalyst for the council's move was apparently the sighting of a juvenile Philippine eagle in a part of the forest known as Sitio Angko in November last year. It was documented by the DENR's Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) stationed in nearby Kiamba town.

The Davao City-based Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) later made an assessment that the juvenile raptor could be between 10 months to a year old and possibly the offspring of Sarangani Pride, a Philippine eagle that was rescued in Barangay Batian and released back to the wild in 2017.

Another rescue

Conservationists were able to monitor Sarangani Pride's movements through a solar-powered global positioning system transmitter attached to the bird.

Also last year, a team assembled by the DENR, the PEF and the Maitum local government scoured the area to look for raptor nesting sites, according to Edgar Calderon, team leader and park maintenance foreman of Cenro-Kiamba.

In January this year, another Philippine eagle was rescued at Barangay Ticulab, also in Maitum. The bird was apparently on a hunt for monkeys when it got trapped in a tangle of rattan vines.

Considered the top predator in the country's tropical forests, the Philippine eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) "plays an important role in keeping the ecosystem in balance and provides an umbrella of protection to all other life forms in its territory," said Jayson Ibañez, the PEF research and conservation director.

Listed among the world's critically endangered species since 1994, the Philippine eagle population in the wild is down to around 400 pairs, based on latest estimates.

Dakeol Forest is also home to another native raptor, the Philippine serpent eagle (*Spilornis holospilus*), whose population trend is classified as "decreasing."

A study conducted by the DENR and the PEF from 2018 to 2020 observed potentially damaging human activity in the forest area in the form of bushmeat hunting and wildlife collection for the pet trade. It also warned that slash-and-burn farming (kaingin) and shifting cultivation (a practice wherein a piece of farmland is abandoned for a period of time for it to recover its fertility) in the surrounding areas could soon encroach on Dakeol if left uncontrolled.

Beth Ramos, a member of the group Maitum Advocates for Sustainable Environment, said no significant cases of timber poaching had been recorded so far in Dakeol, owing to the difficulty of hauling logs out of the forest.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1400848/ph-eagle-sightings-prompt-sarangani-town-to-protect-forest>



DOJ clears 4 DENR officials on shipments of 103 vans of hazardous wastes from Canada

Published February 28, 2021, 1:05 PM

by [Jeffrey Damicog](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Juan Miguel T. Cuna and three other officials have been cleared of criminal charges by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the 2013 and 2014 shipments from Canada of 103 container vans with hazardous wastes.



Department of Justice (DoJ) (MANILA BULLETIN)

In a resolution dated Dec. 4, 2020, the DOJ panel of prosecutors dismissed the complaint filed by the National Bureau of Investigation's Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD). The complaint accused Cuna and the three officials of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) for violations of Republic Act No. 6969, the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990, and Section 3 (e) of RA 3019, the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

The three EMB officials cleared by the DOJ were Irvin G. Cadavona, Geri Geronimo R. Sanes and Renato T. Cruz.

But the DOJ panel recommended the indictment of Bureau of Customs (BOC) officials Benjamin T. Perez Jr., Eufrazio L. Ednaco, Matilda G. Bacongan, and Jose A. Saromo for violation of Section 14 paragraph (b), in relation to Section 13 paragraph (d) and Section 5 of RA 6969.

It said that "respondents Perez, Ednaco, Bacongan, and Saromo knew, or were supposed to know, that the items entering the Philippines were hazardous materials and not plastic scrap materials."

"After all, they claimed to have physically examined the subject importations. When they re-routed these shipments to 'green', they effectively facilitated the importation of hazardous waste into the Philippines," it pointed out.

However, the panel dismissed the complaint against the BOC officials for violating Section 3(e) of RA 3019.

Records showed that the 103 container vans shipped from Canada by Canada-based Chronic Plastics Inc. from May 2013 to January 2014 contained mixed, unsorted or heterogenous plastic materials and not plastic scraps.

President Duterte had ordered that the hazardous wastes be shipped back to Canada. After investigation, the NBI filed its complaint with the DOJ on Jan. 20, 2020.

In its resolution, the DOJ panel which conducted the preliminary investigation said "there was no evidence to support the finding that respondent Cuna's act of issuing a Registry Certificate to Chronic Plastics constituted gross inexcusable negligence, and that it gave Chronic Plastics unwarranted benefits and caused undue injury to the government"



“Respondents from the EMB could not have determined, prior to the importation, that the shipments contained used, mixed, unsorted or heterogeneous plastic materials because it was only during the actual inspection of the shipments that they determined the status or types of materials placed therein,” the resolution said.

“In fact, even the issuance of NOV (Notice of Violation) against Chronic Plastics and their participation in the Inter-Agency Committee that facilitated the return of the hazardous wastes to the state of import are acts that betray any claim of knowledge on their part of the importation of hazardous materials,” it said.

The resolution of the panel was approved by Prosecutor General Benedicto Malcontento and Senior Deputy State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon.



4 indicted over Canadian waste shipment

[Evelyn Macairan](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 1, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) has found probable cause to file criminal charges against four personnel of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) for allegedly allowing the entry of tons of hazardous waste from Canada in 2013.

In a 16-page resolution, the DOJ-National Prosecution Services recently recommended the filing of charges against Customs examiners Benjamin Perez Jr. and Eufrazio Ednaco, and appraisers Matilda Bacongan and Jose Saromo for violating Republic Act 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990.

The respondents reportedly facilitated the entry of the Canadian waste that were misdeclared as plastic scrap materials.

The DOJ said the respondents should have known that the contents of the shipments were hazardous as they claimed they personally examined it.

“When they rerouted the shipments to ‘green,’ they effectively facilitated the importation of hazardous waste into the Philippines,” the DOJ said.

In the same resolution, the DOJ dismissed for lack of probable cause the complaint filed against former Environment Management Bureau chief Juan Miguel Cuna and EMB employees Irvin Cadavona, Geri Geronimo Sañez and Renato Cruz.

Earlier, the Office of the Ombudsman cleared Cuna of the same offense.

The DOJ also dropped the graft complaint filed by the National Bureau of Investigation-Environmental Crime Division Investigative Service against the eight respondents for insufficiency of evidence.

Records showed that from May 2013 to January 2014, Canadian firm Chronic Inc. exported 103 shipping containers to the Philippines.

The shipments were consigned to two local companies, Chronic Plastics and Live Green Enterprise, which received 55 and 48 shipping containers, respectively.

The shipments were later found to contain mixed materials that were declared as plastic scraps.

The garbage was shipped back to Canada in 2019 on orders of President Duterte.



Raps vs 4 DENR execs over Canadian wastes dismissed

February 28, 2021 | Filed under: News | Posted by: Tempo Desk

BY JEFFREY DAMICOG

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New bill on Boracay Island regulatory authority opposed

By Ma. Stella F. Arnaldo February 28, 2021



Image credits: [Stella Arnaldo](#)

AKLANONS, especially those from the municipality of Malay and the island of Boracay, are opposing the new substitute bill creating the Boracay Island Development Authority (Bida).

The still unnamed bill, which substitutes and consolidates with 10 other similar legislations, has morphed Bida into a new government-owned and -controlled corporation (GOCC), similar to the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA). The bill was discussed on Saturday in a forum set by the Malay Sangguniang Bayan between local government officials and private stakeholders of Aklan and Malay.

The substitute bill, which has over 100 coauthors to date, not only will “manage, develop, preserve, and rehabilitate” Boracay Island, the country’s crown jewel of tourism; it also gives Bida control over Barangay Caticlan, the municipality of Malay, “and the entire area occupied by the airport, which extends to the municipality of Nabas.” It also gives Bida the power to “contract, lease, buy, sell, acquire, own or dispose movable and immovable, as well as personal and real property of whatever nature, including shares.”

After the forum, close to 25 Malay, and Boracay Island multisectoral associations, signed up to oppose the substitute bill, and are appealing to lawmakers to revert Bida to an earlier-envisioned regulatory authority.

Prior to its closure for six months in 2018, Boracay attracted over 2 million visitors who contributed P56.14 billion to the Philippine economy.

‘Unconstitutional’

“It’s very clear that this [substitute bill] is a violation of the Constitution and the Local Government Code,” said Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores during the forum. He added, “No consultations were made” between lawmakers and those who will be affected if the bill is passed.

He underscored, like the other local officials who attended the forum, that they “supported the creation of a Bida as an authority,” which will have the same functions of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF), that of overseeing the management of the island and its resources. In his last State of the Nation Address, President Duterte urged lawmakers to set the creation of Bida as a priority measure.

Duterte created the BIATF, led by the Secretary of Environment and cochaired by the Secretaries of the Interior and Local Government and of Tourism, to rehabilitate Boracay Island, implement existing laws on easement and environmental protection, and construct much needed infrastructure. Its term is set to expire on May 2021.



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has said BIATF's work is "on track" to be completed by May 2021, although the DOT's own unit, the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, is scheduled to complete its much-delayed drainage project by the end of the year.

'Vast taxation powers'

It was pointed out during the forum that as a GOCC, the Bida will be given the "vast powers of taxation and regulation that comprise an LGU," depriving Malay a huge chunk of tax revenues needed for their sustained operations and projects. Under the substitute bill, "All local taxes and national taxes shall be imposed on business establishments operating and registered with the Authority; Real estate taxes shall remain with the government of Malay." The municipal treasury office has reported that 98 percent of its revenues come from Boracay Island in terms of regulatory fees, business taxes, and real property taxes.

In a presentation by Aklan provincial board member Jay Tejada to the forum, he noted that there are already existing laws that cover the powers given to the Bida in terms of the issuance of business licenses and permits, which he pointed out is an authority given to the Sangguniang Bayan as per Republic Act 7160, the Local Government Code (LGC). He added that the 1987 Philippine Constitution also respects the local authority's responsibility to impose taxes, and in cases of conflicts between Bida and LGUs, the LGC always favors the local authority.

"In Bida, the only 'bida' (protagonist) is Bida. It creates a new LGU," he stressed.

Local officials are looking to submit a position paper with House lawmakers and discuss their own thoughts about Bida, before the substitute bill is submitted to plenary in March.



Mine site illegal settlers warned of charges

[Victor Martin](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 1, 2021 - 12:00am

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya , Philippines — Informal settlers who refuse to abandon geohazard areas near a mining site in Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya will face charges, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said yesterday.

The illegal settlers set up their houses near a gold-molybdenum project in Barangay Runruno despite a government order to leave the area, according to Edgar Martin, chief of the provincial environment and natural resources office.

Of the 411 families illegally staying in the area located in Sitio Bit-ang, 24 refused to leave.

Most of these illegal settlers came from the Cordilleras as well as in the provinces of Isabela and Quirino.

“A majority complied with the order, but there are still those who refused to leave the landslide-prone area,” Martin said.

Representatives of the Mines and Geo-sciences Bureau, Philippine National Police and local government met with the illegal settlers to persuade them to leave.

