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DENR

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Cimatu condemns attacks vs forester and cops fighting illegal logging

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

September 30, 2020

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has condemned the recent attacks against a forester and two policemen by suspected illegal loggers in Aurora and Northern Samar provinces.

“We vehemently denounce any kind of violent acts inflicted on our defenders of the environment, especially at a time when we are all dealing with an unprecedented public health crisis,” the DENR chief said in a news statement.

He called for a swift justice for the attacks, which took place a day apart in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic that has left many protected areas in the country unguarded against various environmental crimes.

DENR Forest Management Specialist II Danilo Pascasio is now fighting for his life after being shot several times by an illegal logging suspect in Aurora last September 27.

A day earlier on September 26, Patrolmen Jessie Golondrina and Edwin Fernando Velarde both died while conducting an operation against three suspected timber poachers in Northern Samar.

Initial reports reveal that Pascasio was shot several times in front of his house at Barangay Calabuanan in Baler town by a suspect identified as Dennis Ruzol.

On September 24, or three days before the incident, Ruzol was arrested for violating the Forestry Code. He posted bail and was granted provisional liberty.

The forester sustained nine gunshot wounds, one which pierced his liver and pancreas. He immediately underwent an operation to remove the bullets from his body and is currently at the intensive care unit of a hospital in Cabanatuan City. Police have mounted a manhunt to capture Ruzol.

“To assault an environmental worker, who is just doing his job amid this Covid-19 pandemic, is utterly inhumane and unjust,” Cimatu said.

According to Aurora Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Alfredo Collado, Pascasio played a major role in 11 anti-illegal timber poaching operations from June 6 to September 24 this year.

One operation resulted in the arrest and filing of charges against Ruzol and two others, and confiscation of 422 pieces, or 4,865 board feet of illegally manufactured lumber, one elf truck, one Kia Besta van, two chainsaws, and a tricycle.



Meanwhile, Golondrina and Velarde were killed in a gunfight while securing a Masbate-bound pump boat carrying over 11,000 board feet of undocumented lauan timber they recovered from suspected illegal loggers in the coastal town of San Isidro in Northern Samar.

Regional Executive Director Tirso Parian of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 8 said the two environmental policemen were part of the composite team put together by the agency as part of its intensified campaign against illegal loggers in the area.

Parian said the incident was a result of an 11-day operation, which started on Sept. 17, in response to reports from concerned citizens about the unlawful shipment of forest products bound for Masbate and the presence of an illegal boat yard at Barangay Palanit.

Last May, Forester Fernando Polenio was shot dead by an unidentified assailant in Palo town in Leyte while doing field work amid the Covid-19 crisis. In 2019, four environmental workers were also killed while performing their duties.

The deaths of forest and environmental workers have prompted Cimatu to call for the immediate passage of a legislative measure creating the DENR Enforcement Bureau.

Cimatu said that by having a permanent enforcement bureau, the DENR will be more effective in stopping environmental crimes, such as illegal logging and smuggling of wildlife species.



PRO8 probes death of 2 cops in N. Samar anti-illegal logging ops

Published September 30, 2020, 10:53 AM

by [Marie Tonette Marticio](#)

TACLOBAN City – A Regional Fact-Finding Committee has been created by the Police Regional Office 8 (PRO8) to investigate the anti-illegal logging operation that resulted in an armed confrontation, and the death of two police officers in Barangay Buenavista, San Isidro, Northern Samar on September 26.

Pat Jessie Golondrina and Pat Fernando Velarde Jr., both assigned to the Second Maneuver Platoon, 803rd 803rd Maneuver Company of the Regional Mobile Force Battalion (RMFB 8), were killed in the encounter.

The slain PNP personnel were dispatched after receiving a phone call about the alleged illegal transport of forest products wherein a motorized pump boat marked as “Zurlyn 5” was caught in the act of hauling and towing undocumented forest products nearshore of Barangay Balite in San Isidro town.

While they were in the process of apprehending the motorboat, they had an unexpected encounter at sea with more or less six armed men on board another boat at around 10:40 p.m.

Meanwhile, Edwin Erenia, a resident of Brgy. Bondocan, Masbate and the operator of the motorboat, was also reportedly wounded in the crossfire.

The committee, together with the investigating team from the Northern Samar Police Provincial Office (NSPPO), was dispatched to conduct an in-depth investigation on the incident.

All personnel involved in the operation were relieved and reassigned to other units.

“With the creation of this probe team, I assure the public of an extensive and credible investigation on the matter. Rest assured that we will do our best to get to the truth,” PRO 9 Director Brig. Gen. Ronaldo De Jesus said.

The official also extended his condolences and sympathy to the bereaved families. He added that PRO8 was already facilitating the release of financial assistance for the burial services of the slain police officers.



Back in January, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said one of the department's goals is to clean the San Juan River, to which Manila Water immediately responded by pledging its support by way of the Adopt-an-Estero program.

STAR/File

Manila Water, government sign river cleanup project

(The Philippine Star) - October 1, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — East Zone concessionaire Manila Water led the Adopt-an-Estero memorandum of agreement ceremonial signing together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and several local government units (LGUs) to fully implement the cleanup and rehabilitation of San Juan River and its tributaries.

The program further underscores the commitment of each partner-agency to address pressing issues about the environment.

The event also marked the signing of an updated usufruct agreement between the DENR and Manila Water for the upgrading of the East Avenue sewage treatment plant in Quezon City.

The upgrade covers the retrofitting of the facility in compliance with the DENR AO 2016-08, which set the standards for biological nutrient removal in treated effluent, as well as the expansion of its sewerage network.

Back in January, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said one of the department's goals is to clean the San Juan River, to which Manila Water immediately responded by pledging its support by way of the Adopt-an-Estero program.

The program aims to clean up the dirtiest creeks in Metro Manila, including Maytunas, Ermitanyo, Buhangin and Buayang Bato creeks.

The concessionaire initiated due diligence in the cleanup of San Juan River and its tributaries to help formulate technical and social solutions by "adopting" the creeks that traverse Quezon City, San Juan and Mandaluyong.

For their part, the LGUs pledged to support desludging services or siphoning of septic vaults in the households; provide cleaning materials during the cleanup drives; participate in information, education and communication campaigns and other river cleanup programs which are some of their initiatives under the Adopt-an-Estero program.



DENR Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon, representing Cimatu, expressed his gratitude to Manila Water and the other partners for their unwavering support through the implementation of various programs and initiatives geared towards protection of the environment.

On the other hand, Mayors Joy Belmonte (Quezon City) and Francis Zamora (San Juan) also echoed their full support and both lauded Manila Water's consistent efforts with strong commitment on further expanding water and wastewater services.

Meanwhile, Manila Water president and CEO Jose Rene Almendras explained that in support of the government's mandate and infrastructure programs, Manila Water will be building more sewage treatment facilities and expand the sewer network as part of its overall wastewater roadmap for the East Zone.

He added that this is also to manifest Manila Water's steadfast commitment to contribute to the rehabilitation of Manila Bay and other waterways.

Almendras also added that this is the very first event organized by Manila Water with a combination of virtual and physical signatories and attendees.

Manila Water is the private concessionaire of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System for the East Zone that serves more than seven million residents in the eastern portion of Metro Manila and the province of Rizal.



IMPORTED NA BASURA NG SOUTH KOREA

October 1, 2020 admin



HINDI maitatangi na namumutiktik pa rin ang basura sa Filipinas.

Kaya patuloy na nililinis ang mga estero at baybayin ng Manila Bay dahil dito.

Karamihan sa mga basura ay plastic na kinabibilangan ng botelya ng softdrinks at mineral water, sachet ng kape at shampoo, supot na plastic at marami pang iba.

Kumikilos din naman ang administrasyong Duterte para matugunan ang suliraning ito.

Pero kahit marami nang basura sa bansa, nakapagtataakang marami pa ring kompanya ang bumibili ng basura sa ibang bansa.

Nag-i-import sila ng tone-toneladang basura at hindi ito masyadong natutunagan.

Unang nabunyag ang isyu nang madiskubre ang mga umalingasaw ang tambak na basura sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental na nanggaling pa ng South Korea habang nagsilbing consignee naman ang Verde Soko Phil. Industrial Corporation.

Kung hindi ako nagkakamali, dumating ang basura noong Hulyo 21, 2018 sa Mindanao Container Terminal at pinalabas na ito'y "plastic synthetic flakes" na sinasabing paglabag sa Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

Ang totoo, hindi lang SoKor ang nagpadala ng basura sa atin kundi maging ang Canada na itinambak naman sa Tarlac ang mga dumi nila noong Hunyo 2013 na umaabot sa 50 freight containers at naglalaman ng household wastes.

Sinasabing idineklarang mga plastic na basura ang laman ng containers at ang consignee naman ay ang kompanyang Chronic Plastics na nasa Valenzuela City.

Nang inspeksiyunin ng Bureau of Customs, nadiskubrenang mga basura at nangangamoy na.

Tsk, tsk, tsk.

Sa pagkakatanda ko, naibalik na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Canada ang imported nilang basura.

Naantala naman ang pagpapabalik ng basura ng Korea ng ilang buwan.

Sa kabila naman ng krisis, nakatutuwang nagampanan pa rin ng DENR at BOC ang kanilang trabaho.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda, matagumpay na naibiyaha pabalik ng SoKor ang 6,400 metric tons ng imported na basura.

Gayunman, sabi ni Antiporda, ang BOC-10 ang dapat purihin dito.



Kinumpirma rin naman kasi ni BOC-10 District Collector John Simon na nakumpleto na ang shipment noon pang Agosto 4 ng taong kasalukuyan.

Nakahahanga rin naman ang South Korea sa bilis ng pagpapasya sa usapin.

Hindi pa rito nagtatapos ang lahat.

Dapat pa ring parusahan ang Verde Soko at Phividec Industrial Estate sa mga naging paglabag nila.

Nawa'y hagupitin ng batas natin ang mga umaangkat ng basura para hindi na pamarisan.

Huwag sanang i-atras ang mga kasong paglabag sa Republic Act (RA) 6969 o Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act, at RA 10863 o Customs Modernization and Tariff Act laban sa kanila.

Aba'y dadagdagan pa nila ng basura ang ating bansa at ang matindi, pawang hazardous wastes pa ang inangkat na napaka-delikado sa kalusugan ng tao.



Manila, DENR provide portable toilets for ISFs in Parola

By Marita Moaje September 30, 2020, 7:44 pm



MANILA – The Manila City government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) joined hands to provide portable toilets in Parola, Tondo where most houses don't have toilets or comfort rooms.

Manila City Mayor Francisco 'Isko Moreno' Domagoso and DENR director for administrative service Rolando Castro signed a memorandum of agreement for the project "Kubeta Ko".

Portable toilets will be placed in Parola for informal settler families (ISFs) to have "dignified toilet facilities".

"The city of Manila, a local government unit of the Republic of the Philippines and the capital city of the Philippines, has signified its support to the rehabilitation of Manila Bay especially the provision of dignified temporary toilet facilities for informal settler families," the agreement reads.

The city government and DENR hope that when ISFs already have their portable toilets in their area, open defecation in Manila Bay will be minimized and eventually stopped.

The project is also in line with the ongoing rehabilitation of the bay.

The DENR allotted a total of PHP10 million to the city of Manila for the said project and an additional PHP5 million for the operational costs during the implementation of the project.

