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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



House OKs forest use bill on final reading

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Feb 02 2021 04:02 AM

MANILA - The House of Representatives on Monday approved a bill that will further protect Philippine forests and regulates the use of forest resources.

House Bill 8179, or the Sustainable Forest Management Bill, identifies several illegal acts to ensure the protection of forests, as well as special uses of forest lands.

Among the illegal acts specified in HB 8179 are the following:

- Harvesting, gathering, collection or possession of forest resources from protection lands
- Illegal harvesting, gathering, collection or possession of forest resources as an act of economic sabotage
- Grazing livestock in forest lands without authority
- Unlawful occupation of forest lands
- Destruction of forest lands
- Unlawful operations of sawmills, wood processing plants and forest-based industries
- Non-establishment of tree parks and green spaces
- Illegal conversion of tree parks and green spaces

The bill also provides for an undersecretary for forestry. Only registered professional foresters should also be appointed for positions in the Forest Management Bureau (FMB).

HB 8179 also allows special uses of forest lands, such as converting it to a forest park, a herbal or medicinal plantation, public landing site or airstrip, farm-to-market roads, a water reservoir and for renewable energy projects, among others.

“The proposed Sustainable Forest Management Act (House Bill 8179), which got approved on 3rd and final reading today at the House, identifies at least ten specific illegal acts to make sure the forests are sustainably managed,” said Rep. Lawrence Fortun, author of the measure, said in a statement.

Read More: [House of Representatives Rep. Lawrence Fortun House Bill 8179 forest use bill Sustainable Forest Management Bill](#)



DENR chief to lead Cagayan River rehab

By Catherine Teves February 1, 2021, 7:24 pm



(PNA file photo)

MANILA – Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu is scheduled to spearhead on Tuesday (Feb. 2) the launching of rehabilitation work for northern Luzon's Cagayan River.

Aside from delivering his keynote message, Cimatu will also lead the ceremonial planting of bamboo along the Cagayan River's banks.

About 925 bamboo propagules are due for planting along the river's stretch in Barangay Bangag in Lal-lo town, the DENR said in a statement.

Barangay Bangag is among the villages in Cagayan province which reeled from flooding last year when the river's water rose and overflowed in the aftermath of Typhoon Ulysses (international name Vamco).

DENR said planting bamboo and clearing of Magapit Narrows, a constricted portion of Cagayan River, are among activities for the rehabilitation work to correspondingly help address bank erosion and facilitate water flow there.

Authorities said Cagayan River is the Philippines' largest river. It flows in a northerly direction from its headwaters in Nueva Vizcaya province to its mouth in Babuyan Channel near Cagayan's Aparri municipality.

The launch of Cagayan River's rehabilitation is among the activities of the World Wetlands Day (WWD) celebration this year.

WWD marks Ramsar Convention's adoption on Feb. 2, 1971 and aims to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands.



DENR chief to lead Cagayan River rehab

The Philippines is among the parties to Ramsar Convention, the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation on conservation and wise use of wetlands and resources.

According to the Convention, wetlands are "areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six meters."

Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), as well as Armed Forces of the Philippines, will provide dredging equipment that'll be used in clearing Magapit Narrows, DENR noted.

Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Mark Villar is scheduled to lead the launching's ceremonial dredging.

Aside from Villar and local officials, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Silvestre Bello III and Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Arthur Tugade are also expected to attend the launching.

DENR said about 48 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)-trained laborers and operators will undertake the planned dredging.

The planting operation will involve some 100 local residents hired as laborers. The residents are beneficiaries of the DOLE's Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers program.

Experts said wetlands are sources of water and food, serve as habitat and breeding ground of various species as well as provide protection from flooding by absorbing floodwater.

Wetlands also absorb and store carbon emissions linked to climate change, they noted,

This year's WWD theme is 'Wetlands and water.'

Such theme highlights wetlands' contribution to quantity and quality of freshwater worldwide.
(PNA)

Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project to start on Feb. 2

By Oliver T. Baccay Published on February 1, 2021



Director Gwendolyn Bambalan and DPWH Regional Director Loreta Malaluan personally conducted site assessment of the sandbar along the Magapit Narrows on January 26.

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan, Feb 1 (PIA) - - The restoration of the Cagayan River is set to commence tomorrow, February 2 in Lal-lo town, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) region 2 confirmed.

Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan, chair of the Build Back Better Task Force for Cagayan Valley, said the dredging of the Cagayan Valley will be led by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar.