Aside from holding meetings, authorities launched awareness campaign on the dangers of living in the area.

Sources said that those who complied reportedly received money from the mining company.

“Once the case is filed, it’s up to the court to decide whether they will still get the same amount from the company or none at all since the area is part of the company’s operation,” the source said.

The remaining settlers are reportedly expecting the company to renegotiate and offer a higher amount.



Benguet miners find hope in 'green gold'

By: Karlston Lapniten - 2 hours ago



NEW INCOME SOURCE Neri Reynold Fangloy, who used to work in his community's mining tunnels, monitors the daily growth of vegetables and tilapia in the aquaponics farm that he and fellow small-scale miners started as an alternative income source in Itogon, Benguet. —PHOTOS BY KARLSTON LAPNITEN

BAGUIO CITY, Benguet, Philippines — Water may just be the right pay dirt to give displaced small-scale miners here sustainable livelihood after their tunnels closed due to the government's crackdown on illegal mines since 2018.

The "green gold" potential of aquaponics has been promising since the Batawil Small-Scale Miners Association (BSSMA) in Atok Trail village took on the venture last year.

An unconventional form of agriculture in the country, aquaponics combines aquaculture and hydroponics, or water-based planting.

Found on the outskirts of Baguio, the 1000-square-meter aquaponics farm was constructed by the BSSMA from a P1.1-million project grant from the Czech Republic's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The pilot phase is expected to be completed soon, before the start of the first cropping season, said Neri Reynold Fangloy, the association president.

"We don't want to dive in headfirst and make a thousand blunders. We have to be strategic and careful to avoid wasting and losing resources," Fangloy told the Inquirer during a farm visit on Feb. 15.



CRACKDOWN In February 2018, a government team led the closure of over a dozen illegal small-scale mines operating within the Philippine Military Academy reservation in Baguio City's Kias village.

Pool beds

The integral system consists of six long rows of 3-foot-wide vegetable pool beds, which are interconnected to four large water vats and four tanks. Tilapia are raised in three of the vats, which were recycled from tanks previously used in recovering gold using chemicals.



Water is pumped and filtered from a spring and aerated to the pool beds before it is recycled or drained into a nearby creek.

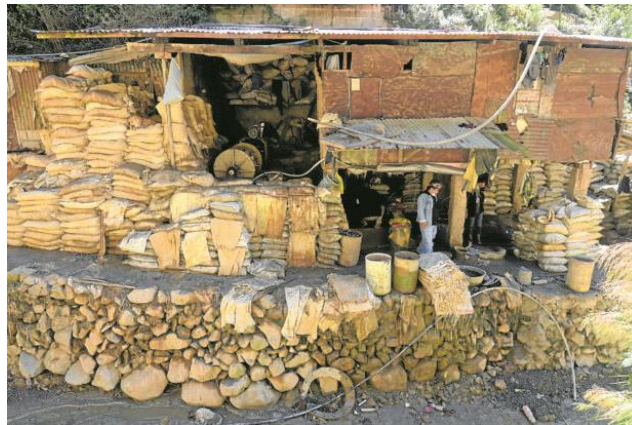
From propagating different leafy vegetables, association members have been successful in growing lettuce and watercress. Their tilapia were also well adapted to the setup, which turns their waste products into natural fertilizers for the plants.

Fangloy said the group was also planning to add crustaceans, such as freshwater shrimps, which command good prices in the market.

The aquaponics farm was borne out of a need for a sustainable livelihood for the small-scale miners after Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ordered the closure of their tunnels in September 2018.

Small-scale mining is ironically a large industry in Benguet but deemed illegal for operating outside the lone government-approved Minahang Bayan (People's Small-Scale Mining program) in Itogon town.

Like many other miners in Benguet, the association applied several times for the sanctioning of their operations but was denied due to technical and procedural challenges.



RIPPLE EFFECT Pocket mining operations outside the lone approved Minahang Bayan in the Cordillera region are constantly monitored by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, leading to raids and arrests in Baguio City and the neighboring Itogon town in Benguet province.

No fallback

They finally quit mining after repeated police raids on their mines in 2019.

"It was really difficult because our families relied on that livelihood and we did not have a fallback," said miner Honorio Chaokas.

Like his fellow miners, Chaokas took a temporary job as a laborer before the aquaponics project received the grant. He now helps manage the farm's daily operations.

Fangloy said he had to undergo a crash course in aquaponics, and dedicated several months to researching and educating himself on the unique farm production.

"People are now becoming more conscious about the food they eat and aquaponics can provide this demand for natural, chemical-free food," he said.



The group registered as a rural-based farmers' association at the Department of Agriculture and underwent training on aquaponics. It pitched the project proposal to various government agencies but was denied due to stringent requirements and technical disqualifications.



FOOD, JOB SECURITY With ample startup support, turning displaced miners to farmers, like the members of the Batawil Small-Scale Miners Association, may be the key to resolving the issues on food and job security in the Cordillera region.

Partner organization

In 2019, the association sought help from Partners for Indigenous Knowledge Philippines, an organization involved in assisting indigenous peoples, which proposed the project to the Embassy of the Czech Republic.

Construction immediately started after the signing of a memorandum of agreement with the Czech Embassy in March 2020.

From leveling the ground to fitting the pipes, the miners themselves built the farm, Fangloy said.

The construction activities provided the much-needed source of income to the association's 30 members during the pandemic, when getting alternative jobs became even more difficult.

In October 2020, the main component of the project was completed though it took two more months to refine the facility.

Trial run

Czech Ambassador to the Philippines Jana Šedivá graced the farm's first trial run in November last year.

The local police, who escorted the Czech party, were surprised when they learned that the miners whom they previously raided were welcoming the ambassador, Chaokas said.

"It was an amusing encounter but at least they got to see the green gold we are now mining," he said in jest.

Fangloy said the goal was to develop the aquaponics farm as a demonstration and training site for interested associations and individuals, especially the displaced small-scale miners like them.



It could also be developed as an agritourism destination, he added.

Nestled far from the city bustle, the farm is suited perfectly for that kind of business.

To reach the farm, it takes around 8 kilometers from Baguio's central business district to reach the concrete dead-end road of Atok Trail village.

It will take another kilometer and a half of off-road track going down the base of the mountain, literally just a few meters from the boundary with Gumatdang village in Itogon town.

Local entrepreneurs have shown interest in partnering with the association, but Fangloy said the market would initially be the consumers in the local community.

"We are currently focused on making the farm sustainable, but our long-term plans never take the backseat. After all, we made it this far," he said.



MWSS' challenge grows 4M trees

posted February 28, 2021 at 10:50 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Four years after the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System launched the Annual Million Trees Challenge, over four million saplings have been planted in seven critical watersheds that supply water to Metro Manila and its environs.



MWSS Board Chairman Reynaldo Velasco

Launched by then MWSS Administrator now Chairman of the Board Gen. Reynaldo V. Velasco (Ret), the AMTC aims to restore the health of eight watersheds supplying water to Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

These watersheds are Angat, Ipo, Kaliwa, La Mesa, Laguna Lake, Umiray, Upper Marikina, and General Nakar in Quezon. Also included in the list is Manila Bay which is currently undergoing rehabilitation.

MWSS saw the need to reforest these watersheds that have been denuded because of illegal activities such as timber poaching, kaingin, and land conversion. Wanton destruction of forest areas has adversely affected water quality in the watersheds.

For three consecutive years after its launch in February 2017, AMTC targets were surpassed. In 2017, the number of saplings planted totaled 1,337,800. This was followed by 1,027,000 in 2018; and 1,022,917 in 2019.

However, the number declined in 2020 because of the pandemic that prompted several program partners to postpone tree-planting activities. Only 633,442 trees were planted for the year. Nevertheless, the cumulative number breached the four million mark at 4,021,626 in four years. These saplings were planted in Ipo-Angat (2,265,483), La Mesa (777,505), Laguna de Bay (222,096), Kaliwa Umiray (60,473), Upper Marikina (552,165), and Manila Bay (143,904).

Among the program partners of MWSS in this endeavor are ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, Inc.–Bantay Kalikasan; Bambuhay Social Enterprise; Boy Scouts of the Philippines; DENR National Capital Region; DENR Region 3; DENR Region 4A; Gen. Nakar, Quezon LGU; JCI Senate Philippines; Laguna Lake Development Authority; Luzon Clean Water Development Corporation–San Miguel Corporation; Manila Water Company, Inc.; Maynilad Water Services, Inc.; Mga Anak ni Inang Daigdig; MWSS Regulatory Office; National Power Corporation; Phil. Waterworks Association (PWWA); UP Beta Sigma; UP Mountaineers; and, World Wide Fund for Nature – Philippines.

AMTC, which is a five-year watershed rehabilitation program, is in support of the government's National Greening Program and is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

During the stakeholders annual pledging session last February 22, Velasco said that to pursue the AMTC more aggressively and ensure its activities continue even after its five-year duration, work is now in progress for the establishment of the Million Trees Foundation.

According to Velasco, the Million Trees Foundation envisions a healthy natural environment that will complement government programs to achieve sustainable economic development. It will be actively involved in tree-planting activities, reforestation awareness campaign, and identify modern technology that will help fast-track the achievement of tree-planting goals.



“I would like a sustainable continuity of the noble annual million trees challenge project whose template of success can be replicated in other 142 watersheds all over the Philippines,” said Velasco.”It is the responsibility of everyone to sustainably manage natural resources. Forests are essential in reducing risk of natural disasters. They help mitigate climate change and protect watersheds. Cognizant of this, the UN Sustainable Development Goal 15 aims “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.”



MWSS reforestation program covers 9.5M hectares—report

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

March 1, 2021

MORE than four million seedlings of native and fruit-bearing trees were planted in critical watersheds covering a total of 9,509 hectares since 2017, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) reported.

Citing a 2020 report for the project dubbed “Annual Million Trees Challenge” (AMTC), the MWSS said a total of 4,021,626 trees were planted between 2017 and 2020 in Ipo-Angat, La Mesa, Laguna de Bay, Kaliwa-Umiray, Upper Marikina watershed and Manila Bay.

The AMTC is in support of the National Greening Program (NGP) and is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the MWSS said.

A government priority program that provided for the planting of some 1.5 billion trees in about 1.5 billion hectares for a period of six years from 2011 to 2016, the NGP was further enhanced by virtue of Executive Order 193 signed on November 12, 2015. The EO targets the rehabilitation of the remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland estimated at 7.1 million hectares from 2016 to 2028.

Now known as the Expanded NGP, the program “harmonized” greening efforts of the private sector and civil society.

In the Ipo-Angat watershed alone, where more than 96 percent of raw water supply for Metro Manila and the Greater Manila Area come from, a total of 2,265,483 trees were planted, surpassing the combined number of seedlings planted in La Mesa (777,505), Laguna de Bay (222,093), Kaliwa-Umiray (60,473) Upper Marikina (552,165) and Manila Bay (143,904).