Viable portable container-based toilet technology will be used for the project developed by Loowat, Limited, who also managed to secure funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation for the 'Kubeta Ko' project.

The project is also in coordination with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and Maynilad Water Services, and will be effective for one year. **(PNA)**



Portable toilets to be installed in Tondo to stop open defecation in Manila Bay

Published September 30, 2020, 6:00 PM

by [Minka Klaudia Tiangco](#)

Portable toilets will be installed in Parola, Tondo to minimize open defecation in Manila Bay after the Manila city government entered an agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The supplemental memorandum of agreement was signed by Manila City Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso and DENR Director for Administrative Service Rolando Castro.

The “Kubeta Ko” project aims to provide “dignified toilet facilities” to informal settler families in Parola, Tondo. It is also another one of the Manila city government’s ways to show its support to the Manila Bay rehabilitation, the agreement read.

A total of P10 million were allotted by the DENR to the City of Manila for the said project and an additional P5 million for the city “to cover the operational costs during the implementation of the project.”

The portable, container-based toilet technology developed by Loowat, Limited will be used for the project. The said company also managed to secure funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for the “Kubeta Ko” project.

The project is also in coordination with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and Maynilad Water Services and will be effective for one year.



DENR bags award for human resource management excellence



EXCELLENCE IN HR MANAGEMENT. Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon received the Bronze Award Maturity Level II for upholding excellence in its human resource management programs from the Civil Service Commission. (Contributed photo)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

September 30, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Luzon bagged the Bronze Award Maturity Level II for upholding excellence in its human resource management programs.

This means the DENR regional office had met the standards on the implementation of the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (Prime-HRM).

The Civil Service Commission (CSC), led by Regional Director Rosalinda Tanaliga-Oliva, conferred the award to Regional Executive Director Paquito Moreno, Jr. in a ceremonial program held recently at the DENR Regional Office in City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Moreno said attaining the second level maturity in Prime-HRM confirmed that the DENR office in Central Luzon has managed and implemented its HRM systems according to documented process and has established a process-defined HRM in the four core HRM systems, which include recruitment, selection and placement, performance management, learning and development, and rewards and recognition.

“This recognition will serve as our daily motivation to bring out only the best in our HRM practices. This will inspire, and challenge us at the same time, to reach our full potential as a government organization,” Moreno said, adding the DENR would continue to prime its HR processes to champion efficient and effective personnel administration in the office.

As a Prime-HRM Bronze awardee, the DENR is granted with the following privileges: authority to approve appointments, subject to post-audit; 20 percent discount for the HRM officer or agency representative on training and conferences conducted by the Civil Service Institute; endorsement or recommendation for scholarship grant offered by other institutions; and nomination to CSC’s Certification Program for HRMOs subject to the guidelines to be issued by the Commission.

The DENR regional office may also enjoy exclusive membership to a community of learners who shall have access to digital learning resources and other developmental opportunities subject to the guidelines to be issued by the Commission; announcement of the agency’s programs/projects bureaucracy-wide through the CSC website; and other benefits that the Commission may approve in the future.



Since 2015, the DENR has issued a total of 1,179 appointments as part of their efficient and intensified recruitment and selection process to bring better service and uplift socio-economic conditions.

Oliva lauded the DENR for its support in human resources management programs and assured that the CSC will continue to provide assistance until the DENR reaches the highest HRM maturity level, which is level 4 or the gold award.

The CSC also recognized Perla Collado, chief of the administrative division, and the HR team for their invaluable contribution and hard work in the conferment of the Prime-HRM Bronze Award to the DENR-Central Luzon, and for their efforts in promoting human resource excellence.

Arturo Fadriquela, DENR deputy director for management services, assured CSC that the DENR would continuously strengthen its administrative governance to make its HRM programs more systematic, innovative and strategic.

“We will not just maintain the status under Level 2, but we shall continue to improve our HRM systems to meet the indicators of the next higher level,” he said.

He said aside from the continued partnership with CSC in improving the DENR’s HRM systems, the DENR would also implement and comply with the 2017 Omnibus Rules on Appointments and other Human Resource Actions and other CSC laws and rules in the issuance of appointments.

Since 2012, CSC has mandated the implementation of Prime-HRM through CSC Memorandum Circular No. 3, Series of 2012 and CSC Resolution No. 1200241. It is a mechanism that empowers government agencies by developing their human resource management competencies, systems and practices toward HR excellence.



People gather at the artificial white sand beach along the shore of Manila Bay.

The STAR/Miguel De Guzman

'Manila Bay Sands' a costly effort that won't solve Manila Bay's problems — marine scientists

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - September 30, 2020 - 5:25pm

MANILA, Philippines — Overlaying a small portion of Manila Bay's shoreline with crushed dolomite rocks is an expensive and temporary effort that will not help solve the bay's environmental problems, the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute said Wednesday.

Dolomite grains were laid as a topping to the naturally gray coastline of a portion of the Manila Baywalk as part of a P389-million "beach nourishment" project. This project is part of the government's rehabilitation program for the degraded bay, officials said.

"There are no shortcuts to a cleaner environment. The use of crushed dolomite sand will not help solve the environmental problems in Manila Bay. At most, it is a beautification effort that is costly and temporary," the UP MSI said.

Threat of erosion

Among the environmental problems that beset Manila Bay are poor water quality due to poor waste management and erosion, which is influenced by wind direction, wave action and tidal fluctuation

The Department of the Environment and Natural Resources earlier said that a "nourished" beach will prevent erosion by "dissipating wave energy and having a balanced sediment budget."

But the addition of crushed dolomite rocks "cannot serve to anchor the loss of beach sand nor serve as replacement for eroded sediments," the UP MSI said.

It explained that beach nourishment projects are not "one-shot deals," especially for continuously eroding shorelines aggravated by excessive groundwater extraction and land subsidence.

"Dolomite sand grains will erode given the hydrodynamic conditions in coastal Metro Manila during storms. Even the breakwater off the baywalk area, elevated seas and larger waves during storms can penetrate and pound the baywalk area. Hence, continuously replacing the sand will be expensive and will not contribute to improving water quality in the bay," UP MSI said.



'Beach nourishment unnecessary'

The UP Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology, in a separate statement, said that coastal erosion in the site where the dolomite sand was laid has already been addressed by installation of seawall and breakers, "making it unnecessary to implement beach nourishment."

Both the UP MSI and UP IESM said that dolomite particles will be carried out to sea during storm surges and intense rainfall events.

The DENR earlier said that geotextile tubes were installed on the beach, which will act as a breakwater and will allow water to pass through while preventing the filling material from being washed away.

It is unclear whether this has already been done, but sandbags have been placed along the shoreline of the "white sand beach."

'Environmentally damaging'

The DENR also said that crushed dolomite rocks will help neutralize the acidity of the water in Manila Bay.

But the UP MSI stressed that "such augmentation in the carbonate ion budget from dolomite addition is not a solution to the potential acidification happening in Manila Bay" because ocean acidification occurs on a much larger scale.

The UP IESM also said that the beach nourishment project will be "environmentally damaging" in the long run.

The institute added that the washing off of dolomite sand from the beach is similar to dumping foreign sediments, which can disturb plants and habitats of marine animals by potentially burying them, lowering the oxygen in the seawater and blocking their access to sunlight.

"These outcomes endanger the biodiversity of the area. The polluted waters discharging to Manila Bay are already causing the degradation of its marine environment. The addition of sediments only hastens its deterioration," it said.

'Long and arduous task'

The two UP institutes pointed out that the clean-up of Manila Bay will be a "long and arduous" task.

"We support efforts to restore the natural environmental integrity of the bay by well-considered and science informed efforts in sewage treatment, waste management, providing informal settlers with housing and sewerage toilets, mangrove rehabilitation and tourism management," UP IESM said.

The UP MSI also said there is a need for a massive restoration of watersheds and monitoring of emerging organic pollutants such as plastic component.

"The task of cleaning and restoring Manila Bay may be daunting but it needs to be done for future generations of Filipinos to benefit from its many uses," it said.



Olivarez kontra kay Villar sa Manila Bay reclamation project

By Abante News Online — Last updated Sep 30, 2020

NEWS



Tinawanan lang ni Paranaque City Mayor Edwin Olivarez ang pahayag ni Senador Cynthia Villar na ang panukalang reclamation project sa Manila Bay ay magdudulot nang pagbaha.

Ayon kay Olivarez, ang naturang plano sa coastal area na sumasakop sa Paranaque ay sasailalim pa sa appraisal ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ibang ahensya kabilang ang Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

“The assessment, determination and all technical parameters of any proposed reclamation will also be subjected to investigation and checking not only by the DENR but also the Department of Public Works and Highways, whose chief is the son of the senator,” sabi ni Olivarez.

Aniya, bago maisakatuparan ang reclamation project ay dadaan pa ito sa masusing compliance sa lahat ng mga technical requirement ng batas.

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Sep 30, 2020 0

“No reclamation project can also be realized without approved policies and issuance of the government, otherwise, the said proposed project is doomed for denial and therefore should not be implemented,” paliwanag ng alkalde.

Sakop ng proyekto ang baybayin ng Bgy. Baclaran, Tambo, La Huerta, Don Galo at Bgy. San Dionisio sa Paranaque.

Giit ni Olivarez na posibleng hindi ituloy ang proyekto kung babahain ang mga nabanggit na barangay ng lungsod.

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Una nang sinabi ni Senador Cynthia Villar na ang reclamation project na tinutulak ng Paranaque City ay magdudulot ng pagbaha sa Cavite, Las Pinas, at Paranaque bukod sa makakasira sa 35 ektaryang mangrove forest sa Manila Bay.

Kasama din sa masasakop ng proyekto ang mga barangay Moonwalk, Sto. Nino at Vitales. "Natural lang na hindi natin itutuloy ang reclamation project kung sakaling babahain lang naman ang mga nasabing barangay sa aming lungsod at ang lalawigan ng Cavite at buong Las Pinas," paliwanag ni Olivarez sabay giit na maiiwasan ang pagbaha sa pamamagitan ng Imus, Cavite catchment basin.



Critically endangered dolphin found dead in Negros town

Published September 30, 2020, 11:50 AM

by [Glazyl Masculino](#)

BACOLOD CITY – A critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphin was discovered dead in the waters off Pulupandan town in Negros Occidental on September 25 that raised serious concern from marine wildlife conservation group Earth Island Institute Philippines.



A dead Irrawaddy dolphin found floating in a coastal area of Pulupandan in Negros Occidental Friday.
(Photo courtesy of Lumba project via Facebook)

In a press release dated September 29, Mark Louie Aquino, the group's campaign officer, said marine scientists in the area, led by experts from the University of St. La Salle (USLS), were still in the process of identifying the cause of death of the Irrawaddy dolphin.

Irrawaddy dolphins have been categorized by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red list of Threatened Species (IUCN Red list) as "critically endangered" because of its dwindling number, Aquino said in a statement.

At present, there are only 13 remaining individual Irrawaddy dolphins, according to the marine population surveys, he added.

The group cited that, in November 2019, Senator Juan Edgardo 'Sonny' Angara filed a resolution, urging the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the local government units (LGUs) of Pulupandan and Bago City in the province to immediately take necessary steps to protect the remaining Irrawaddy dolphins in the Guimaras Strait and declare their habitat as "marine protected areas" (MPA).

However, the declaration process from the local government unit of Pulupandan remains elusive in signing the MPA, the group said.