She said there will be a ceremonial dredging at the 'Magapit Narrows' at Barangay Bangag in Lallo town and simultaneous 'Bamboo' tree planting at the same site as well as in Gattaran and Aparri towns.

The Cagayan River Restoration project is part of the Build Back Better program which was indicated under the Executive Order 120 of President Rodrigo Roa-Duterte which aims to implement post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery programs to typhoon-affected areas.

"Last year, we were hit by typhoons which caused severe flooding in most of the Cagayan region, so this is our rehabilitation and restoration program which also aims to achieve reduced impacts of disasters," Bambalan said.

She said there are six key result areas (KRAs) that need to be undertaken to include Better and Resilient Infrastructure which will be headed by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) that will focus on infrastructure management, dredging and desilting, and construction of structural measures for flood control.

The second KRA is focused on delineation of areas that are prone to climate-related hazards, relocation of affected families and construction of evacuation facilities; the third which is on Improved Systems and Essential Service will ensure adequacy of key lifelines such as basic needs,



Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project to start on Feb. 2

medical services electricity, road lines, sewers, telecommunication and transportation that can be mobilized immediately after the typhoon.

The fourth KRA is focused on sustainable livelihood programs, the fifth will be focused on improved land-use planning and enforcement of building codes, while the last KRA is on intensive watershed management.

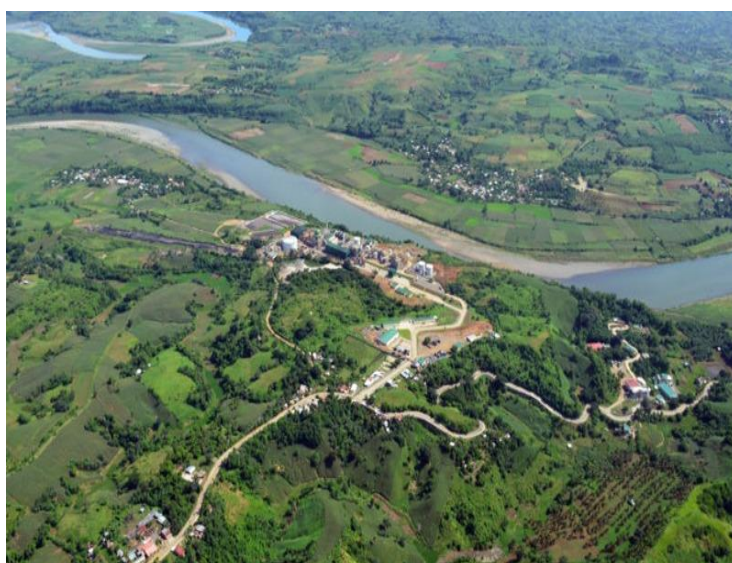
Bambalan further explained that dredging is one of the strategies in the restoration of the Cagayan River as studies revealed that the river beds are already heavily silted.

"We also have identified some areas to be planted with bamboos as protection of the riverbanks against erosions and in areas that are no longer suitable for planting, there will be infrastructures to be constructed," Bambalan said.

She further cleared that the intention of the dredging activity is to deepen, widen as well as protect the Cagayan river from further destruction and not mining.

However, she said that if there will be mineral contents to be assessed in the materials to be dredged, the dredging companies will pay the corresponding taxes due to the government.
(MDCT/OTB/PIA 2-Cagayan)

Ceremonial dredging, pagtatanim ng Bamboo sa Cagayan River sisimulan na ng DENR



February 1, 2021 @ 7:46 PM 9 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang muling buhayin ang Cagayan River magsasagawa ng ceremonial dredging at pagtatanim ng Bamboo sa Cagayan river ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) upang muling ibalik at mabuhay ang ilog bukas ng umaga Pebrero 2, 2021 (Martes).

Ayon sa DENR isasagawa ang ceremonial dredging at pagtatanim ng Bamboo project sa Lal-lo, Cagayan bukas Martes (Pebrero 2, 2021) dakong alas 9:15 ng umaga.