The report stated that AMTC targets were surpassed for three consecutive years since its launch in February 2017.

In 2017, the number of seedlings planted totaled 1,337,800. This was followed by 1,027,467 in 2018 and 1,022,917 in 2019. The number declined in 2020 because of the quarantine measures, which prompted several program partners to postpone tree-planting activities. Only 633,442 trees were planted for the year.

Through the AMTC, a total of 9,509.375 hectares from 2017 to 2020 were reforested.

At the Ipo-Angat watershed, reforested area was 5,035.19 hectares; La Mesa, 1,723.39; Laguna de Bay, 347.83; Kaliwa-Umiray, 150.84; Upper Marikina, 1,928.99; and Manila Bay, 323.135.

A 5-year watershed rehabilitation program, AMTC is spearheaded by the MWSS-Corporate Office in partnership with various organizations that include national government agencies, local government units, civil society groups and the private sector. It aims to rehabilitate the seven critical watersheds (La Mesa, Ipo, Angat, Umiray, Laguna Lake, Upper Marikina and Kaliwa) supplying water to Metro Manila and parts of Rizal, Cavite and Bulacan.

Formally launched on February 18, 2017, the MWSS and its partners agreed on maintaining the health of the beneficiary watersheds by planting and nurturing at least one million trees annually.

The MWSS said it saw the need to reforest these watersheds that have been denuded because of illegal activities such as timber poaching, kaingin and land conversion. Wanton destruction of forest areas has adversely affected water quality in the watersheds.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/03/01/mwss-reforestation-program-covers-9-5m-hectares-report/>



P700,000 board feet of illegally sawn lumber seized in Cagayan

Published February 28, 2021, 5:47 PM

by [Liezle Basa Iñigo](#)

ABULUG, Cagayan — Police seized 11,000 board feet of alleged illegally sawn lumber worth P700,000 in Barangay Lucban here Saturday.

The Provincial Intelligence Unit received a report that sawn lumber was seen stockpiled in an open lot.

Police proceeded the area and recovered approximately 11,000 board feet of different kinds of sawn lumber composed of red and white lawan and narra species with estimated market value of more or less P700,000.

The stockpile was believed to be owned by a contractor known as “Joma.”

Abulug police have coordinated with CENRO Sanchez Mira for the conduct of scaling of the seized evidence.



P.7M worth of contraband wood confiscated by PNP Cagayan

February 28, 2021 1 min read

By Glen S. Ramos

ABULUG, Cagayan – Members of the Cagayan Philippine National Police have confiscated a total of 11-thousand board feet of contraband wood cut from illegal logs in the town of Abulug yesterday, February 27, 2021.

The stockpile of contraband wood was discovered in a compound in Brgy. Lucban, Abulug which is owned by a contractor identified as Tomas Uy, a resident of Apayao province.

The Cagayan Police Provincial Office (CPPO) Intelligence Unit together with the Abulug Police Station conducted the raid at around 10:40 p.m. yesterday and confiscated the illegal items amounting to Php700,000.

The contraband items are now under the custody of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO).

The provincial government of Cagayan has established a Cagayan Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force to curb the rampant illegal logging activities in the province. (AI/MTVN)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2021/02/28/p-7m-worth-of-contraband-wood-confiscated-by-pnp-cagayan/?fbclid=IwAR1hTxsE-xYQ7bBulXWB4VpKzXbnVPSpOcInQqdaPCxtA4pBIWwXgr6aow4>



13 illegal logger kalaboso sa Cagayan

By Abante News Online — Last updated Feb 28, 2021

METRO



Dinakip ang 13 katao matapos umanong mahuli habang nasa aktong pumuputol ng kahoy sa kagubatan, bahagi ng bayan ng Lal-lo at Gonzaga, Cagayan.

Ayon sa report ng Cagayan Police naaktuhan ang limang lalaki na pinuputol ang G-melina tree gamit ang chainsaw sa Brgy. San Lorenzo noong Sabado.

Hinuli ang mga suspek matapos na walang maipakitang permit na putulin ang puno at hindi rin nakarehistro ang gamit na chainsaw na paglabag sa chainsaw act law.

Dito, nakumpiska ang mga tinistis na G-melina kasama ang gamit na chainsaw.

Sa bayan naman ng Gonzaga, ayon sa CPPO, huli ang walong kalalakhian matapos maaktuhang hinihila ang isang round log gamit isang fishing boat sa dalampasigan sa Barangay Batangan.

Binitbit ng pulisya ang walong suspek kasama ang nakumpiskang round log na may habang 12 metro.
(Allan Bergonia)



Inabandonang ‘hot logs’, narekober

@Balitang Probinsiya | February 28, 2021

NUEVA ECIJA—Narekober ng mga awtoridad kamakalawa ang inabandonang 430 board feet na “hot logs” na illegal na pinutol sa kabundukan ng Bgy. Pias, General Tinio.

Sa ngayon ay inaalam na ng mga awtoridad ang mga illegal loggers na nag-abandona ng “hot logs” sa nasabing barangay.

Ayon sa ulat, may tinanggap na impormasyon ang mga awtoridad na may nagpuputol ng kahoy sa naturang lugar kaya agad rumesponde ang mga operatiba, pero nakatakas ang mga suspek.

Sa tantiya ng mga awtoridad ay aabot sa halagang P17, 200 ang inabandonang “hot logs” sa nabanggit na lugar.

Pinaghahanap na ng mga awtoridad ang mga suspek upang sampahan ng kasong paglabag sa Presidential Decree 705 o Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.



Bamboo industry eyed to spur economic recovery amid Covid-19 pandemic

By: [Christia Marie Ramos](#) - Reporter / [@CMRamosINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:51 PM February 28, 2021



(Photo by Michael Jaucian, Inquirer Southern Luzon)

MANILA, Philippines — A lawmaker is pushing to make bamboo a “viable pillar” in the country’s economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, touting its benefits not only to the economy but also to the environment.

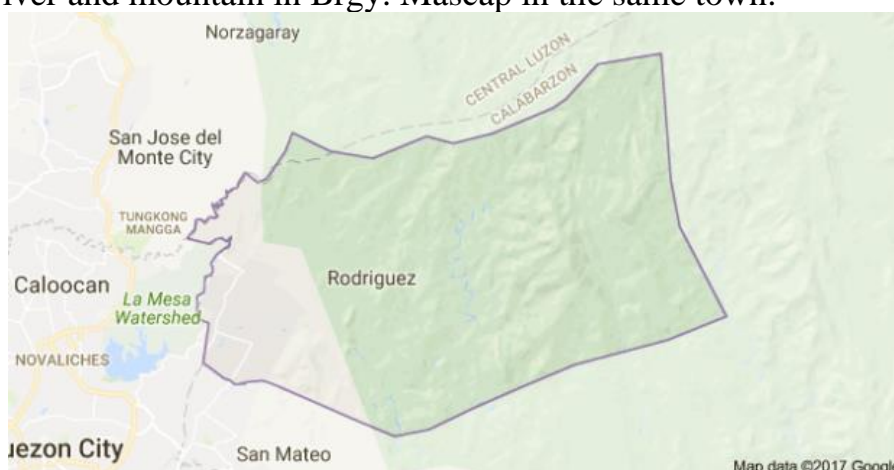
Rizal 2nd District Rep. Fidel Nograles, in a statement on Sunday, said his office would open talks with the Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Trade and Industry to explore how Rizal could maximize the benefits derived from bamboo.

With an end-goal of sustainable development, Nograles said he hopes to create value chains so that Rizal could be a bamboo-processing hub rather than just a possible source of raw materials.

“With the help of these two departments that can provide us with technology and technical know-how, as well as strategic partnerships with the private sector, we plan on making bamboo a viable pillar in our pandemic recovery efforts,” he said.

This, as the Save Our Forests Now program embarked on its second leg, with more than twice the number of participants joining in reforestation efforts in the province of Rizal.

More than 500 youth participants from the town of Rodriguez planted some 1,000 bamboo saplings by the river and mountain in Brgy. Mascap in the same town.



Rodriguez town in Rizal (Google maps)



Nograles launched the program in December last year in the wake of Typhoon Ulysses, which battered various towns in the province in November.

In the program's launch, over 200 students from Rizal province joined the maiden activity along Wawa Dam in Rodriguez, which was among the hardest-hit areas.

"More of our youth are realizing their potential to be agents of change, and it is truly inspiring to witness them take our beloved province's destiny into their own hands," he added.

He said that economic considerations, besides the touted benefits in preventing soil erosion and the rush of floodwater, were the reason behind the choice to plant bamboo.

"Bukod sa matibay na panangga sa pagguho ng lupa o "soil erosion" at pag-agos ng tubig-baha mula sa kabundukan sa panahon ng bagyo, ang kawayan ay maaaring maging kabuhayan," Nograles said.

(Aside from preventing soil erosion and preventing floods, bamboo can also be a source of livelihood.)

"Sapagkat likas na mayaman sa kawayan ang Montalban (Rodriguez), hangad nating gamitin ito bilang puhunan sa kabuhayan," he added.

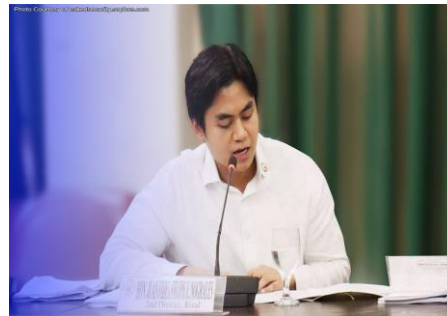
(Montalban is a rich source of bamboo, and we wish to make it a key source of livelihood.) Further, the solon said he plans to provide skills training to residents who wish to rely on bamboo for their livelihood.

gsg



Kawayan gagamitin sa pandemic recovery SOFN NI NOGRALES SUPPORTADO NG KABATAAN

11 hours ago [jake](#)



IKINAGALAK ni Rizal 2nd District Congressman Fidel Nograles ang patuloy na pagdami ng mga kabataan na sumasali sa Save Our Forest Now Movement para sa reforestation sa lalawigan ng Rizal.

Kasabay nito, nais ng bagitong mambabatas na magkaroon ng kabuhayan ang mga taga-Rizal sa pamamagitan ng kawayan o bamboo na itinatanim sa mga kabundukan ng lalawigan lalo na ngayong panahon ng pandemya.

Ayon sa mambabatas, umaabot sa 500 kabataan mula sa bayan ng Rodriguez (Montalban) ang sumali sa pagtatayo ng mahigit 1,000 bamboo sampling sa tabi ng ilog at kabundukan sa Brgy. Mascap.

Mahigit doble ang bilang nito sa 200 kabataan na sumali sa unang isinagawang reforestation na nagtanim ng bamboo sampling sa Wawa Dam sa naturang bayan noong Disyembre.