"We earnestly urge the national government to immediately adopt the proposal of the local scientists and communities to declare parts of the coastal areas as MPA aimed at helping these Pinoy dolphins survive their crisis on population," Aquino said.

"This should be a national priority since the Irrawaddys are our national treasure and pride," he added.

Earth Island Institute Asia-Pacific said that only by declaring the area as MPA will the country be able to enhance the conservation efforts to prevent the extinction of the Irrawaddys.

This means that all human activities in the area where the Irrawaddy dolphin can be found must immediately stop.

Fisherfolk and companies that will be affected by these policies should be supported by the concerned LGUs, as well as the national government. Alternative livelihood such as promoting ecotourism like dolphin watching can be introduced to the locals, the group said.



Earth Island Institute Philippines is an international organization that promotes awareness, grassroots environmentalism for the protection, conservation, and restoration of nature, focusing on marine wildlife.

Meanwhile, the Lumba project, a center for research and engagement on critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphins found in Bago and Pulpandan areas, of the USLS, said in their Facebook post, that the Irrawaddy dolphins in Guimaras Strait are the most endangered mammals in the region, with their population at dangerously low levels.

Their survival is being threatened by several factors aggravated by the fact that they live in coastal areas near shore, where they are vulnerable to the effects of industrial, domestic, and agricultural pollution, boat traffic, net entanglement, and habitat degradation, the group said.



Suplay ng tubig sa Metro binawasan

By Abante News Online — Last updated Sep 30, 2020

NEWS



Photo courtesy of untvweb.com



Asahan na hihina ang supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila dahil sa pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam kung saan binawasan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa irigasyon mula sa 30 cubic meter per second ay magiging 25 cubic meters per second sa susunod na buwan.

Paliwanag ni Dr. Seville David Jr., Executive Director ng NWRB, nasa 178.08 meters ang lebel ngayon ng tubig sa Angat Dam, na mas mababa sa 180 meters minimum operating level.

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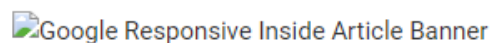
Camp Crame, Aguinaldo ibenta na lang kesa bagong buwis

Sep 30, 2020 0

“Kaya sa ngayon, minabuti ng NWRB na bawasan muna ng alokasyon para sa Metro Manila na from 46 cubic meters per second ay magiging 44 cubic meters per second, effective Oct. 1,” ayon sa panayam kay David.

“Gusto rin nating pangalagaan yung pangangailangan ng mga kababayan natin sa Metro Manila at lalo po itong panahon ng pandemya kaya nakikipagtulungan tayo sa MWSS para itong pagbabawas na ginagawa

natin galing sa Angat Dam ay hindi makaapekto sa mga kababayan natin ngayong panahon ng COVID dito sa Metro Manila,” sabi pa ni David. (Vick Aquino)





NWRB reduces water allocation for Metro Manila

September 30, 2020 6:54 PM by [Kristan Carag](#)



Photo Credits: [peace.gov.ph](#)

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) will reduce the water allocation for Metro Manila due to the decreasing water level in Angat Dam.

NWRB announced that the water allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System will drop from 46 cubic meters per second to 44 cubic meters per second.

NWRB executive director Seville David Jr. said on Tuesday, September 29, that the water level in Angat Dam remains below the minimum operating level of 180 meters.

“Sa ngayon ang level ng Angat Dam ay nasa 177,” David said during DZRH’s Breaktime.

“Ito’y upang pangalagaan yung kasulukuyan level ng Angat Dam para naman mabigyan din ng kasigurahan yung mga pangangailangan natin sa mga susunod pa na buwan,” he added.

David, however, allayed concerns that the reduced water allocation would result to a water shortage.

“Sa tingin natin, hindi ito makakaapekto masyado sa gamit natin para sa water supply sa Metro Manila kasama na rin sa irrigation,” David said.

David explained that isolated rains help maintain the water supply at reservoirs in the the National Capital Region.

“Itong mga manaka-nakang mga pag-ulan na nararanasan natin dito sa may bandang parte ng Metro Manila, hindi pa nga nakakarating ito sa watershed ng Angat, pero ito ay nakakatulong dito sa mga maliliit na reservoir,” the NWRD official said.

“Ito ay nakakadagdag sa tubig na nang-gagaling sa Angat,” he added.



COA calls out DOST for scrimping on climate change budget

Published September 30, 2020, 9:36 PM

by [Ben Rosario](#)

State auditors have called the attention of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) against scrimping on the P9.98 billion granted by the government to finance the Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation projects, saying that underspending might “hinder the country’s resilience to calamities.”

The Commission on Audit (COA) disclosed that out of the P9.98 billion funding for grants-in-aid (GIA) projects from 2016 to 2019, only P2.38 billion or about 24 percent went to DRRCCA projects which is not in line with the Special Provisions of the General Appropriations Act.

In the 2019 annual audit report for DoST, COA also revealed that some P1.93 billion remained under the receivables ledger “due to the ineffective monitoring and lack of thorough evaluation on the viability of projects, failure to enforce collection and laxity in the implementation” of the memorandum of agreements under the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP).

The GAAs of 2016 to 2019 underscored that priority funding should go to research on disaster risk reduction and climate change and mitigation.

“We recommended that management revisit its priorities in allocating projects funded out of the DOST-GIA fund to comply with the Special Provisions of the DOST GAA requiring priority research on DRRCCA and ensure that this is embedded and institutionalized in development planning,” COA stated in the 2019 annual audit report for the DOST.

Reacting to the COA audit report, the DOST management under Secretary Fortunato de la Pena said had complied with the special provisions in the GAA.

Auditors also noted that there was a “low percentage of completion of only 48 percent” for GIA-funded projects from 2016 to 2019.

COA disclosed that only 247 out of the 511 projects financed was completed during the three-year period. According to the audit agency, there was likewise “minimal liquidation of only 44 percent or P2.59 billion out of the approved P5.94 billion.”

COA also said various “internal control lapses” in the disbursement have cast doubts on the proper implementation of the projects and the “timely delivery of expected research outputs to intended users.

Also in connection with the DOST-GIA program, auditors noted that the DOST Central Office purchased from 2010 to 2019 various equipment with an accumulated value of P2.35 billion but only P1.55 million worth of equipment were inventoried.

Computations showed that there was a P795.39 unaccounted balance in equipment.

“The difference is attributable to inadequate monitoring on the status of equipment purchased out of GIA funds,” COA stressed.

The audit agency added: “Considering that millions if not billions of peso worth of equipment had already been acquired/procured through the GIA funds, stringent monitoring and record keeping should be instituted.”

In response, the DOST management pointed out that most of the projects funded from 2016 to 2019 are still being implemented as of December 31, 2019.



With regards the SETUP projects, COA said this flagship program of the DOST provides financial and technical assistance to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to encourage them to adopt technological innovations to improve their operations and boost profit.

During the years of implementation, receivables from the program have reached P811.210 million for past dues of one to over 10 years.

At least P233.30 million more were described as “of doubtful collectability.”

“Due to the failure to collect past due accounts the government lost the opportunity to use the funds to finance future projects under SETUP and other vital projects in order to keep up with the country’s most pressing needs,” COA said.

“Moreover, equipment purchases in the total amount of P115.87 million remained unutilized and not properly secured/stored for several years, thus exposing the equipment to wear and tear and risk of loss of value or purpose of usage,” the audit agency stated.



Asian scientists call for stronger collaboration vs. climate change

Published September 30, 2020, 3:13 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Climate scientists across Asia have called for urgent action and stronger collaboration in addressing climate change in developing countries, despite the setbacks brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.



APIK Indonesia Network (Indonesia Expert Network for Climate Change and Forestry) chairman Mahawan Karuniasa emphasized the need for a low carbon and sustainable recovery from the pandemic.

In a statement, Karuniasa said that the current situation should strengthen stakeholder engagement, build better solidarity, and implement science-based actions in facing the climate crisis.

Ken O'Flaherty of the 26th Conference of Parties or COP 26 Region Ambassador for Asia-Pacific and South Asia said the world is still not on track to reach the Paris Agreement goals and the next five years will be critical. "We must work together and act urgently."

They also pointed out that developing countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Bangladesh are highly vulnerable to climate impacts with limited resources to support needed action.

The developing nations' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and National Adaptation Plans (NAP), and how the proper implementation, collaboration, and mainstreaming of climate efforts on the ground can help meet the Paris Agreement goal, they emphasized.

Saleemul Huq, Director of the International Center for Climate Change and Development in Bangladesh, cited that apart from compliance, it is more important to contextualize NDC and NAP in the national and local planning and make sure that the right thing is being done on the ground in terms of mitigation and adaptation.

Echoing this call is Filipina climate scientist Lourdes Tibig, a technical expert of the Philippine Climate Change Commission and founding member of the Asia Climate Experts (ACE) Network.

"We need to have champions in the national and local levels so that we can embed climate change in development planning. Harmonization of policies and resources is also very important," Tibig said.

"While we speak different languages across Asia, collectively we have the human capacity, expertise, and experiences in dealing with climate change and its impacts," said Dr. Felino Lansigan, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of the Philippines Los Baños and founding member of the ACE Network.

"When we work as a team, we achieve more and hopefully, we achieve it faster," Lansigan said.



The Paris Agreement primarily aims to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

It also aims to strengthen countries' ability to deal with the impacts of climate change and support them in their efforts.

The Agreement, which was adopted in 2015 by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, mandates that developed and developing nations boost ambitions of their national climate commitments—known as NDCs—every five years.



No climate emergency

September 30, 2020 | 5:54 pm

My Cup Of Liberty

By Bienvenido S. Oplas, Jr.

Among the big headlines this week is the report that President Rodrigo Duterte is considering the environmentalists' lobby to declare a "climate emergency." Greenpeace in particular lobbies to phase out or kill coal and other fossil fuel power, mining. They want to plunge the country in blackout-friendly intermittent, variable renewable energies (VREs) like wind, solar and biomass.

The endless lobby to demonize fossil fuels, mining, conventional vehicles running on oil, related

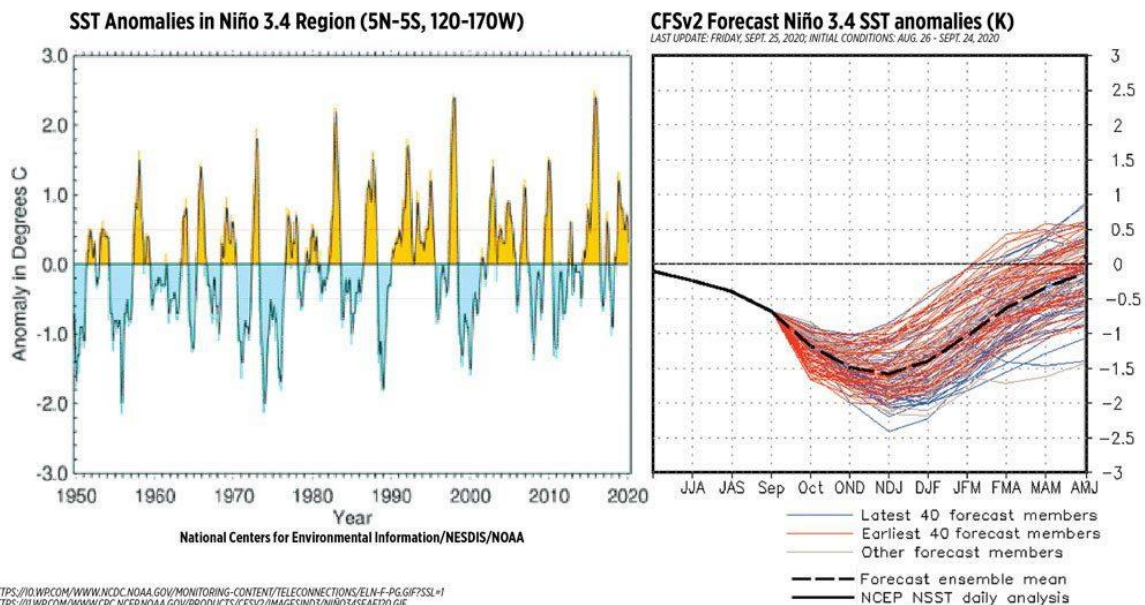
measures are based on a very opportunistic, corrupt, even brain-dead "analysis" that these commodities cause less rain and more rain, less flood and more flood, less storms and more storms, less cold and more cold. Whatever weather and climate, people should be scared and worried so that the VRE lobby should continue to get rich, so that governments can continue to slap carbon tax, oil tax, carbon cap and trade, create and expand climate bureaucracies.

Climate change is true, global warming and global cooling are true. They have happened since planet Earth was born some 4.6 billion years ago, warming-cooling in natural, endless cycle. Take the current La Niña – the sea surface temperature (SST) anomaly or deviation from the mean temperature is -0.5 C or lower in the Pacific Ocean Niño region 3.4. This region is the widest and center-most part of the Pacific Ocean. Australia's Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) weekly monitoring reported on Sept. 6 that Niño region 3.4 has dipped to -0.52 C or La Niña territory already. The latest update on Sept. 27 showed -0.80 C.

I checked El Niño-La Niña cycle, 70 years data from 1950 to early 2020, data from the US National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Then I added the chart of NOAA forecast, the 40+ models predict a big and deep La Niña from September 2020 to April 2021, the SST anomaly will see a deep -1.5 C in Nov. 2020 to January 2021 (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1.

SST of Pacific Ocean Niño region 3.4, Forecast as of Sept. 25, 2020



This means that in the coming weeks and months we expect more rains and floods, more landslides, more flood/water-related killer diseases like leptospirosis and dengue. And the climate lobby will say that these are proof of "man-made warming/CC," never proof of transition to natural global cooling.



So if the planet undergoes warming-cooling in natural cycles, like day-night cycle, winter-spring-summer-fall cycle, El Niño-La Niña cycle, water evaporation-condensation cycle, carbon cycle in plants-animals/humans, where is the “climate emergency”?

The Philippine government has been spending hundreds of billions of pesos yearly on climate adaptation and climate mitigation programs. From 2018 to 2021 budget, the government would have spent some P878 billion or an average of P219 billion/year. This is equivalent to 7.8% of the total budget excluding appropriation for interest payment and allocation to local government units (ALGUs). While the Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Agriculture and Department of Environment and Natural Resources are the lead departments, other agencies also have substantial climate projects and budgets, like the National Dairy Authority, Philippine Crop Insurance Corp., Philippine Fisheries Development Authority, Philippine Rice Research Institute, and National Irrigation Administration (*see Figure 2*).

FIGURE 2.

Climate change expenditures by agencies, P Billion

DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018-21
Public Works and Highways (DPWH)	223.73	154.63	190.72	140.06	709.14
Agriculture (DA)	13.52	23.76	17.66	17.26	72.20
Environment and Nat. Resources (DENR)	11.73	9.78	10.76	11.16	43.43
NDA, PCIC, PFDA, PhilRice, NIA	6.01	5.10	5.41	5.42	21.94
Metro Manila Devt. Authority (MMDA)	3.31	3.28	4.52	4.34	15.45
Science and Technology (DOST)	1.96	1.10	1.17	1.03	5.26
Labor and Employment (DOLE)	1.01	0.29	0.79	--	2.09
Social Welfare and Devt. (DSWD)	--	--	--	1.62	1.62
Agrarian Reform (DAR)	0.43	0.47	0.30	0.30	1.50
Trade and Industry (DTI)	--	0.95	0.50	--	1.45
Info. and Communications Tech. (DICT)	0.22	0.05	0.42	0.33	1.02
Energy (DOE)	0.22	0.22	0.32	0.23	0.99
Others	1.05	0.23	0.23	0.15	1.66
Total, CC expenditures	263.19	199.86	232.8	181.9	877.75
Total Budget net of int. payment, ALGUs	2,626.65	2,599.39	2,866.34	3,136.66	11,229.04
CC/Total budget net of int. pay., ALGUs	10.0%	7.7%	8.1%	5.8%	7.8%

SOURCE: DBM, BUDGET OF EXPENDITURES AND SOURCES OF FINANCING (BESF) 2020, 2021.

Note also that the budgets by LGUs, from provincial to barangay, for various climate offices, programs and meetings are not included there. Plus the various huge climate loans from the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, other multilaterals.

The President should not heed the opportunistic and corrupt lobby to declare a “climate emergency” because there is none. The President should not impose new carbon tax, higher oil tax, coal tax and vehicle tax, create a carbon cap and trade, kill mining, and so on.

To hasten economic recovery from this pandemic and indefinite lockdowns, we should have cheaper energy and more jobs creation including jobs from the mining sector.

Bienvenido S. Oplas, Jr. is the president of Minimal Government Thinkers



‘Warming oceans more stable and that’s bad’

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

September 30, 2020

PARIS: Global warming is making the oceans more stable, increasing surface temperatures and reducing the carbon they can absorb, according to research published on Monday by climate scientists who warned that the findings have “profound and troubling” implications.

Man-made climate change has increased surface temperatures across the planet, leading to atmospheric instability and amplifying extreme weather events, such as storms.

But in the oceans, higher temperatures have a different effect, slowing the mixing between the warming surface and the cooler, oxygen-rich waters below, researchers said.

This ocean “stratification” means less deep water is rising towards the surface carrying oxygen and nutrients, while the water at the surface absorbs less atmospheric carbon dioxide to bury at depth.

In a report published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, the international team of climate scientists said they found that stratification globally had increased by a “substantial” 5.3 percent from 1960 to 2018.

Most of this stabilization occurred towards the surface, and was attributed largely to temperature rises. They said this process is also exacerbated by the melting of sea ice, meaning that more fresh water — which is lighter than salt water — also accumulates on the surface of the ocean.

Study co-author Michael Mann, a climate science professor at Pennsylvania State University, said in a commentary published in *Newsweek* that the “seemingly technical finding has profound and troubling implications.”

These include potentially driving more “intense, destructive hurricanes” as ocean surfaces warm. Mann also pointed to a reduction in the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) absorbed, which could mean that carbon pollution builds up faster than expected in the atmosphere.

He warned that sophisticated climate models often underestimate ocean stratification and may also be underestimating its impact.

With warmer upper waters receiving less oxygen, there are also implications for marine life.

By absorbing a quarter of man-made CO₂ and soaking up more than 90 percent of the heat generated by greenhouse gases, oceans keep the population alive — but at a terrible cost, according to the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC).

Seas have grown acidic, potentially undermining their capacity to draw down CO₂. Warmer surface water has expanded the force and range of deadly tropical storms. Marine heatwaves are wiping out coral reefs, and accelerating the melt-off of glaciers and ice sheets driving sea level rise.

Last year, research published in the *US Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* calculated that climate change would empty the ocean of nearly a fifth of all living creatures, measured by mass, by the end of the century.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/09/30/news/world/warming-oceans-more-stable-and-thats-bad/774053/>



Clean energy may be a catalyst for recovery

By [Ben Kritz](#)

October 1, 2020

A couple of weekends ago, I had an early Saturday morning video meeting with a business acquaintance in Brooklyn, New York, and he remarked that one of the recent developments in 2020's never-ending parade of horrors for people in his neighborhood was that they could now smell the smoke from the wildfires in the western US.

The nearest of those fires to Brooklyn is in the vicinity of Cameron Peak, Colorado, about 2,700 kilometers away. To put that in a local perspective, that is about the same distance as from Manila to Tokyo, Seoul or Jakarta.

US President Yam Head has attributed the wildfires to dead trees that had fallen over and somehow spontaneously exploded, but to anyone not making a strenuous effort to be willfully ignorant, the scale, duration and intensity of these wildfires are the clearest evidence yet of rapid climate change. The US is suffering its worst fire season ever, surpassing last year's, which was, in turn, the worst fire season up to that point. The same thing is happening across vast areas of Siberia; it has happened this season in many areas of Europe, with Spain, Italy and the lower Danube region being particularly affected. Though we are hoping for the best, it would probably happen again in Australia in the coming weeks and months.

While the debate goes on about whether specific environmental targets, such as those in the 2015 Paris Agreement, are realistic or achievable (they probably are neither), the world's leadership — with a few problematic exceptions, like the aforementioned Yam Head or that ill-mannered sack of crap the normally honorable and intelligent Brazilian people elected as their president — seems to have turned a corner and accepted that some tangible effort must be made to reduce human environmental impact.

Here in the Philippines, for example, the government has proposed a 30-percent increase in the budget for its climate-mitigation and risk-reduction convergence program — P152.3 billion for 2021 from P117 billion this year — and President Rodrigo Duterte has, somewhat unexpectedly, said he would give serious consideration to a proposal from Greenpeace to declare a “climate emergency” in the country.

A window of opportunity

“All of these are happening, of course, against the backdrop of the worst pandemic in more than a century. Although a few ardent environmentalists have tried to draw a connection between the coronavirus and climate crises, there really isn't any, except in one, after-the-fact respect: some economists and policymakers are coming around to the idea that pursuing more aggressive climate-mitigation strategies, particularly in sustainable energy, may contribute significantly to the recovery of the global and national economies.

There are many reasons for this, but two in particular stand out: one is a broad, global peculiarity while another is a familiar local condition. On a global scale, one of the assumptions about the post-pandemic economy is that there will be a significant negative output gap, which may last until the end of the decade. Most reliable estimates peg the collective gross domestic product of advanced economies at about 1.5 percent lower by 2030 than it would have been without the coronavirus. This means one of the biggest obstacles to implementing more aggressive green energy development policies — the assumption that sustainable energy requires reduced consumption as the trade-off — is at least partially eliminated without a contentious debate having to take place; consumption will be reduced, anyway, making it a moot point.



On the local level, the chaos in the energy sector caused by the coronavirus pandemic has led to a surge in demand in one particular niche: off-grid solar. Apart from the surge in generation and distribution charges imposed on most customers during the height of the March-to-May lockdown, some areas served by generators under the Small Power Utilities Group were left without power for considerable periods of time due to interruptions in the fuel supply chain.

Although some rate corrections have since been made by the likes of Meralco, power costs remain high and are still problematic for households and businesses on reduced incomes, sustaining demand for alternative solutions. As anecdotal evidence of this, one of the first businesses to reopen in my own neighborhood after the lifting of Metro Manila's first major lockdown at the beginning of June was a local retailer of home solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. At last report, its order book had ballooned to the point where customers are on a four- to six-week waiting list for installations.

Jenny Lin Maaño, president of Makati City-based SunSmart Solar Power Technology Inc., summed up the lessons of the pandemic. The disruption in energy supplies to end-users, she explained, "brought unity to understanding that despite having other sources of power, even if renewable, the need to make it simple, sustainable and resilient is highly essential."

"Covid-19 is one big example for utilities, essential goods and technology providers to become 'more capable' to serve even the most far-flung, unserved areas," she said.