“Nakakagalak po na mas marami pa sa ating kabataan ang interesadong makilahok sa kilusan para muling maging luntian hindi lang ang bayan ng Rodriguez, kundi ang buong Rizal,” ani Nograles.

“More of our youth are realizing their potential to be agents of change, and it is truly inspiring to witness them take our beloved province’s destiny into their own hands,” ayon pa sa mambabatas.

Sinimulan ng mambabatas ang reforestation sa nasabing lalawigan kung saan nagtanim ang mga ito ng bamboo sampling upang maiwasan ang pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa kapag panahon ng bagyo o malakas na ulan.

Kasabay nito, nakikipag-ugnayan na ang tanggapan ni Nograles sa Department of Science and Technology (DOST) at Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) para tulungan ang mga taga-Rizal na magamit ang mga kawayan para sa alternatibong kabuhayan.

“Bukod sa matibay na panangga sa pagguho ng lupa o “soil erosion” at pag-agos ng tubig-baha mula sa kabundukan sa panahon ng bagyo, ang kawayan ay maaaring maging kabuhayan,” ayon pa sa Harvard trained lawyer na si Nograles.

“Sapagkat likas na mayaman sa kawayan ang Montalban, hangad nating gamitin ito bilang puhunan sa kabuhayan,” dagdag ng mambabatas.

Nais nito na maging bamboo-processing hub ang Rizal sa hinaharap dahil mayaman ito sa kawayan sa halip na maging source ng raw material.

“With the help of these two departments that can provide us with technology and technical know-how, as well as strategic partnerships with the private sector, we plan on making bamboo a viable pillar in our pandemic recovery efforts,” paliwanag pa nito. (BERNARD TAGUINOD)

Source: http://saksingayon.com/nasyunal/kawayan-gagamitin-sa-pandemic-recovery-sofn-ni-nograles-suportado-ng-kabataan/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR3dEK70J8hmBVlsZc6k92Cf0PcQk4ucLFPk1PTPNJf_V5O4QuHRC-2FQ1Q



The story behind Medellin's famed Bamboo Forest

By: [Morexette Marie B. Erram](#) Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital February 28, 2021



Badges of bamboo planted within the 2.3-hectare Bamboo Forest in Barangay Luy-a, Medellin
| CDN Digital Photo by Morexette Marie B. Erram

MEDELLIN, Cebu – Around six years ago, farmers and planters belonging to the Bogo-Medellin Milling Company, Inc. (Bomedco) planted bamboos to help the nearby sugarcane and banana plantations.

The first badges of bamboo cultivated in Barangay Luy-a in Medellin town of north Cebu were harvested specifically to prop up bananas.

But according to Jose Mari Miranda, the current president of the Bogo-Medellin Sugarcane Planters Association, they came up with the idea to turn it into a hangout when they noticed locals dropping by and having their pictures taken with the bamboos for their background.

“At first, we never expected and planned to have it as a tourist spot,” said Miranda in Cebuano.

“But we observed that people really come here for the bamboos... and when we started asking them, they said they found these beautiful. Like they are in a forest,” he added.

Spotting an opportunity, Miranda said they decided to plant more.

And they did so.

Fast forward to several years later, what started out as an ordinary parcel of land planted with bamboo is now one of the most popular tourist attractions in northern Cebu.

At least 200 badges of fully-grown bamboo can now be found in the 2.3-hectare land owned by Miranda in Barangay Luy-a. The property was eventually named Medellin's Bamboo Forest.

Last February 25, Miranda, together with the local government officials of Medellin town including Mayor Benjun Mondigo, led the ceremonial launching of Medellin's Bamboo Forest.

Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia and representatives from the Capitol and the Department of Tourism in Central Visayas (DOT-7) were also present to help promote the province's newest destination.

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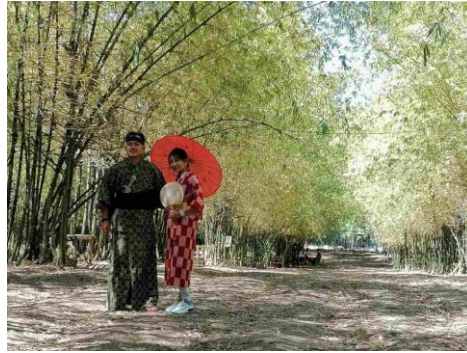
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Cebu Provincial Board Member Red Duterte (left) with Governor Gwendolyn Garcia (right) in traditional Japanese costume during the ceremonial launch of Medellin's Bamboo Forest last February 25, 2021. | CDN Digital Photo by Morexette Marie B. Erram

When visiting Medellin, one cannot miss its famed Bamboo Forest.

From the Curva-Bangon-Medellin highway that cuts across hectares of sugarcane fields, clumps of bamboos towering over sugarcanes can be visibly seen on the horizon.

Admission fee, regardless of age, is P20.

However, due to prevailing minimum health standards, Miranda said they decided to cap the maximum number of guests to 300 per day.

The bamboo forest starts accepting guests at 8 a.m. and closes at 8 p.m. on weekdays. On weekends, they often extend their operating hours up to 10 p.m.

Medellin is a second-class municipality located approximately 117 kilometers north of Cebu City. With the presence of a vast sugarcane fields, this town has also earned its moniker as the 'Sugar Bowl of Cebu.'

Bomedco, one of the country's oldest incorporated companies and presently owns one of Cebu's largest sugarcane milling plant, is also a roughly 10-minute ride away from Medellin's Bamboo Forest.

During a quick trip to the Bamboo Forest, one can also experience a semblance of the life of farmers planting sugarcane for a living. Here, old tractors used in harvesting sugarcane and large *kawa* for cooking are put on display.

Local vendors also sell delicacies such as *pintos na mais*, a Filipino version of sweetcorn tamales, and fresh sugarcane juice.



Tubo juice or juice extracted from fresh sugarcane are sold in Medellin's Bamboo Forest | CDN Digital Photo by Morexette Marie Erram



Miranda said they are glad that the Bamboo Forest placed Medellin once again on the tourist map. It also spawned livelihood opportunities for locals.

“All in all, we are helping everyone and the economy to recover from the pandemic,” he said.



Ilocos Norte aims to expand its coffee plantation

By Freddie G. Lazaro Published on February 28, 2021

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union, Feb 28 (PIA) - - The provincial government of Ilocos Norte aims to expand its coffee plantation to boost production and ensure sustainability of this industry amid the pandemic.

Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Marcos Manotoc said that the program is one of his priority projects this year to include the coffee processing training.

To date, the provincial government has provided assistance to farmers with over 1,000 hectares of land planted with robusta and arabica coffee located at Barangay Saguigui, Pagudpud town and Barangay Francisco of Dingras town. The coffee plantation will possibly be expanding the coffee plantation in the towns of Solsona, Bangui, and other parts of Pagudpud.

The governor said that the provincial government will partner with the different farmer's cooperatives and the local youth sectors to strengthen the production and processing of the local coffee products in the province.

He said the residents should know the proper technology in the processing of a high-quality coffee product out of the locally-produced raw materials to increase its value when sold in the local and even in the international markets.

To have a sustainable marketing outlet for local coffee products, the governor has also planned to establish a coffee shop in different strategic places in the province.

According to Ilocos Norte's Environment and Natural Resources Officer (ENRO) Estrella Sacro, a total of P3 million has been allocated this year for the expansion of coffee farming in the province.

She said that her office is currently propagating Robusta coffee seedlings for distribution to the farmer-cooperators in the different towns of Ilocos Norte.

Sacro recalled that two years ago, farmers in Pagudpud started to revitalize coffee growing in its lowland and hilly areas in support of the government's National Greening Program (NGP) and to boost livelihood in the area.

The first batch of coffee seedlings has started to bear fruits in which the provincial government will assist it the processing and will introduce it as a home-grown brand of coffee called "Kapeng Ilokano".

Considering the high-potential of coffee production in the province due to its climatic condition, the local government unit of Piddig had also initiated the country's first and largest national convergence program for coffee with the development of about 1,600 hectares of upland and lowland plantations of high-grade Arabica, Excelsa and Liberica coffee varieties.

The local products of coffee from Piddig town are now being sold in the various trade fairs and exhibits, and in the local markets. (JCR/FGL, PIA 1)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1068107>



FLEA MARKET OF IDEAS

Roads for people and trees

By: [Joel Ruiz Butuyan](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:06 AM March 01, 2021

It's about time our roads are freed from the absolute clutches of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). It's high time they are transformed into public spaces jointly managed with other government agencies that will incorporate greenery, ensure pedestrian access, and include leisure spaces. The single biggest feature that makes a town or city either charming or ugly is the state of its roads and highways. Localities with roads that are narrow, barren of trees, and bereft of pedestrian spaces are communities with a very low grade of livability. Residing in these localities engenders feelings of stress, danger, and uncertainty. Sadly, this imagery applies to 99 percent of our towns and cities.

The major reason our roads and highways are in such a sorry state is because we've totally surrendered to the DPWH the power to divine their design and function. We love our engineers, but their inherent DNA is to treat and construct our roads as pure motorways that singularly serve fuel-powered vehicles.

Our policymakers should bestow upon the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) co-equal powers with the DPWH to plan and design the form and function of our roads. Sure, the DENR currently has a say in the cutting of roadside trees and in the issuance of environmental permits for road construction. It's a passive role, however, and the DENR readily gives whatever the DPWH wants. What the DENR should be made to do is to create a bureau with the singular purpose of devising long-term plans to transform all road right-of-way into spaces that have areas for pedestrians and bicycles, native trees and plants, and even sporadic benches here and there. It is not known to many, but our national roads have 15 to 20 meters of road right-of-way on both sides that can be utilized for said purposes.

Almost all of our unutilized road right-of-way are occupied by private property owners whose lots adjoin roads. They build structures or plant within these easement spaces, lulled as they are into a false sense of security that they can do whatever they want with these spaces, only to be shocked with an order of demolition when the DPWH embarks on road expansion. The government should once and for all mark and delimit the use of these public spaces for everyone's sake.

The DENR and the DPWH can gradually implement plans to develop our road easements, in partnership with local government units. If it proves difficult to implement them in congested localities, the government can start in the uncongested portions of our national road network, particularly those spaces that abut open fields and connect different towns.

By utilizing our extensive road right-of-way as reserved spaces for roadside greenery, we can have beautiful native trees and plants in the midst of our towns and cities. These plants—thousands of them are not found anywhere else on earth because they exclusively evolved in our islands—should not be left facing extinction in extreme parts of our mountains. They should be made to thrive, to be seen and enjoyed, in the proximate surroundings of our communities.



The DPWH and the DENR should have long-term blueprints for our roads, and not the kind of ad hoc and shortsighted plans that the DPWH has long been used to that periodically results in the massacre of trees and demolition of pedestrian spaces. If existing roads with trees eventually become narrow because of the increased volume of vehicles, the solution should no longer be to widen these roads but to transform them into one-way roadways. The government must then construct additional thoroughfares for the opposite direction that will bypass the town proper. This will allow our towns to grow century-old trees and enable them to preserve old roads that exude quaint charm.