While anyone offering any sort of "simple, sustainable and resilient" solution has found new demand, the situation seems to have worked out particularly well for SunSmart. It offers a wider variety of useful systems than most distributors, including solar-powered generator units, off-grid and mini-grid solar power systems, and solar and solar/wind hybrid outdoor lighting systems, among others.

"With the lengthy lockdowns and up- and downscaling of the quarantine, our mobile, integrated, small, medium [and] large integrated solar hybrid power systems made a huge head-turn and generated demand both in the public and private sectors," Maaño said.

As she sees it, one of the big takeaways from the pandemic is that innovation, both in her industry and across the economy in general should be a bigger priority. In terms of development in energy systems, "the drive for innovation is a big must," she said. "Not just better solar PV technology, but rather advanced solar energy solutions that are able to sustain the need of the green energy market in accordance with not [only] the life span of the solar PV system itself, but also its ability to adapt to climatic conditions, including socioeconomic disruption and adaptive changes, which should remain levelized, if not constant."

Although the degree to which our current shared cloud may be described as having a "silver lining" is probably debatable, it is nevertheless encouraging to discover that circumstances have come together that can lead to something positive. The heightened concern for climate action, a more critical need for flexible, cost-effective energy solutions, the search for policy directions that can "kick-start" flagging economies and a great deal of general forced socioeconomic adaptation are all answered to a significant extent, if not completely, by a focus on sustainable energy development.

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Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/01/business/columnists-business/clean-energy-may-be-a-catalyst-for-recovery/774478/>



Expert reveals technology not advanced enough to limit toxic and pollutants in incinerators

Published September 30, 2020, 12:57 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A former technical advisor to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has warned that even how advance the technology is, there remains no safe limits to toxic and hazardous pollutants released when burning the garbage.

Dr. Jorge Emmanuel, who co-authored the World Health Organization's guidebook on health care waste, was joined by other experts during an online forum on Wednesday to warn the country against heading to a more catastrophic situation if waste incineration, guised as waste-to-energy project, is legalized.

He pointed out that the problem with trash burning is that it releases dioxins and furans however advance the technology.

A former chief technical advisor on global environment projects of the UNDP, an adjunct professor in Silliman University, and leader of a UN team that helped contain the spread of Ebola virus in Africa, Emmanuel pointed out that there are no safe limits when we are dealing with these toxic and hazardous pollutants.

His presentation was made available during an online forum organized by Green Thumb Coalition on Wednesday.

He pointed out that a single drop of dioxin is enough to contaminate a medium sized lake and its inhabitants. Over a long period, this toxin could be passed on to humans by eating fish, eggs, pork, poultry and other meats that have accumulated dioxins.

“Dioxins stay in our environment for hundreds of years and cause serious illnesses including cancer, birth defects and reproductive disorders among people exposed to it,” Emmanuel said.

Lee Bell, POPs (persistent organic pollutants) and mercury policy advisor for the International Pollution Elimination Network (IPEN) also highlighted during the forum a recent study by the Center for International Environmental Law, which shows incineration of plastic waste generates large quantities of carbon and carbon equivalent (CO₂e) emissions.

Waste incinerators, driven by high carbon content plastics and organic waste streams, currently release an average of around 1 ton of CO₂ for every ton of waste incinerated, he said.

Bell noted that “368 million tons of wastes are incinerated globally per year equating to annual emissions of around 368 million tons of CO₂.”

“That's a huge amount of greenhouse gases added annually into our atmosphere,” he added.

According to Dr. Vicky Espaldon, a professor at the University of the Philippines School of Environmental Science and Management, the chain of reaction from incineration to health and climate and then onto our food production systems will reduce harvests, affect the quality of agricultural produce and increase its costs by as high as 25 percent in the next two decades.

“An increase of 1°C leads to about 8-14 percent decrease in rice yield during the dry season,” Espaldon said citing a study conducted in 2007.

“Tread carefully as impacts are serious and it (waste-to-energy) is a huge investment, it is better to invest in making sure that RA 9003 provisions are successfully implemented,” she added.



Green Thumb Coalition convenor Jaybee Garganera said the scientific evidence will be presented to legislators who are currently deliberating the passage of a bill that would allow waste incineration in the country.

“The science and robustness of evidence we have gathered will complement our collective experiences on the ground to engage our senators like (Sherwin) Gatchalian, (Francis) Tolentino, and (Nancy) Binay and make them understand the profound negative economic and health impacts of their policy actions such as the waste-to-energy law,” Garganera said.

Gatchalian is the principal author of Senate Bill 1789 or the Waste-to-Energy Bill.



Crematorium sa Antipolo, inirereklamo dahil sa maitim at makapal na usok mula roon

Setyembre 30, 2020 2:45pm GMT+08:00

Iniiibestigahan ang isang crematorium sa Antipolo City sa Rizal dahil sa lumalabas na makapal at maitim na usok mula rito na nanggaling daw sa mga sinusunog na labi ng mga nasawi sa COVID-19 pati ang kanilang mga ginamit na unan at kumot sa ospital.

Sa ulat ni Emil Sumangil sa Balitanghali nitong Miyerkoles, makikita ang paglabas ng usok mula sa tsimneya ng Heaven's Gate Memorial Parks and Chapels na nakunan ng video ng concerned citizen na si Jake.

"Akala ko kasi may nasusunog sa sobrang itim ng usok so gumilid ako sa kalye at tinignan ko, aba chimney. On that side I thought it was a factory or anything so kinunan ko lang ng video, just about 13 seconds of it. Pero pagsakay ko sa sasakyan at lumampas ako, nu'ng tumapat ako, hindi pala factory," sabi ni Jake.

Sinabi ng concerned citizen na nagmamalasakit lang siya para sa mga residenteng malapit sa naturang crematorium.

"Nu'ng nag-post ako may mga nag-PM sa akin na mga taga-roon at sinabi na tuloy-tuloy daw 'yon at 'yun din ang nagiging problema nila. Naramdaman ko 'yung hirap ng mga nandu'n sa tabi," sabi ni Jake.

Sinabi ng mga residente na bagama't wala silang naaamoy, napapansin nila ang maitim na usok halos araw-araw.

"Nireklamo na rin ng mga tao pero walang nangyayari. Kaya ang tao parang 'wala lang,' kasi magreklamo ka baka ikaw pa ang pagalitan," sabi ni Edith Mayores, residente.

Dahil dito, biglaang ininspeksiyon ng Environment and Waste Management Office ng Antipolo City ang Heaven's Gate Memorial Parks and Chapels, kung saan may nakitang paglabag hinggil sa ordinansa laban sa polusyon.

Sinabi ni Engineer Violeta Sabulao-Faiyaz, pinuno ng City Environment and Waste Management Office-Antipolo, na mag-i-isyu sila ng notice ng violation sa nasabing crematorium.

Ayon kay Jun Bumanglag, Crematory Supervisor ng crematorium, puro mga namatay sa COVID-19 ang kanilang mga kine-cremate.

Nakadagdag daw sa makapal at maitim na usok ang mga sinusunog din nilang unan at kumot ng kini-cremate na pasyente.

"Pag nagki-cremate po kami hindi na po namin binubuksan 'yung cadaver para po sa safety ng mga cremator natin. Kaya siguro meron pong usok na lumabas," ani Bumanglag.

"Kung meron palang pagsusunog, kontrolado naman nila 'yung machine na nago-operate, but since na-COVID lahat ng pasyente na galing sa ospital for cremation, mukhang hindi natatanggal 'yung mga damit, unan, kung anu-ano man 'yan, which is 'yun po 'yung magdadagdag para magkaroon ng maitim na usok," sabi naman ni Faiyaz.



Pagmumultahin ng P5,000 ng lokal na pamahalaan bilang paunang penalty ang establisyimento. Sinabi rin ng city hall na araw-araw nilang ipamo-monitor ang kanilang operasyon.

Posibleng ipasara ang crematorium sakaling sumablay sa sumunod sa polisya. —**Jamil Santos/KBK, GMA News**

Metro Manila Council to decide on curfews as easing into MGCQ is seen

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 30, 2020 3:02:12 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 30) — Members of the Metro Manila Council are set to discuss the issue of curfews in their next meeting as they see the possible easing into a modified general community quarantine.

MMC Chairman and Parañaque City Edwin Olivarez made the revelation during a televised briefing on Wednesday, saying they were meeting on the issue as the country's economy was slowly opening

"Ang ginagawa po ng mga mayor natin ngayon, kasi hindi lang po yung health protocol, kailangan buksan na rin yung ating ekonomiya. Dun na rin po papunta yung strategy nung ating mga syudad na pagbubukas ng ating economy without compromising healthcare. Kaya po pinag-uusapan po natin ngayon, pero hindi pa po final, yung tungkol sa curfew," he said.

[Translation: What the mayors are doing now, because it's not just about health protocol, we also have to open up the economy. That is where strategy is headed without having to compromise healthcare. So now we are talking about it, but it's not yet final, the issue of the curfew.]

Curfews in Metro Manila are unified, beginning at 10 p.m. and ending at 5 in the morning. Olivarez added the opening of [24/7 delivery services](#) in the metro was also a way to help the economy.

Olivarez said despite the downtrend in COVID numbers, it was still not possible to fully ease quarantine restrictions for now. However, should the downtrend continue, they see the possible move of the metro into MGCQ.

"Kung matutuluy-tuloy po ang ating trend, itong pagbaba ng cases natin... at ipagpapatuloy lang ang padisiplina sa ating constituents, palagay ko po baka itong katapusan ng October...ay matatapos natin ang GCQ at hopefully...itong darating na November, MGCQ na po tayo," the mayor added.

[Translation: If the downtrend in cases continue...as well as discipline among constituents, I think by the end of October...GCQ will end as well and hopefully...this November we will be under MGCQ.]

[On Tuesday](#), Dr. Butch Ong, a member of the UP OCTA research team, said new cases have steadily gone down since healthcare workers requested for a "time out" in August.

He said should they see in October that numbers have gone down even further, then easing quarantine restrictions could be considered.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/9/30/metro-manila-council-quarantine-mgcq.html>



2,426 new COVID-19 cases bring Philippines' tally to 311,694

Published September 30, 2020 4:09pm

By JULIA MARI ORNEDO, GMA News

The Philippines' coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) tally rose to 311,694 on Wednesday after the Department of Health (DOH) announced 2,426 new infections.

The bulk of the newly reported cases were still recorded in Metro Manila with 887 new infections, followed by Cavite with 201, Rizal with 147, Negros Occidental with 115, and Batangas with 99.

Eighty-seven percent or 2,113 of the latest cases contracted COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

Meanwhile, the total number of recoveries jumped to 253,488 after 585 more patients recovered from the respiratory disease.

The death toll also climbed to 5,504 with 58 new fatalities, 42 of whom died in September, 12 in August, and four in July.

“Moreover, 14 cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified to deaths after final validation,” the DOH added.

The other 52,702 are active cases undergoing treatment or quarantine, 86.4 percent of which are mild, 9 percent are asymptomatic, 1.4 percent are severe, and 3.2 percent are in critical condition.

As of September 29, 49 percent of COVID-19 intensive care unit beds nationwide were occupied and 23 percent of mechanical ventilators were in use.

The Metro Manila Council earlier said quarantine restrictions may be [loosened](#) in November if the number of infections continues to go down.

Metro Manila and several other areas are under general community [quarantine](#) until October 31.—**LDF, GMA News**



Covid spending takes 8-month PHL debt to P9.6 trillion

By [Bernadette D. Nicolas](#)

October 1, 2020



Provincial buses expected to arrive during the first day of the resumption of provincial operations are nowhere in sight at the Philippine Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) in Parañaque City.

THE national government's outstanding debt as of end-August swelled to P9.6 trillion as it secures more borrowings to finance its spending needs amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Latest data from the Bureau of the Treasury showed the country's debt stock surged by 21.1 percent from P7.94 trillion in end-August last year.

Compared to end-2019 level of P7.731 trillion, the government's debt portfolio as of end-August jumped by 24.4 percent. Month-on-month, the country's debt stock is up by 4.92 percent from P9.16 trillion as of end-July.

Of the total outstanding debt, 69.8 percent was sourced domestically, while 30.2 percent came from foreign lenders.

Domestic debt as of end-August also rose by 27.3 percent year-on-year to P6.7 trillion from P5.27 trillion a year ago.

To date, domestic debt has increased by 30.92 percent from P5.13 trillion as of end-2019. The end-August domestic debt stock also increased by 7.3 percent from P6.26 trillion as of end-July.

According to the Treasury, domestic borrowings for the year as of end-August amounted to P2.5 trillion. Of the total new issuances, P925.38 billion was in Treasury bills (T-bills), P447.86 billion was in Treasury bonds (T-bonds) and P827.11 billion in Retail Treasury Bonds. This also includes the P300-billion short-term borrowing from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas through a repurchase agreement.

Gross maturities also reached P914.08 billion. Of this, P540.08 billion was for T-bills and P374 billion was for T-bonds.

On the other hand, external debt as of end-August has reached P2.902 trillion, inching up by 8.8 percent year-on-year from P2.67 trillion in the same period in 2019.

It also went up by 11.5 percent from P2.604 trillion as of end of last year.

However, this is 0.2 percent lower from P2.908 trillion as of end-July.



The Treasury said the month-on-month decline in external debt was due to the P37.36-billion net effect of local currency appreciation.

For the period, project loan availment reached P17.09 billion, while program loans amounted to P306.54 billion. Meanwhile, offshore bond issuances amounted to P186.06 billion.

Total guaranteed obligations of the national government as of end-August dropped by 8.8 percent to P446.997 billion from P490.278 billion a year ago.

The lower level of guarantees was due to the net redemption of both local and external guarantees amounting to P8.59 billion and P0.42 billion, respectively. Local currency appreciation further reduced the value of external guarantees by P2.85 billion, offsetting the effect of third-currency appreciation amounting to P0.03 billion.

Since the start of the year, guarantees as of end-August this year slid by 8.5 percent from P488.746 billion as of end-December last year.

The government borrows to finance its spending requirements as well as to cover its budget deficit.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) also expects the country's debt-to-GDP ratio this year to increase to 53.91 percent of GDP—a level it has not seen in over a decade—from a record low of 39.6 percent of GDP last year.

By the end of this year, the national government expects its outstanding debt to reach P10.16 trillion, up by 31.42 percent from last year's amount.

As tax collections are down amid the pandemic, the Development Budget Coordination Committee projects the country's budget deficit to more than double to 9.6 percent of GDP or P1.815 trillion from only 3.4 percent of GDP or P660.2 billion last year.

Image credits: [Roy Domingo](#)



Boracay reopens

We are pleased that the Boracay IATF, Aklan and Malay have agreed to put health and safety as top priorities as we carefully and safely welcome guests to the island.

Published 3 hours ago on October 1, 2020 03:28 AM

By [Sundy Locus](#) [@tribunephil_sndy](#)



Guests entering world-famous Boracay Island in Malay, Aklan, starting Thursday are mandated to have Boracay Tourist QR (quick response) codes upon arrival in airports and seaports, entry in all establishments, including hotels and restaurants, and participation in water activities.

The QR code system will allow members of health emergency responders to immediately track and trace possible high-risk contacts of guests who will experience COVID-19 related symptoms.

Quick response hotline 152 was also established to easily allow responders to assist guests and employees that will need medical attention.

On Tuesday, the Aklan Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) visited Godofredo P. Ramos Airport (Caticlan) Airport for final assessment prior to the reopening for domestic tourists only.

The assessment included review of protocols on receiving guests while ensuring social distance, queuing system, temperature and online health declaration card scanning and isolation rooms for symptomatic guests.

A health declaration card, available online, must be filled up and submitted by guests.

Tourists from areas under general community quarantine, including Metro Manila, will be allowed on the island as long as they are negative from the coronavirus and have booked accommodations.

Undersecretary Benito Bengzon, in a televised briefing on Wednesday, said the Department of Tourism (DoT) forecasts reopening to international guests by the second half of 2021.

DoT Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said Boracay's reopening signals a gathering momentum for domestic tourism all over the country.

"We are pleased that the Boracay IATF, Aklan and Malay have agreed to put health and safety as top priorities as we carefully and safely welcome guests to the island," she said.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque likewise welcomed the reopening but cautioned that the country is not safe from the virus yet.

"It means we need to balance the reality that workers of the tourism sector must go back to work," he said.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/01/boracay-reopens/>



Mga taga-Boracay may halong pananabik, kaba sa pagbubukas ng isla sa turista

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 30 2020 05:46 PM

MAYNILA - Hindi naging madali ang buhay ng singer at dating "Tawag ng Tanghalan" grand finalist at Boracay-based singer na si Tuko De Los Reyes, nang isara ang isla sa turismo dahil sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Dahil walang gig sa isla, wala siyang kinikita. Kaya naman naisipan niyang magtinda na lang muna ng mani para magkaroon ng kabuhayan, kahit papaano.

Gaya ng marami sa isla, halo ang nararamdaman ni De Los Reyes sa napipintong pagbubukas ng Boracay sa lahat ng turista sa bansa.

Maganda man ito sa ekonomiya, naroon din ang kaba para sa mga nagtatrabaho sa lugar.

"Nakakatakot 'yung mga bisita na pumasok ngayon dahil sa COVID saka di natin masiguro 'yung papasok na tao kung ok sila," pahayag naman ng tricycle driver na si Eduardo Saclao.

"Sa totoo lang, may halo kasi kaming takot sa pagbubukas ng Boracay kasi 'yung coronavirus di natin alam kung kalaban natin," pahayag naman ng saleslady na si Amira Macarampat.

Nakatutok ang mga awtoridad sa paghahanda sa pagbubukas.

Nagsagawa naman ng tinawag na simulation ang iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno.

Required ang lahat ng papasok na bisita na magpakita ng negative swab test result.

"Economic survival [at] health survival kailangan natin balansehin. 'Yun ang challenge. Personal responsibility din ng mga turista na papasok na sila ay healthy talaga. They will observe all protocols," ani Jonathan Pablito, hepe ng Malay police.

Ayon sa Department of Tourism, hinahanda na nila ang sistema ng QR code ng mga test result para matiyak na hindi mapepeke ang mga resulta.

Kasama dapat si Tourism chief Bernadette Romulo-Puyat sa muling pagbubukas ng Boracay pero hindi natuloy dahil may nakasalamuha siyang nagpositibo sa COVID-19.

"The doctors advised me to quarantine for 10 days since exposure, para na rin sa safety pero negative naman ako, no symptoms," ani Puyat.

Paalala ni Puyat: Bawal muna ang party sa isla.

"Mahirap kasi kung magparty-party ta's mag-allow maglasing, baka di na magkaroon ng physical distancing. So dapat maalala pa rin natin na we can restart tourism na puwede naman tayo mag-enjoy pero keep in mind wearing of the mask and wash your hands," ani Puyat.

Bubuksan ang Boracay sa mga turista sa Oktubre 1.

— Ulat ni Jeff Canoy, ABS-CBN News

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/30/20/mga-tag-a-boracay-may-halong-pananabik-kaba-sa-pagbubukas-ng-isla-sa-turista>



SINA COVID-19 AT BAGYONG NIKA, OFEL AT PEPITO



September 30, 2020 @ 6:38 AM 23 hours ago

ANO kaya ang mangyayari kung magkakatotoo ang sinasabi ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration na may darating na dalawa o tatlong bagyo sa Oktubre 2020 o susunod na buwan?

Nagtatanong tayo, mga Bro, sa harap ng katotohanang inaatake tayo ng coronavirus disease-19 o COVID-19 na wala pang masasabing saktong lunas o bakuna.

Isa sa mga inaalala natin ang kalagayan na posibleng magsama-sama ang mga may COVID-19 at walang sakit dahil sa kagagawan ng mga bagyong sina Nika, Ofel at Pepito.

'Yun bang sa mga evacuation area.

TOTOONG NAGAGANAP

Hindi kaila sa lahat na kung sinabi ng PAGASA na signal number 3 hanggang super ang bagyong darating, anak ng tokwa, naririyang ang mga pwersahang pagbabakwit sa mga Pook Tipunan o evacuation area.

Delikado kasi ang mga nasa tabing ilog, mababang lugar at gilid o tuktok ng bundok.

Sa mga tabing ilog at mababang lugar, karaniwang baha ang tumatama habang landslide naman ang sa mga gilid o tuktok ng bundok.

Meron ding pinaghalong baha at landslide.

Kaya naman, pwersahan ang mga pagbabakwit at dinadala lahat sa mga ligtas na lugar at evacuation area.

PAANO ANG MAY COVID-19?

May tatlong uri ng mga taong may COVID-19.

Naririyang ang asymptomatic kung tawagin at walang palatandaan o sintomas at mild at seryoso o kritikal na parehong may sintomas.



Lahat ng ito'y nakahahawa at lahat posibleng mauwi sa asymptomatic, mild at seryosong kalagayan sa iba.

Karaniwang ang mga mild at seryoso ang isinasalang sa rapid o swab test pero hindi ang mga asymptomatic.

Pero halimbawang nasa bahay ang lahat ng ito at wala sa ospital o isolation facility ng mga lokal at pambansang pamahalaan, tiyak masasama sila sa evacuation area.

Paano na ang mahahawaan na tuluyang magkasakit o mamatay?

ANO-ANO NA ANG MGA PAGHAHANDA?

Ang katanungang ito'y para sa mga taong pamahalaan na mag-aasikaso sa mga biktima ng kalamidad na dala ng bagyo.

Ang mga taga-barangay, taga-munisipyo, taga-lungsod, taga-lalawigan at taga-rehiyon.

Meron siyempre ang mga pambansang tauhan gaya ng mga pulis, sundalo at bumbero na karaniwang kasama lagi sa mga nagsesearch and rescue dahil sila ang malalakas ang katawan at mga tamang gamit.

Nakahanda ba sila sa lahat gaya ng ligtas na pagliligtas sa iba gaya ng pagkakaroon ng mga personal protective equipment?

Paano ang mga health worker na sasalang din sa mga pagliligtas at pag-aasikado sa kalusugan ng mga evacuee?

Ang mga ospital, nakahanda ba lagi?

Saan dadalhin ang mga pamilya ng biktima ng COVID-19 at suporta sa mga ito na mapaparalisa ng kung ilang Linggo at hindi makapaghanapbuhay?

Paano ang mga hawaan na maaaring mas malala kaysa hawaan sa mga ordinaryong sitwasyon?

Ang mga pondo na gagamitin, papaano, lalo na kung iisipin na malalaking tipak ng mga ito ang nauna nang naubos laban sa nasabing sakit?