For far too long, our roads have been designed to serve purely the convenience of vehicles. It's about time they're redesigned and repurposed to make our communities habitable for man and nature.

Comments to fleamarketofideas@gmail.com



Sudy: Lake Lanao remains pristine

ByThe Manila Times
February 28, 2021



“Our Lake Lanao from all sampling sites is still pristine; our water is still clean.”

This was disclosed by Fema Abamo, Ph.D., a professor of Mindanao State University in Marawi City, during her webinar presentation for the regional basic research caravan for Bicol, as conducted by the Department of Science and Technology-National Research Council of the Philippines (DoST-NRCP).

The water quality of Lake Lanao in five sampling sites namely Marawi City, Ramain, Balindong, Taraka, and Binidayan was monitored for two years by using the abundance of one-celled protozoan ciliates as bio-indicators of organic pollution. The highest ciliate abundance was observed in the littoral zone of Balindong at 0.0061cells/mL during the dry season. The previous study of Beaver and Crisman (1989) categorized lakes as ultra-oligotrophic when their ciliate abundance is equal to or lower than 2.4cells/mL; Lake Lanao, therefore, is ultra-oligotrophic having ciliate abundance below the set range in all sampling sites.

Their results were corroborated by the findings of another group in the same program conducting the physical and chemical characterization of the lake and found the same that the lake is not polluted but still healthy and has good water quality.

The study, which was funded by the DoST-NRCP, was conducted during a three-year period, but was temporarily suspended and eventually allowed to resume after the Marawi siege.

Lake Lanao is estimated to be around 10 million years old (World Lake Database) and is listed as one of the 17 ancient lakes of the world with a tectonic-volcanic origin. It is the second largest lake in the Philippines and the largest one in Mindanao, home to 18 endemic cyprinids (freshwater fishes related to the carps and minnows) that are found nowhere else in the world.

For more webinars on basic research, interested parties can visit the NRCP’s Research Pod, a Facebook Page of the council.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/02/28/public-square/sudy-lake-lanao-remains-pristine/846122/>



Mayor Belmonte leads Plastic Bags Ban kick off event

Published February 28, 2021, 3:48 PM

by [Allysa Nievera](#)

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte led the Plastic Bags Ban kick off event on Sunday morning in a bid to promote plastic waste reduction in the city.



Photo from QC LGU/ MANILA BULLETIN

The mayor distributed bayongs and eco bags to market goers in Galas, Munoz, Suki, A. Bonifacio, Frisco, and Kamuning market in Quezon City on Sunday, February 28.

The kick off event was in relation with the re-implementation of the city's Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance starting on Monday, March 1.

Belmonte was joined by Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department head, Andrea Villaroman, and personnel from the Market Development and Administration Department of the city to encourage sustainable practice and promote the plastic waste reduction campaign.

The distribution of plastic bags as carry-out bags in establishments will be prohibited throughout the city.

“We suspended the implementation of the ordinance during the pandemic para hindi po makadagdag sa uncertainty, but now we can manage the pandemic better so itinuloy na natin. Alam naman natin na plastics are one of the greatest polluters of our oceans and bodies of water, clogs our waste streams and pose health risks (We suspended the implementation of the ordinance during the pandemic to avoid creating additional uncertainty, but now we can manage the pandemic better so we continued it. We know that plastics are one of the greatest polluters of our oceans and bodies of water, clogs our waste streams, and pose health risks),” the mayor said.

The event is also a part of the city's celebration of Women's Month this March which highlights the role of women in environmental protection.

Under the Kababaihan Para sa Kalikasan movement with the theme “Babae: Tayo ang Pagbabago,” women are encouraged to be more pro-active and be the catalysts for change given their important role in our households and communities.

The establishments and other businesses violating the ban will be meted with a fine of 1,000 pesos for the first offense, 3,000 pesos fine and revocation of environmental clearance for the second offense, and 5,000 pesos fine for the third offense and revocation of business permit.



Plastic bag bawal na uli sa Quezon City, simula ngayon

By [Mer Layson](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - March 1, 2021 - 12:00am



Nabatid na ang naturang aktibidad ay nagsilbing kick-off event para sa re-implementation ng lungsod sa 'Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance' na sisimulan ngayong araw, Marso 1, 2021.

STAR/File

MANILA, Philippines — Pinangunahan ni Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte ang pagtungo sa ilang pamilihan sa lungsod upang mamahagi ng mga reusable bayong at mga ecobags sa mga residenteng namamalengke, upang isulong ang kanilang kampanya hinggil sa plastic waste reduction.

Nabatid na ang naturang aktibidad ay nagsilbing kick-off event para sa re-implementation ng lungsod sa 'Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance' na sisimulan ngayong araw, Marso 1, 2021.

Nakasaad sa ordinansa ang mahigpit na pagbabawal sa distribusyon ng plastic bags bilang carry-out bags sa retail establishments sa buong lungsod.

Pansamantalang itinigil ang implementasyon nito nang pumutok ang pandemya ng COVID-19.

Ang aktibidad ay bahagi rin umano ng pagdiriwang ng lungsod ng Women's Month ngayong Marso, na nagha-highlight sa papel ng mga babae sa pagprotekta sa kalikasan.

Sa ilalim ng 'Kababaihan Para sa Kalikasan' movement na may temang "Babae: Tayo ang Pagbabago," ang mga babae ay hinihikayat na maging mas pro-active at maging mga catalysts ng pagbabago dahil na rin sa kanilang mahalagang papel sa mga tahanan at komunidad.

Nabatid na ang mga supermarkets, malls, shopping centers, fastfood restaurants at iba pang mga negosyong lalabag sa ban ay papatawan ng multang P1,000 para sa unang paglabag, multang P3,000 at pagbawi ng environmental clearance para sa ikalawang paglabag at pagbawi ng business permit at P5,000 multa naman para sa ikatlong paglabag.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2021/03/01/2081071/plastic-bag-bawal-na-uli-sa-quezon-city-simula-ngayon/amp/>



Unilever Philippines to give incentives for sachet collection under ‘Walastik na Pasig’

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Feb 27, 2021 8:00:37 AM



Walastik na PASIG

Kolek, Kilo, Kita

#WaisWalastik



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines) - To scale up the collection of plastic waste, the City Government of Pasig, Unilever Philippines, and Cemex Philippines have formalized their partnership to roll out an expanded plastic collection program under the campaign "Walastik na Pasig."

"Walastik Na Pasig, which advocates proper waste management, addresses our concern on post-consumer plastic waste ending up in our river and drainage system. We are looking forward to implementing this program in the entire city with Unilever and Cemex, and to continue working with them in protecting and preserving the environment for Pasigueños," said Mayor Vico Sotto.

Pasig City is a highly urbanized area with approximately 800,000 residents. With an estimated average per capita waste generation of 0.40 kilograms per day¹ and with waste segregation becoming more crucial amid the pandemic, Pasig stays close to its commitment to reduce its waste generation by 20 percent by 2025.

As Pasig strives to become a progressive eco-city, the partnerships it builds with organizations like Unilever and Cemex will help drive its ambitious waste management and climate action plans, city officials say.

'Walastik na Pasig' rolls out in 30 barangays

"Walastik na Pasig" is based on Unilever Philippines' flagship education and plastic collection program "Misis Walastik," which has been implemented in Pasig City and over 400 barangays in Metro Manila and nearby provinces since 2012.

The program has also been running for five years in two of the biggest barangays in Pasig: Pinagbuhatan and Manggahan.

"The City of Pasig is home to our Selecta ice cream facility and has also been a long-time partner of our various sustainability programs for health and environment. These underscore our commitment to Pasig and its people and our drive to make sustainable living accessible to our communities," said Benjie Yap, chairman of Unilever Philippines.



Unilever's programs seek to reduce flexible plastic waste ending up in landfills and leaking into waterways by providing incentives to households and community junkshops for participating in proper segregation and recycling.

Despite the challenge of the pandemic, Unilever is scaling up its program to the entire city in a new way - by partnering with branded "Walastik na Junkshops" within each of the 30 barangays. Serving as drop-off and collection points, these partner junkshops in the revamped program would still follow the same basic mechanics of Kolek-Kilo-Kita.

Following a wide-scale information and education campaign led by the City Government and the barangays, households build the habit of segregating their empty, cleaning flexible plastic packaging waste, which they can now bring any time to the nearest partner junkshop.

For every kilo of collected flexible plastic waste, cash incentives will be given to the household. The junkshops will also get incentives in the form of e-money for every kilo of flexible plastic waste turned over to them.

At a dedicated time within the month per barangay, the city hauler, managed by the Solid Waste Management Office, will collect the waste from the partner junkshops.

"Winning partnerships play a key role in keeping plastic waste out of our rivers and waterways and we are happy that we have the City of Pasig and Cemex Philippines working with us on this program.," shared Ed Sunico, Unilever Philippines VP for Sustainable Business and Communication.

This launch forms part of Unilever's sustainable packaging commitment to collect and process more than what it sells and follows the rollout of "Kolek Kilo Kita Para Sa Walastik Na Maynila" in 2019.

Bringing it online, community members can also share their experience in participating in the program or some tips for their fellow 'conscious consumer' by posting it on Facebook or Instagram using the hashtag #WaisWalastik.

To learn more about "Walastik na Pasig" and Unilever's sustainability programs, visit www.unilever.com.ph or <https://facebook.com/UnileverPhilippines>.



PH looks into carbon tax to fight climate change

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:04 AM March 01, 2021

The Philippines is looking into carbon pricing and taxation to slap a price on harmful emissions in line with the country's push to fight climate change.

"We recognize that there is a need to put in place measures to reduce carbon emissions while balancing the short-term versus long-term economic objectives and environmental goals," director Nina Asuncion of the Department of Finance (DOF) told a webinar organized by the Tokyo-based think tank Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) last week.

Citing a partnership for market readiness study by the World Bank, Asuncion said the most effective and efficient emissions trading scheme for the Philippines would be in the power sector.

On the other hand, carbon pricing instruments covering transport are deemed "less effective given the sector has less share in the Philippines' total greenhouse gas emissions and an inelastic demand."

Asuncion said the DOF was carefully studying carbon taxes "to ensure that there's no regressivity within the system."

In lieu of carbon tax, the Philippines is focusing on implementing carbon pricing instruments, taking into consideration political feasibility; the mechanism's impact on retail prices, which should be minimized, and congressional approval of carbon pricing legislation, Asuncion said.

Also, "the carbon pricing instrument mechanism to be adopted must trigger clean energy investments so that a direct benefit can be seen by consumers," she added.