PAGKAKAISA, PAGTUTULUNGAN

Tiyak namang marami ang maliligtas sa mga kalamidad.

Mas marami karaniwan ang hindi nadadamay.

Paano kaya natin sila asahan na makatulong?

Bukod sa kusa nilang pagkilos, may mga kampanya na ba ang pamahalaan na pakilusin ang mga ito sa mga matitinding pangangailangan na maaaring hindi agad na maibigay sa oras ng mga nasa pamahalaan?



Marami kasing gustong tumulong subalit nabablangko sila ng kung ano ang higit na kailangan ng mga biktima ng kalamidad at pagkakasakit sa COVID-19.

Ang mga kinauukulan ang makapagsasabi kung ano ang mga kagyat at pinakamahahalagang gawin ng mga hindi biktima ng kalamidad at sakit.

Sa huli, paano tiyakin ng pamahalaan na hindi masisilaw sa korapsyon ang mga tatanggap ng ayuda na para sa mga biktima?

Napakalaganap kasi ng korapsyon hindi lang sa hanay ng mga nasa pamahalaan kundi maging sa mga ordinaryong mamamayan na kabig ng mga ito sa pagpapatakbo ng mga gawaing pampamahalaan.



Strong gov't needed

Published September 30, 2020, 10:25 AM

by [Hector Ronald Romero Villanueva](#)

CHAFF FROM THE GRAIN



Hector RR Villanueva

“History will absolve me.” – Fidel Castro

During these difficult times caused the coronavirus pandemic and truncated economic recession, the country needs a strong government and a firm hand on leadership.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, there were certain Asian leaders who brought their respective countries impressive industrial development and stunning growth such as Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, Mahathir Mohamed of Malaysia, Suharto of Indonesia, Monarchist Thailand, Deng Xiao Peng of China, Park Chung-Hee of South Korea, and Chiang Cheng-Kuo of Taiwan.

The only contemporary leader who failed to join their ranks was Ferdinand Marcos who achieved notoriety for massive corruption and for alleged amassing of ill-gotten wealth.

Today, we have a leader in President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, although the short fixed term forestalls and inhibits continuity of administration and fulfilment of objectives.

Austere President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, who is not enamoured with money, and abhors corruption will readily do battle against any recalcitrant tycoon or taipan, and will not hesitate to confront or remonstrate against any erring oligarch.

Truth to tell, we have a strong President, and a weak bureaucracy.

First, reforms and cleansing should be aimed at the local government units or LGUs, where the DILG is doing inadequate cleaning.

Corruption remains unabated and widespread in many barangays.

Many barangay captains get corrupted in the distribution of relief goods and financial assistance.

There seems also a systematic conspiracy against the poor in the application of laws and regulations and rampant fraudulent relationship between hospitals and PhilHealth.

Transformation and punishment should be focused at the lowest level of government, i.e., LGUs and municipal employees, where vigilance and controls are lax.

Nothing much has changed at this level.

Second, the general public has the right to know the names, qualifications, expertise, and integrity of the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and any other ad-hoc task forces formed to the combat COVID-19 pandemic at the expense of economic recovery.



It appears that the propensity to impose lockdowns, community quarantines, and stiff protocols is not sufficiently cognizant of the economic consequences and social repercussions.

At the end of the day, like any hard and fundamental reforms, it is easier to look the other way, or to procrastinate, or to ignore difficult decisions at our peril.

This country needs a strong, erudite, and incisive leader, and a proactive and unintimidated bureaucracy.

Up to today, we are still nation building.

You be the judge.



Presidential assistant for foreign affairs and protocol chief Robert Borje said President Rodrigo Duterte was “signaling that the doors of engagement (are) becoming wider now, not just with China but with other stakeholders in the South China Sea.”

AFP/File

‘Duterte UN speech opens more discussions on sea row’

[Alexis Romero](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 1, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — President Duterte’s speech before the United Nations General Assembly has opened more discussions with all parties in the South China Sea row, an official said yesterday.

Presidential assistant for foreign affairs and protocol chief Robert Borje said Duterte was “signaling that the doors of engagement (are) becoming wider now, not just with China but with other stakeholders in the South China Sea.”

“The intended outcome of the President’s speech is to signal the call for deeper engagement and broader engagement by the Philippines with all the partners around the world on several key points. It’s important to note that the South China Sea issue is one of them but also the issue of geopolitical developments in Asia-Pacific and other parts of the world,” Borje told CNN Philippines.

In 2016, an arbitral court based in The Hague declared that China’s maritime claim in the resource-rich South China Sea has no legal basis and affirmed the Philippines’ sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone. China, which claims about 90 percent of the busy sealane, has refused to recognize the ruling.

Late last month, Duterte, who has been accused of being too soft on the maritime dispute, said the Philippines would not allow efforts to undermine the arbitral ruling, saying it is “beyond compromise and beyond the reach of passing governments to dilute, diminish or abandon.”

The address drew praise even from administration critics, including former foreign secretary Albert del Rosario, who has been urging the President to rally international support to enforce the arbitral decision.

Asked whether the government would heed Del Rosario’s appeal, Borje replied: “Framing it that way, ‘heeding the call’ assumes there’s only one stakeholder that’s involved in this.”

“The fact of the matter is, the government is continuously involved in stakeholder coordination and consultation within the government of the Philippines already,” he added.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/10/01/2046348/duterte-un-speech-opens-more-discussions-sea-row>

Around 40% of the world's plant species are threatened with extinction

By Jack Guy, CNN

Published Oct 1, 2020 2:17:57 AM



Photo courtesy: Ricardo Moraes/Reuters

(CNN) -- Some 40% of the world's species of plants are threatened with extinction, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew says in a new report.

Previous research in 2016 showed that 20% of plant species were under threat, but the "State of the World's Plants and Fungi 2020" report, published Wednesday, draws on the work of 210 scientists from 42 countries to reveal the scale of the problem, using improved data and methodology.

"Deforestation rates have soared as we have cleared land to feed ever-more people, global emissions are disrupting the climate system, new pathogens threaten our crops and our health, illegal trade has eradicated entire plant populations, and non-native species are outcompeting local floras," according to the report from RBG Kew, which carries out scientific research into plants and fungi as well as running a renowned botanical garden in west London.

And this is just what we already know about. Researchers say there are huge gaps in our knowledge of plants, and more work is needed to assess the conservation status of more species.

Alexandre Antonelli, Director of Science at RBG Kew, told CNN "it's just a race against time" as we are losing plants faster than we can name them.

"A world without those 40% is not the world we know today," Antonelli said.

While we don't know what the effects of losing them would be, he added, it could be "catastrophic," as we don't understand which species play important roles in particular ecosystems.

"Everything is linked up," Antonelli said.

Among those that we know are under threat are medicinal plants, with demand for naturally derived medicines threatening their survival. Some 5,411 medicinal plants were assessed in the study, and 723 are threatened.

Researchers say increased demand for herbal medicines is being driven a greater prevalence of certain chronic illnesses and the quest for new treatments.

While some medicinal plants are suffering overexploitation, Antonelli was keen to emphasize just how much plants and fungi have to offer.

The report recommends more funding for projects to find, name and conserve species that could provide solutions to some of humanity's biggest problems, such as food insecurity and climate change, before they go extinct.



For example, humans rely on just 15 plants to serve 90% of our food needs, adding to the problem of malnutrition and leaving us vulnerable to climate change, but scientists at Kew have identified 7,039 plant species that could be used as food.

"Harnessing this basket of untapped resources for making food and production systems more diverse and resilient to change, should be our moral duty to current and future generations," said Stefano Padulosi, former Senior Scientist at the Alliance of Biodiversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, who co-authored the food chapter of the report.

The situation is similar when it comes to producing energy. As things stand, we use six crops -- maize, sugarcane, soybean, palm oil, rapeseed and wheat -- to make 80% of global biofuel.

However, researchers have identified 2,500 plants that could be used to produce energy -- potentially a major boon for the 840 million people whom they estimate currently have no access to electricity.

"International collaboration can help us to identify the plants and fungi that will make clean, sustainable energy accessible to everyone," said contributor Mary Suzan Abbo, managing director of the Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation at Makerere University, Uganda, who said the approach could be used to cut down on unsustainable use of wood and charcoal.

The report also describes a slew of species that have been identified recently, including two new relatives of cassava from Brazil, which experts say could future-proof the food crop by making it pest- or disease-resistant.

Developments like this are less likely as we lose more species, and Antonelli believes consumers need to make more sustainable choices while holding political leaders to account on policy.

"We really have to grasp the problem," he said, underlining that international cooperation will be key to reducing the threat and harnessing all that plants and fungi can do to help humanity.

This story was first published on CNN.com, ["Around 40% of the world's plant species are threatened with extinction"](https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/10/1/Around-40--of-the-world-s-plant-species-are-threatened-with-extinction.html)



Greenland's ice sheet is melting as fast as at any time in the last 12,000 years, study shows

By [Drew Kann](#), CNN

Updated 1915 GMT (0315 HKT) September 30, 2020



Meltwater carves into the ice sheet near the Sermeq Avangnardleq glacier in Greenland in August 2019.

(CNN) We've known for some time now that Greenland's ice sheet is melting [at an alarming rate](#).

[Greenland lost more ice last year than in any year on record](#), and the melting has accelerated rapidly since the 1990s.

But in the context of Earth's 4.5 billion-plus year history, melting in any one year or even a few decades amounts to the blink of an eye.

Whether the rapid disintegration we're seeing on Greenland today compares to anything that has happened in the past is a question on which the science is not completely clear.

Now, [a new study published in the journal Nature provides some answers](#), and it is not good news: The rate of melting we're seeing today already threatens to exceed anything Greenland has experienced in the last 12,000 years.

Over the last two decades, Greenland's ice sheet has melted at a rate of roughly 6,100 billion tons per century, a rate approached only during a warm period that occurred between 7,000 and 10,000 years ago.

"We know there's a lot of year-to-year variability, so what we were interested in doing is capturing the more meaningful trends over decades and maybe up to a century," said Jason Briner, a professor of geology at the University at Buffalo and the lead author of the study. "And when you do that, and think about the direction that Greenland is heading this century, it's pretty clear we're in quite anomalous times."

A chart provided by the study authors shows how rapidly Greenland's melt has accelerated, and how unprecedented it is compared to rates that occurred over the last 12,000 years.

The big difference between now and then? The influence of human activity.

The melting seen today is driven primarily by greenhouse gas emissions, whereas the warming that occurred thousands of years ago was a result of natural climate variability, Briner said.

How much Greenland melts going forward is up to us.

Under a scenario where humans continue to raise concentrations of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere, Greenland's ice loss could reach unprecedented levels, with more than 35,900 billion tons of ice potentially lost by the end of this century.



Right now, Briner says current melt rates track closely with this worst-case scenario.



Greenland's ice sheet -- which contains enough water to raise global sea levels by 24 feet -- is melting as fast as at any time in the last 12,000 years, a new study finds.

However, if the world resolves to slash emissions enough so that global warming peaks around 2050, ice losses this century could be held to 8,800 billion tons -- still a massive amount, but only enough to raise sea levels by about an inch, compared to the roughly 4 additional inches we can expect under a high-emissions scenario.

"Humanity has the knobs, and we can turn those knobs to decide what the ice sheet is going to do," he said.

What happens to Greenland's ice sheet and others around the globe will determine what the future holds for the millions of people living along the world's coasts.

In terms of its potential to raise sea levels, Greenland is the world's second most important ice sheet, behind only Antarctica.

Greenland's ice sheet contains enough water to [raise global sea levels by 24 feet](#). Over the last 26 years, melt water from Greenland has raised sea levels by 0.4 inches, and it is currently the world's biggest contributor to sea level rise.

Melting from Antarctica, on the other hand, is [currently responsible for 20-25% of global sea level rise](#), but is likely to surpass Greenland as the largest global contributor.

[Antarctica holds enough water to raise sea levels by about 200 feet](#), and scientists have recently [discovered alarming vulnerabilities in some of its most important glaciers](#).

[A report last year from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) warned that sea level rise is likely to exceed 3 feet by the end of this century if greenhouse gas emissions are not reigned in.

Rising seas are [already causing problems in many coastal areas](#). And for places like New York and Shanghai, 3 feet or more of sea level rise could spell disaster.

[Another recent study](#) found that rising seas could cost the global economy \$14.2 trillion in lost or damaged assets by the end of the century, and expose as many as 287 million people to episodic flooding, up from 171 million today.

"Clearly, the sea level rise from melting ice 12,000 years ago also affected people, but those people were much more widely spread out, and they didn't have parking garages and integrated modern water systems serving millions of people," said Richard Alley, a professor of geosciences at Penn State University who was not involved with the study published by Nature.

"These results say that human decisions about our energy systems are truly important in deciding how much sea level rise we face from melting of Greenland's ice."

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/09/30/weather/greenland-ice-sheet-melt-carbon-emissions-climate-change/index.html>



Sea level: Greenland ice loss worst in 12,000 years

Marlowe Hood, Agence France-Presse

Posted at Oct 01 2020 03:55 AM



Wildflowers bloom on a hill overlooking a fjord filled with icebergs near the south Greenland town of Narsaq July 27, 2009. *Bob Strong, Reuters/File*

PARIS - Ice loss from Greenland's massive ice sheet will cause sea levels to rise more during the 21st century than they have during any 100-year period in the last 12,000 years, even if global warming is held in check, scientists said Wednesday.

The study -- based on ice core data and models and published in the journal *Nature* -- is the first to painstakingly reconstruct Greenland's ice loss record over the entire course of the Holocene, the geological epoch that has allowed civilisation to flourish.

It found that if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, the kilometers-thick ice block will shed some 36 trillion tons of mass from 2000 to 2100, enough to lift the global ocean waterline by 10 centimeters.

Until the late 1990s, Greenland's ice sheet was roughly in balance, gaining as much mass through snowfall as it lost in summer from crumbling glaciers and melt-off.

But accelerating climate change has destroyed that balance, with the net loss flowing into the north Atlantic.

The northern hemisphere's only ice sheet ultimately holds enough frozen water to raise seas by seven meters.

If it were to pass a temperature "tipping point" into irreversible decline -- a threshold that could be as low as two degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels -- the ice sheet would likely take thousands of years to melt away, scientists say.

But even in the short term, increases in sea level measured in tens of centimeters will devastate coastal communities around the world.

Areas currently home to 300 million people -- mostly in poorer nations -- will be vulnerable by 2050 to regular flooding from storm surges, earlier research has shown.

'COURSE CORRECTION NEEDED'

Last year, Greenland cast off more than 500 billion tons of ice and meltwater -- 40 percent of total sea level rise in 2019 and the most in a single year since satellite records began in 1978.

Unless humanity dramatically ratchets down the carbon pollution caused by burning fossil fuels, such levels could become the "new normal", said lead author Jason Briner, a professor of geology at the University of Buffalo in New York.



"No matter what the future carbon emissions are going to be, the Greenland ice sheet will lose more ice this century than even during the warmest of times during the past 12,000 years," he told AFP.

"But it also gives me hope to know that humanity has a say in the future of Greenland and global sea levels."

The first single, continuous record of Greenland's ice sheet loss took five years to assemble and required the combined efforts of ice core scientists, climate modellers, remote sensing experts and palaeoclimate researchers.

The 12,000-year timeline makes it possible to better separate natural fluctuations in the ice block's mass balance with the impact of manmade climate change.

Capping global warming at under two degrees Celsius -- the cornerstone target of the 2015 Paris Agreement -- would limit Greenland's contribution to sea-level rise at about two centimeters this century, the study found.

But under any scenario, the ocean waterline will continue to rise in the 22nd century and beyond.

"No doubt we will see impactful sea level rise this century," Briner said. "But without a course correction now, the next century's sea-level rise could be life-changing for much of the globe."

Until 2000, the main driver of sea-level rise was melting glaciers and the expansion of ocean water as it warms.

But over the last two decades, the world's ice sheets atop Greenland and Antarctica have become the single largest source of sea-level rise.

The UN's climate science advisory panel, the IPCC, has forecast sea-level rise from all sources of just under a meter by century's end.



2 California wildfires ravage wine region

Published 3 hours ago on October 1, 2020 03:40 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



Fire creeps across a field towards a fire line scrapped into the earth by Fire Fighters with hand tools as the Glass Fire continues to burn in Napa Valley, California on September 29, 2020. – Two California wildfires that ravaged Napa’s famous wine region and killed three people exploded in size Tuesday as firefighters faced a weeks-long battle to contain the blazes. The wildfire remains at 0% containment since it began three days ago and now threatens more than 10,000 structures. (Photo by Samuel Corum / AFP)

CALIFORNIA (AFP) — Two California wildfires that ravaged Napa’s famous wine region and killed three people exploded in size Tuesday as firefighters faced a weeks-long battle to contain the blazes.

The so-called Glass Fire enveloping some of northern California’s world-famous vineyards has scorched 42,000 acres (17,000 hectares) and remains zero percent contained, despite the efforts of some 1,500 firefighters.

Celebrated Napa wineries such as Chateau Boswell and part of Castello di Amorosa have been lost to the flames, which reached the fringes of Santa Rosa — the largest town in neighboring Sonoma County.

Tens of thousands of residents have been evacuated from towns including the entirety of wine tourism destination Calistoga.

“It looks like a bomb went off,” 61-year-old resident Joe Ortega told the San Francisco Chronicle. “The trees go up like matches.”

Cal Fire official Jonathan Cox said 80 houses have been destroyed between the two counties.

Santa Rosa fire chief Tony Gossner said it would take weeks to bring the flames under control, warning “it’s going to be kind of long, and it’s going to be painful.”



Reptiles vulnerable to unscrupulous pet trading: study

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by [Agence France-Presse](#)

More than a third of reptile species are bought and sold online in often-unregulated international trade, researchers said Tuesday, warning of the impact on wild populations of a pet market that puts a bounty on rare and newly discovered animals.

Even endangered species and those with small habitats — such as the speckled cape tortoise and Seychelles tiger chameleon — are bought and sold in online forums, according to the new study by researchers in Thailand and China, who found that three-quarters of trade is in species not covered by international regulation.

The market primarily caters to buyers in Europe and North America — the British Federation for Herpetologists has reported that there are more pet reptiles than dogs in Britain.

But unlike most other pets, the study found that 90 percent of traded reptile species and half of traded individuals are captured from the wild.

“We did not expect that almost 40 percent of the world’s largest terrestrial vertebrate group would be in trade, that so many endangered and critically endangered species would be included,” co-author Alice Hughes of China’s Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden told AFP.

Researchers used the database of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which monitors international trade in its listed species and the Law Enforcement Management Information System (LEMIS) covering wildlife imports into the US.

The authors also searched some 25,000 web pages based on keywords in five languages and found that at least 36 percent of reptile species are being traded — or 3,943 species.

The research, published in the journal Nature Communications, identified parts of Southeast Asia as of most concern for the trade in endangered species.

In Africa, meanwhile, most countries had significant numbers of species that had not been assessed for vulnerability to extinction.

Hughes highlighted fears for newly-discovered species, with some animals appearing for sale online just months after they were described to science.

“Combined with the ease of keeping most reptiles there is the ‘cool’ angle, which is why there is a real pursuit of novelty, especially for colourful or unusual species like leaf tail geckos,” said Hughes.

She added that previous research suggested whole wild populations of reptiles were harvested using details from scientific reports.

She said that because it takes time for a species to be listed with CITES, newly described species would not necessarily have any trade protections and this creates incentives for wildlife traffickers.

– Lizard ‘laundering’ –

Richard Thomas, head of communications at the wildlife trade monitor Traffic, said scientists who describe a new species of reptile “are in the invidious position of putting a price on its head if they disclose the precise location”.



“They will doubtless be aware it will lead to a run on the species from specialist collectors and breeders, and yet the type locality is an essential piece of the scientific documentation of the species that deserves to be in the record.”

He said examples include the Roti Island Snake-necked Turtle, “decimated in the wild after its discovery”, or Borneo’s Earless Monitor-lizard, which began appearing for sale online in specialist reptile keeper groups shortly after its rediscovery.

Thomas said that the situation was not confined to reptiles, adding the discovery locations of at least two new slipper orchids in northern Vietnam have never been disclosed in the scientific literature “for their own safety”.

But he said sourcing from the wild was not always a threat to species because it can create an incentive to protect their habitat.

Hughes and colleagues proposed shifting the burden of proof to ensure trade is sustainable before it is permitted, and called for better regulation in the pet trade.

But Thomas said even the regulated trade in CITES listed reptiles is “fraught with difficulties” and open to fraud, because they do not apply to captive-bred individuals.

“Many of these species are wild caught but laundered into legal trade through deliberate misdeclaration,” he said.



France announces 'gradual' ban on wild animals in circuses

Published 11 hours ago



Hundreds of wild animals are reported to belong to French circuses

France has said it will gradually ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses as part of sweeping new animal welfare measures.

On Tuesday, Ecology Minister Barbara Pompili said, "Our attitude to wild animals has changed."

She also announced a ban on farming minks for fur and on keeping dolphins and orcas in captivity in marine parks.

The move was hailed as "an historic victory" by leading animal rights groups.

"It is time to open a new era in our relationship with these [wild] animals," Ms Pompili said during a press conference.

"It is time that our ancestral fascination with these wild beings no longer means they end up in captivity."

The minister did not outline a precise timetable for the changes but said they would be implemented "in the years to come".

"Putting a date on it does not solve all the problems," she told reporters.

Bears, tigers, lions, elephants and other wild animals would no longer be allowed in travelling circuses under the ban. But the government said the rules would not apply to zoos and other permanent attractions or shows.

In addition to the measures, and starting immediately, Ms Pompili said France's three marine aquariums would no longer be able to breed or bring in new dolphins or orcas. No new marine aquariums would be built, she said.

The minister added that the government was considering creating a sanctuary for the animals currently in captivity.

Ms Pompili said the government would offer an 8m euro (£7.3m; \$9.3m) package to help circuses and marine parks adapt to the new measures.

"We are asking [circuses] to reinvent themselves," she said. "That transition will be spread over several years because it will change the lives of many people."

But the announcement was met with anger from the circus industry.

"She didn't want to listen to us," William Kerwich, the head of the circus animal trainers' union, told AFP news agency. "Who is going to pay for the meat for the lions and tigers and the food for the elephants?"

"Circuses will have to abandon their animals and the minister will be responsible," he added.

Animal rights groups, meanwhile, praised the government's announcement.

"Champagne bottles are being uncorked here," Peta wrote on Twitter [in French]. "Thank you to all those who have helped bring this about."

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-54353907>