—Ben O. de Vera INQ



Alabang Viaduct in Muntinlupa gets facelift via 'Green, Green, Green' project

By Ma. Alaine P. Allanigue Published on February 28, 2021



Mayor Jaime Fresnedi (3rd from right) and Representative Ruffy Biazon (5th from right) led the inauguration ceremony of Phase 1 of the Development of Alabang Viaduct, an initiative of the National Government through its "Green, Green, Green" program recently. The newly constructed open space in Alabang Viaduct showcases an iconic sculpture resembling a water lily which is commonly seen near the shore of Laguna de Bay and local tributaries that empty to the lake. Muntinlupa City is among local government units in the country championing sustainability and building of open spaces as part of climate change mitigation. (Contributed photo)

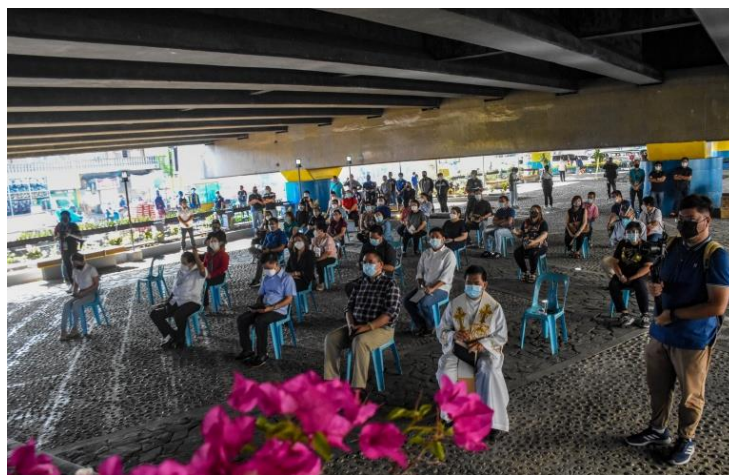
QUEZON CITY, Feb. 28 (PIA) -- The former eyesore and shunned area to motorists traversing the South Luzon Expressway and local residents under the Alabang Viaduct has been converted into a blooming open space featuring native flora and fauna design.

Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi led the inauguration ceremony of Phase 1 of the Development of Alabang Viaduct, an initiative of the National Government through its "Green, Green, Green" program recently.

Fresnedi thanked the Department of Budget Management for selecting Muntinlupa as one of the recipients of the "green fund" amounting to P17.29 million. The local exec said the beautification of the area is a welcome development to the city's green space and park improvement efforts.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) launched the "Green, Green, Green" program which aims to make the country's 145 cities more livable and sustainable through the development of public open spaces.

The newly constructed open space in Alabang Viaduct showcases an iconic sculpture resembling a water lily which is commonly seen near the shore of Laguna de Bay and local tributaries that empty to the lake.





Muntinlupa City Architect Don Causapin, designer of the architectural and interior design of the urban space, said the park's centerpiece symbolizes Muntinlupa residents' strength, resourcefulness, and perseverance as water lilies are characterized as resilient plants and able to thrive and bloom no matter the extreme conditions.

Causapin hopes that the open space will uplift the spirit of the residents who will visit the area as they find beauty in the elements found within their hometown.

The opening of the open space in Alabang Viaduct is part of city's celebration of its 26th Cityhood Anniversary on March 1.

Muntinlupa City is among local government units in the country championing sustainability and building of open spaces as part of climate change mitigation.

In 2020, Muntinlupa represented the country as one of the finalists in the World Wide Fund for Nature's (WWF) One Planet City Challenge (OPCC). The WWF-OPCC is a global competition that recognizes cities with effective climate change action plans. One to three cities per participating country are chosen as finalists.

WWF lauded the city's action plan to combat the urban heat island effect. The organization highlights the city's holistic approach towards sustainability including gardening initiatives, first aid trainings to equip city employees in assisting the public during particularly hot periods, climate responsive agriculture training for urban farmers, aquaponics, vertical farming, mulching and mushroom culture.

Muntinlupa also served as one of the country's representatives in the WWF's We Love Cities campaign, a social campaign which aims to bridge better communication between city officials and citizens they represent on climate and sustainability issues. (PIA NCR)



Global warming can be stopped

By Fr. Shay Cullen, SSC

February 28, 2021

One of the most famous and committed protectors of the natural world and defender of the planet is David Attenborough. He gave a speech online to the members of the United Nations Security Council on climate change and security this week. Climate change is disrupting our world, and the temperature has risen 1 degree Celsius and will not go back. There is no going back, he said. We have reached a point of no return, and that is a security risk to the planet and to every nation. We can stop it from rising higher however.

One of the grave security risks is the increase in number and severity of natural disasters that are turning millions of people into victims of droughts, where rice fields are turning into deserts in one part of the world and becoming permanent lakes in others. Devastating fires around the world have driven thousands from their homes and killed millions of animals. Wildlife is fast disappearing. Many people who are so complacent to see birds flying and fish swimming in the sea cannot imagine or accept that they may soon be gone as many are already diminished or extinct because of us and our fossil fuel-based lifestyles.

In Surigao, floods have driven thousands of people into shelters as their homes were flooded, crops were destroyed and livestock were killed by the latest typhoon. Millions of poor people are the worst affected and will live in greater poverty than before. Climate refugees are becoming the greatest threat as millions are displaced by natural disasters and abandon their shacks and shanties and the hunger and poverty and head for the rich nations and besiege their borders begging for help and work. Their numbers will continue to increase.

Besides, the growing increase in carbon dioxide emissions from coal plants and vehicles is making the earth warmer. As I had written before, vast tracts of marshlands in Siberia and near the Arctic Circle are melting, releasing billions of tons of methane into the atmosphere. This, too, is adding to the blanket of gas that is insulating the planet and preventing the heat from escaping while the sun beats down, roasting everything on the planet. Winters are already harsher, colder and more prolonged as happened this year again in the northern hemisphere reaching as far south as Texas in the United States, cutting the electric power grid and people almost dying of cold as one child did. This is unheard of in many years. Nothing like this increase in global temperatures has happened for millions of years and when it did, the earth was uninhabitable, even animals could hardly survive, and thousands of species became extinct. It is happening again all because of us humans, the species with the big intelligent brains who should know better. We do know better, but good choice does not always follow the facts.

Many politicians and corporate bosses especially in the developed economies refuse to face and admit the truth of global warming and dangerous climate change simply because of corporate greed, the love of comfort and money and to retain political power and economic growth. David Attenborough tried to convince the Security Council of this fact.

The near absence of political will and the blindness of denial are allowing the planet's temperature to creep upward to the maximum allowable temperature increase of 2 C before even greater disaster will occur. Even this 1-C increases, the experts say, is already a calamity. An increase of .75 C is causing the death of the coral reefs — the life-giving food of thousands of species of fish upon which millions of families depend for a daily meal.

The oceans are under threat, too, not only from over-fishing but also from absorbing all the carbon dioxide, so much so they are becoming more acidic. Global fish stocks are threatened as a result. There will be more massive crop failures, droughts, floods, rising sea levels, greater forest destruction and massive population migrations. The prices of food commodities are increasing at an alarming rate and



as production drops; famine could once again kill millions in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is not only war but also war against nature that is endangering the world population.

It sounds all gloom and doom, but it is, and we have to take serious action to stop it. The deadline is a tipping point of global temperature that when reached could make the warming irreversible and perhaps it already is. If we humans continue destructive behaviors, like destroying forests and burning fossil fuels in coal plants to make electricity and populating the world with billions of methane-making cattle, we are making big trouble for ourselves and the rest of humankind. The forests are threatened not only by greedy humans in Hungary, the Amazon and Southeast Asia by logging and growing soya and raising cattle for beef but by disease caused by the warmer temperature, where tree-destroying diseases and insects thrive. The billion cattle in the world are releasing methane, a greenhouse gas that is dangerous to the planet.

Committed environmentalists march, demonstrate and petition and elect “green” politicians to push governments and corporate tycoons to stop building more coal plants and turn to non-destructive and renewable ways of making electricity such as geothermal, solar and wind power. We can all be environmentalists. I happily joined the Preda Foundation team and the Aeta Indigenous People of Zambales in planting 4,000 tree saplings last year and 2,000 this year.

We, too, can change our community to be more climate-friendly by protecting our local environment, speaking out against logging, planting trees, recycling and establishing organic food gardens to feed ourselves and eat less meat. This is the challenge for our future and the future of our families and the next generation. Each of us can find a way to be involved in saving the environment in our community.



Imagining a regenerative, decarbonized post-pandemic world

By: [Federico R. Lopez](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:02 AM March 01, 2021



Federico Lopez

Why should we strive for the goal of Carbon Neutrality by 2050 (CN 2050)? Why should we have such a goal when the Philippines is but a tiny fraction—barely 0.4 percent—of global emissions? Shouldn't the large, developed nations just be tasked with doing this and we, the developing countries, should be given the chance to grow as they have in the past?

First, it's good to keep the issue in the right perspective.

The Philippines, despite its tiny contribution to world emissions, is one of the most vulnerable nations on Earth to the unfolding climate crisis. We have an inordinate stake in limiting global temperature rise to within 1.5 degrees Celsius. Our voice in the community of nations resonates with a stronger moral power if we're willing to back our words with action, proving it can be done.

It has taken too long, but the world is about to wake up to the fact that the very future of humanity on this planet is at stake. The next 10 years are absolutely critical to whether we get the transition on course for CN 2050 or watch it run away from us irreversibly. As this reality mainstreams, the world will also recognize that we have a remaining carbon budget that halts warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius. Hard to imagine? Think again. Could anyone have imagined a world where our movements beyond home are constrained; where we distance socially; wear masks and sanitize our hands and everything we touch constantly; where we meet and conduct our day-to-day business electronically? Or not be able to sit by the bedsides of those we love in their direst moments?

When we all wake up to that fact, it will be a different world. We will go back to basics. Consumerism will hopefully be anchored less on our wants and more toward our needs. Hopefully, we focus on prosperity for all, especially those left behind, rather than on simply aiming to raise gross domestic product growth per se. Then very importantly, we begin to reimagine and redesign our infrastructure and way of life for a changed world: decarbonized, resilient and socially inclusive.

Words in action

What could it look like if we put CN 2050 into action?

First, we could carve out a definitive path to a decarbonized electricity system in the country that charts a transition from fossil fuels like coal and natural gas today to renewables such as geothermal, solar and wind; storage batteries; and energy efficiency technologies.

Natural gas-fired power plants we have today that keep the lights on and complement renewable energy intermittency nicely because of their flexibility and speed are useful in ushering the age of pure renewables and batteries, and could eventually be repowered into using clean hydrogen in the coming decades as technology develops. Second, if we green the electricity grid, it opens up the electrification of transport, too, which today is practically the source of all pollution from gasoline and diesel. The improvement in our urban air quality would be tremendous. Beyond the energy sector, we would reimagine how and where we get our food; our building materials (even integrating carbon negative materials like bamboo); the design of our buildings; how we cool them; how we insulate them; and so forth.



Third, beyond designing for a decarbonized world, just as important would be planning for resilience amid a harsher climate. Here, we could reimagine how we design our cities with resilient infrastructure like underground powerlines and distributed generation as well as circularity in the use of water, rainwater and waste—a valuable resource we’re literally throwing away.

It will also be about building cities that encourage social integration, community and compassion—the so-called “15-minute cities” being planned by progressive urban designers in Paris, Barcelona, London, Detroit, Melbourne and Oregon where work, shopping, health and culture are not more than a 15-minute walk, bike ride or mass transit ride away.

Urgent call

Corporate social responsibility or philanthropy may ease our consciences but can never scale up enough to heal our hurting world in time. There is an urgency for all of us to go beyond incremental sustainability and transform into regenerative forces that align our profit engines with the need for a better, more just world and a safer planet. Collectively, we have the creativity and innovative energy needed to solve the world’s greatest problems. Unlocking these will be the foundation to some of the greatest business opportunities in the coming century.

How do we align our businesses and profit engines with fixing a hurt world and solving its most intractable problems?

Ronald Heifetz, the pioneer in the study of leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School, whom I invited to the Philippines to spend two days with the Lopez Group in 2014, would say that we are clearly in the midst of what is called an “adaptive challenge.” The solutions to the problems we face are not known and cannot be solved, he says, by “someone who answers from on high.”

They require “experiments, new discoveries and adjustments from numerous places in the organization or community. Without learning new ways—changing attitudes, values and behaviors—people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in the new environment. The sustainability of change depends on having the people with the problem internalize the change itself.”

CN 2050 could become that focal point, which catalyzes multidimensional solutions from all sectors and corners of society. Tackling climate change—the issue, the emergency, the crisis of our time—requires nothing less than global communities coming together to create countless collaborative pathways toward the paradigm shift and quantum leap we all need to see right now. —

CONTRIBUTED INQ

The author is chair and CEO of Energy Development Corp. The piece is based on Lopez’ message during environmental nonprofit organization Green Convergence’s virtual forum on Quantum Leap for the Environment in Dec. 2020.



Red tide alert up in 13 provinces

posted February 28, 2021 at 11:20 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources said a red tide alert was hoisted over several areas in 13 provinces.

BFAR said for the areas covered by the alert, shellfish of all types and alamang are not safe for human consumption.

The areas covered are as follows: Inner Malampaya Sound in Taytay, Palawan; Sorsogon Bay; Dauis and Tagbilaran City, Bohol; Tambobo Bay in Siaton, Negros Oriental; Daram Island, Zumarraga, San Pedro, and Cambatutay Bays in Western Samar; Calubian, Leyte, Carigara Bay, Ormoc Bay and Cancato Bay in Tacloban City, Leyte; Biliran Islands; Guiuan and Matarinao Bay in Eastern Samar; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; Balite Bay in Mati City, Davao Oriental; and Lianga Bay and Hinatuan in Surigao del Sur; Murcielagos Bay and Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental; and Taguines Lagoon, Benoni, and Mahinog in Camiguin.

“Fish, squids, shrimps and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking,” the bureau said.



Duterte considering placing PH under MGCQ

By Azer Parrocha February 28, 2021, 9:15 pm



File photo

MANILA – President Rodrigo Duterte on Sunday said he is considering placing the entire country under the least restrictive modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) as soon as the country gets enough Covid-19 vaccines doses.

Duterte, who personally witnessed the arrival of the initial 600,000 vaccine doses of China-donated Sinovac's CoronaVac vaccines to the Philippines, said he needed to reopen the economy because many Filipinos are suffering.

"I am considering it, actually. Buksan ko na (I'll open it) because there are two things that are really bugging us, it's the economy and Covid-19. Our economy is really down, as in down so the earlier na mabilisan itong vaccine (we can speed up vaccine inoculation), the better," he said in a press conference at the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

It was unclear when he would downgrade the current quarantine status to MGCQ but noted that it would be when vaccines are "available to anybody."

"Kung nakita ko na marami nang vaccine, open ko na lahat (If I see that there are a lot of vaccines, I'll open everything)...People have to eat, people have to work, people have to pay for their upkeep and the only way to do it is to open the economy and for businesses to regrow. Without that, patay talaga (we're dead)," he added.

However, Duterte said he would not allow yet face-to-face classes even in areas with low risk of Covid-19 infection.

"Huwag muna (Not yet). Not now. I cannot make that decision. It will place the children in jeopardy. I am not ready to lose the lives of our young people, our children," he said.

Asked when he expects the country to reach pre-pandemic levels, Duterte said herd immunity might be reached about two years from now.

"Maybe early year 2023. Not 22. Ito ngayon hanggang katapusan ng buwan paspasan tayo (Now until the end of the month, we will have to things up). Maybe in the first or second quarter or year 2023," he said

Last Saturday, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said Metro Manila will remain under general community quarantine (GCQ) in March.

Roque said GCQ would also be imposed in Apayao, Baguio City, Kalinga, Mt. Province, Batangas, Tacloban City, Iligan City, Davao City, and Lanao del Sur.

The rest of the country would stay under the least restrictive MGCQ from March 1 to 31, he added.

The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), as well as the Metro Manila mayors, initially recommended the imposition of the most relaxed MGCQ in the entire Philippines in March.



Duterte, however, turned down the proposed nationwide shift to MGCQ until the government starts the rollout of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccines.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles earlier said the President is taking a “step-by-step” approach to the plan to place the entire country under MGCQ.

On Sunday, China officially turned over the initial 600,000 Covid-19 doses of Sinovac-made “CoronaVac” vaccines to the Philippines in a turnover ceremony witnessed by Duterte and some Cabinet members.

It was the first batch of Covid-19 vaccine to arrive in the country. (PNA)



Arrival of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines to PH postponed – DOH

By [Vince Ferreras, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Feb 28, 2021 6:50:19 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, February 28) - The arrival of 525,600 doses of anti-coronavirus vaccine from British manufacturer AstraZeneca will be delayed by a week, according to Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

Duque on Sunday confirmed that the government will not welcome on Monday the [supposed arrival of vaccines by AstraZeneca](#), which is part of the first batch of doses from the COVAX facility, [citing global supply shortage](#).

“Meron lang balita kasi na hindi matutuloy dahil nga ang sabi ng WHO (World Health Organization) nagkaka-problema sila sa supply, maantala daw ng isang linggo,” he said.

[Translation: There’s just a news that it will be postponed because the WHO said that there is a problem with the supply.]

The COVAX facility is a global initiative led by the World Health Organization which aims to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez, Jr. also confirmed the latest development.

“We have to understand, nakita natin yung AstraZeneca at ibang vaccines, pinagagawan sa Europe at sa area ng mga developing countries. Naiintindihan naman natin. Makakapaghintay naman po tayo,” he said.

[Translation: We have to understand that Europe and other developing countries are fighting over AstraZeneca and other vaccines. We understand that. We can just wait for it.]

AstraZeneca is among the three manufacturers granted by the Food and Drug Administration with emergency use authority, alongside United States’ Pfizer and China’s Sinovac.

The vaccine produced by the British manufacturer showed an average efficacy of 70% after receiving two doses.

The country welcomed on Sunday the arrival of [600,000 doses from Sinovac](#), the first batch of COVID-19 vaccines to arrive in the country since the pandemic started.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/2/28/Arrival-AstraZeneca-postponed-.html>



MAGPABAKUNA NA PO TAYO, MGA KRITIKO HUWAG PAKINGGAN



March 1, 2021 @ 12:30 AM 6 hours ago

SA wakas, magsisimula na mismo sa araw na ito ang pagbabakuna laban sa coronavirus disease o COVID-19.

Makaraang maipasok sa Department of Health warehouse sa Marikina City ang bakunang 600,000 doses ng Sinovac, nadeliberan na rin kagabi hanggang madaling araw ngayong Marso 1 ang mga ospital na unang pagbabakunahan.

Kasama sa mga mabibigyan ang Philippine General Hospital sa Maynila, Lung Center of the Philippines sa Quezon City, at Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital and Sanitarium (Tala Hospital) sa Caloocan City.

Ilang matataas na opisyal ang tuturuan bilang pagpapakita ng pamahalaan na epektibo at ligtas ang mga bakuna at simula na rin ng pukpukang kampanya at pakiusap na magbabakuna ang lahat ng mamamayan na kwalipikado.

Pero habang tinitipa ito, walang nakaaalam kung sino ang magiging kauna-unahan na mabakunahan, kung ang mga opisyal o ordinaryong mamamayan, lalo na sa hanay ng mga health worker na inuna ng pamahalaan na mabakunahan.

Halos sabay-sabay kasing magbabakuna ang mga doktor at nars sa nasabing mga ospital.

Pero hindi na ito importante dahil higit na mahalaga na masimulan na ang pagbabakuna.

MAGPABAKUNA AGAD

Sa pagkakaintindi natin, mga Bro, ikakalat na rin agad ang mga bakuna sa ibang mga lugar sa bansa na roon matatagpuan ang malalaking ospital ng gobyerno.

Kabilang sa mga mabibigyan ng parte ang mga regional hospital sa Luzon, Visayas at Mindanao.

Magkakaroon na rin ng suplay ang mga ospital na itinayo at pinamumunuan ng mga local government unit.

Karamihan sa mga LGU na nakayanang maglabas ng pondo para magkaroon bakuna ay matatagpuan sa Metro Manila habang magmumula ang bakuna sa pambansang nasyunal para sa mga LGU na walang pondong pambili.

Magkagayunman, dahil 600,000 pa lang ang bakuna, 600,000 pa lang din ang magiging benepisyaryo.

Wala namang nakatitiyak kung kailan darating ang mga bakuna gaya ng AstraZeneca na nangakong magbibigay ng mahigit 500,000 doses sa pamamagitan ng Covax Facility at Advance Market Commitment o AMC ng World Health Organization.



Wala ring nakatitiyak kung kailan darating ang 117,000 doses ng Pfizer/BioNTech na daraan din sa Covac Facility at Advance Market Commitment.

Sa pagkakaalam natin, kabilang tayo sa mahihirap na 92 bansang nasa ilalim ng programang AMC na magtitiyak nang mabilis, pantay at murang bakuna habang para sa mayayamang bansa naman ang Covax Facility.

Tatandaan na 10 bansa lang ang kumokopo ng nasa 75 porsyento ng suplay ng bakuna gaya ng United States na siyang gumagawa ng Pfizer/ Pfizer/BioNTech at United Kingdom na siyang gumagawa naman ng Astrazeneca.

Sa gitna ng lahat ng ito, kung tinatawagan na tayo dahil kabilang tayo sa mga magiging benepisyaryo, magpabakuna na po tayo.

EPEKTIBO AT MABISA ANG BAKUNA

Ayon sa WHO at United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention o CDC, basta nakaabot ang isang bakuna ng epekto o bisa na 50 porsyento, tanggap na itong epektibong gamitin laban sa sakit na pinaglalaanan dito.

Pumasa ang Sinovac sa pamantayang ito nang ideklara sa Turkey na 91% epektibo ito samantalang sinukat naman ito sa Indonesia na 65% at sa Brazil na 50.4%.

Naging mababa sa Brazil dahil tinesting lang umano ito sa mga high risk o health worker at hanggang 14 araw lang ang palugit ng testing samantalang naging mas maganda sana umanong pinaabot ito sa 21 araw, gaya ng ginawa sa ibang mga bakuna.

Gayunman, 100 porsyento umano itong makapipigil sa pagkakaospital at pagkamatay...na maaaring totoo sa rami na ng naiiniksiyunan sa Sinovac.

Sa Turkey, mismong si President Recep Tayip Erdogan ang unang nagpaturok ng Sinovac at sinundan ito nina Indonesia President Joko Widodo, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam at Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul.

Ginusto ni Thailand Prime Minister Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha ang magpabakuna subalit hindi iyon natuloy dahil isa na siyang senior citizen na hindi basta mababakunahan, maging ng iba pang mga bakuna.

Maliban sa pagpapabakuna ng nasabing mga lider ng bansa na milyon-milyong dose ang biniling Sinovac, mga Bro, sinasabing umabot na sa mahigit pitong milyon sa China ang naturukan ng Sinovac at ginagamit o binibili na rin ito ng marami pang ibang bansa, kasama na ang Brazil, Malaysia, Ukraine, Serbia, Saudi Arabia, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Uruguay, Azerbaijan, Singapore, Zimbabwe.

EKSPERTO VS EKSPERTO

Bago at nang dumating ang Sinovac sa bansa, may mga oposisyon o kritiko ng pamahalaan na nagpipilit na dapat dumaan muna ito sa Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC) bago gamitin bilang bakuna laban sa COVID-19.

Itinakda at nilikha ang HTAC ng Universal Health Care Law bilang advisory body sa Department of Health at PhilHealth ukol sa anomang usaping pangkalusugan, kasama na ang kalidad, epekto at kaligtasan ng bakuna.

Sa madaling salita, mga Bro, pawang mga eksperto ang bumubuo ng HTAC kaya naman nariryan ang pagsandig ng Universal Health Care Law sa kanila.



Ang isang tanong: May kapangyarihan ba itong magsabi kung pupwede o hindi pupwede ang bakunang gaya ng Sinovac at ang HTAC ba ang pinakamakapangyarihang sangay ng pamahalaan na magdeklara ng pwede at hindi pwede?

Ngayon naman, sinasabi ng Food and Drugs Administration na pwede ang Sinovac bagama't may limitasyon sa paggamit nito gaya ng hindi paggamit, hangga't maaari sa mga senior citizen at boluntaryo lamang sa hanay ng mga health worker.

Mismong ang DOH at National Immunization Technical Advisory Group na may mga eksperto rin ang nagsasabing pwede ang Sinovac.

At batay sa mga desisyon ng FDA, NITAG at DOH, umaaksyon naman bilang eksperto sa pamumuno ng bansa ang Pangulo ng bansa at kanyang mga gabinete.

Isa pang tanong: Higit bang makapangyarihan ang mga eksperto sa HTAC kaysa nagsama-samang kapangyarihan ng mga eksperto mula sa Palasyo, DOH, NITAG at DOH sa pagpapasya kung pupwede o hindi ang nasabing bakuna?

Eh, kung isama ang mga eksperto sa iba't ibang bansa na nag-apruba sa Sinovac para gamitin sa sarili nilang bansa sa mga ekspertong pabor sa Sinovac bilang bakuna, ano sa palagay ninyo ang tama?

Isa pang punto, isa lamang advisory body ang HTAC na pupwedeng kilalanin o isantabi ang mga bilin o advice nito.

Isipin natin na limitado ang saklaw ng HTAC dahil pangunahing usaping pangkalusugan ang konsentrasyon nito samantalang kapakanan o interes ng buong bansa, kasama na ang kaligtasan sa pandemya, pagbangon ng ekonomiya at matatag na pamamahala sa bansa ang saklaw ng Palasyo, DOH, NITAG at FDA.

MAGPABAKUNA NA, BOSES NG MANGHAHARANG 'WAG PAKINGGAN

Tila nais lang harangin o pabagalin ng mga nasa oposisyon at kritiko ang mga hakbang ng buong pamahalaan na magtagumpay laban sa pandemya.

Nais lang nilang panatilihin sa kamatayan, pagkakasakit at paghihirap ang mga mamamayan at ibintang ang lahat sa kasalukuyang pamahalaan?

Huwag naman sana.

Dapat na higit na pakinggan ng bayan ang boses ng mga nagsusumikap na iahon sa krisis ang sambayanan at buong bansa kaysa ang boses ng mga higit na namumulitika kaysa totoong naglilingkod sa bayan.

Kaugnay nito, ang dapat higit na gawin ng mga ito ay makipagkaisa ngayon para maligtas sa kamatayan, pagkakasakit at paghihirap ang mamamayan at ibangon ang buong bansa tungo sa malusog at malakas na pagbangong pang-ekonomiya at maayos at matapat na pamamahala.

O, magpabakuna na po tayo at huwag umasa sa bakunang hindi natin alam kung kailan darating.

Drop by drop, China's Yangtze River is drying up

Stephen Chen, South China Morning Post

Posted at Feb 28 2021 06:03 PM



Dams play a complex role in the water levels of the Yangtze, researchers say. *Xinhua via South China Morning Post*

The biggest river in China is drying up.

After examining decades of records from ground stations and satellite images, government researchers estimate that the average level of the Yangtze River has fallen by about 2cm (0.8 inches) every five years since the 1980s.

Researchers warn that the overall decline of the waterway could have a great impact on the environment and economy of one of the richest, fastest-growing parts of the country.

In a peer-reviewed paper in the journal *Advances in Water Science* this month, Nie Ning and colleagues with the Ministry of Education's Key Laboratory of Geographic Information Science pin part of the blame on human activities such as changing landscape and dam construction.

"[But] climate change played a much bigger role than any other factors [in the decline]," they said.

Home to 460 million people, the Yangtze region encompasses the economic powerhouse of Shanghai and accounts for more than a third of China's GDP.

Throughout history, its water resources have been a source of wealth, enabling food production and transport.

As industrial activities increased, more than 1,000 lakes disappeared along the waterway. But the belief remained that the total amount of water was more or less unchanged – based on the premise that all the used water would eventually return to the environment.

It was a difficult theory to test. The Yangtze stretches over 6,300km (3,900 miles) from Tibet to the East China Sea. Some water is on the surface, some underground, and there can be big annual variations in times and regions, making calculation difficult.

To get a closer estimate of the long-term trend over an area nearly a fifth to China's total land mass, Nie's team used not only records from ground stations but also satellites that could detect the change of gravity caused by water in the crust.

They concluded that climate change contributed to nearly 80 per cent of the decline, with abnormal climate events such as rising temperatures in some parts of the Pacific Ocean reducing the overall rainfall going into the Yangtze.

Warmer temperatures also increased the fluctuation of water reserves, leading to more floods and droughts, they said.

Evaporation increased as well, partly because of higher temperatures, partly because of human activities, with ever-growing cities accelerating the loss of water into the atmosphere.

The role of dams was more complex. The operations of 15 major dams including the Three Gorges caused the water levels to fall in winter and spring, but rise in warmer periods. Overall the dams had a negative, though relatively small impact, on the amount of water, according to the researchers.



Xie Zhicai, a researcher from the Institute of Hydrobiology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Wuhan, said less water could have ripple effects on the rest of the environment.

“[For example] the concentration of pollutants can increase in the river and poison more vulnerable species,” said Xie, who was not involved in the study.

The ecological balance could tip towards species that favoured a drier environment and if that happened too quickly, certain plants and animals could become extinct, he said.

Less water also means dams played a bigger role in water management, disrupting natural cycles. Some fish species such as sturgeon were sensitive to changes in temperature and water level.

“The disruption can affect their reproductive activities,” Xie said.

“The Yangtze is not short of water for now. The decline appears to be low. But the impact may manifest in a longer time span.”

But a Beijing-based water scientist said the water decline in the Yangtze might be worse than the paper’s estimate. Each day, a large but undisclosed amount of water is drained from the Yangtze and channelled up north to thirsty cities including Beijing.

More than half the water consumption in the capital comes from the Yangtze, according to the municipal authorities.

“Throughout history, water distribution issues have sparked fights between regions,” said the researcher who declined to be named because of the political sensitivity of the issue.

There are signs that the central government is aware of the waterway’s decline.

Approval has been tightened for new construction projects along the Yangtze and from t

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/02/28/21/drop-by-drop-chinas-yangtze-river-is-drying-up?fbclid=IwAR208HrjwjtjgQpLzeDMFbwwBs4aCdFiM6iLS4HW5T-WcYqRgL5Np0TReAyQ>



A chasm called the North Rift formed on the Brunt Ice Shelf is seen in Antarctica, February 26, 2021, in this still image obtained from social media video. The vast iceberg, almost the size of Greater London, broke off, the British Antarctic Survey said on Friday, Feb. 26, 2021. British Antarctic Survey

Giant iceberg breaks off near UK Antarctic base

Published February 28, 2021 7:51am

LONDON - A vast iceberg almost the size of Greater London has broken away from the Antarctic ice shelf near a British research station, the British Antarctic Survey said Friday.

The research body said the iceberg measuring 1,270 square kilometres (490 square miles) had broken off from the 150-meter-thick Brunt Ice Shelf in a process called "calving".

This came almost a decade after scientists first saw massive cracks had formed in the shelf.

A crack in the ice widened by several hundred metres on Friday morning before the iceberg broke off completely.

Britain's Halley VI Research Station monitors the state of the vast floating ice shelf daily.

"Our teams at BAS have been prepared for the calving of an iceberg from Brunt Ice Shelf for years," said BAS director Jane Francis.

The mobile research base relocated inland for safety reasons in 2016-2017 as cracks in the ice threatened to cut it off.

"That was a wise decision," commented Simon Garrod, BAS director of operations.

The glaciologists said the latest event is unlikely to affect the station's current location.

The base's 12-person team left earlier this month, as they leave the base uninhabited in winter due to the unpredictable conditions.

While they are away, data from GPS instruments at the site goes to a center in Cambridge, eastern England, for analysis.

Icebergs naturally break off from Antarctica into the ocean in a process accelerated by climate change.

The BAS said in this case, there is "no evidence that climate change has played a significant role".

"Over coming weeks or months, the iceberg may move away; or it could run aground and remain close to Brunt Ice Shelf," said Francis.

The British Antarctic Survey is a world leader in environmental research in the region. —**Agence France-Presse**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/777683/giant-iceberg-breaks-off-near-uk-antarctic-base/story/>

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