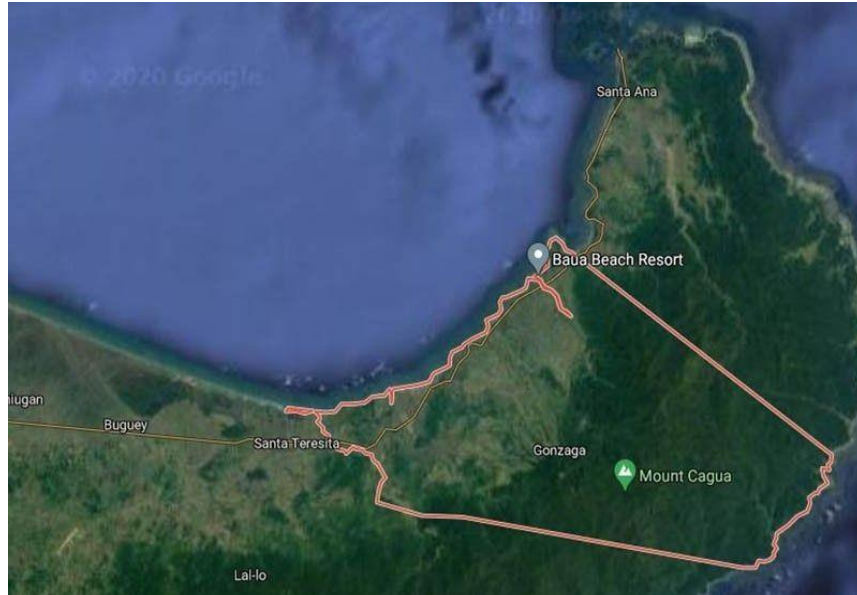
Pangungunahan ni Environment Secretary and Task Force Build Back Better (TFBBB) chair Roy A. Cimatu ang proyekto para muling buhayin ang Cagayan River.

Sinabi ng DENR na makikiisa kay Sec.Cimatu sa naturang proyekto sina Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary at TFBBB co-chair Mark A. Villar, Labor Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III, Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade, at Local Government officials ng Cagayan Valley.

Magugunitang noong kasagsagan ng mga bagyo nitong nakalipas na taon isa ang lalawigan ng Cagayan ang hinagupit ng tubig baha dahil sa pag-apaw ng Cagayan river.

At isa sa proyekto upang hindi na maulit ang pagbaha sa naturang lalawigan dahil sa pag-apaw ng Cagayan river ay ang dredging at pagtatanim ng bamboo sa paligid ng ilog. **Santi Celario**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/ceremonial-dredging-pagtatanim-ng-bamboo-sa-cagayan-river-sisimulan-na-ng-denr/>



Screengrab from Google Maps shows Gonzaga town in Cagayan.
Google Maps

Groups oppose 'destructive' offshore mining project in Cagayan

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - February 1, 2021 - 10:15am

MANILA, Philippines — The large-scale offshore magnetite mining in Cagayan province could harm marine life and ecosystems in the area and affect fishers' access to their fishing grounds, organizations opposing the project said.

In a letter sent to Department of Environment and Natural Resources officials, local government officials, and lawmakers, 74 groups said the activity is “destructive and has irreversible negative impact” to marine ecosystems.

Whales, dugongs in danger

The groups stressed the project will potentially impact the ecosystems in the Palaui Island Protected Landscape and Seacape, including 50 hectares of corals and seagrass beds that are important habitats for the critically endangered dugong.

They also said the activity poses hazards to marine mammals since the proposed site is the only known breeding area for humpback whales in the Philippines. The area is also part of the Babuyan Marine Corridor, a key biodiversity area and a priority conservation site.

“Noise, oil and water pollution that would emanate from the mining activities would affect the marine mammals in the area and their habitat, directly or indirectly, causing them to be disturbed or injured and might even lead to their death,” the groups said in a position paper.

“The increase in turbidity may result in disturbances in spawning of the marine mammals’ prey items. The eggs and larvae of their prey are at high risk from entrainment, decreasing prey availability for the marine mammals,” they added.



Groups oppose 'destructive' offshore mining project in Cagayan

According to the [project fact sheet](#) uploaded on the website of DENR's Environmental Management Bureau, the extraction process through siphon vessel with magnetic separator, poses "no hazard at all and no social complication as the siphon vessel is stationed at the ocean far from the shore."

Fisherfolk access

The project of JDVC Resources Corp. is said to be the first massive offshore magnetite mining in the Philippines. The firm is allowed to mine within an area of 1,092.59 hectares located 14 kilometers offshore from the town of Gonzaga.

The DENR greenlighted the project last year, according to reports.

"This impacts livelihood of fisherfolk and possible violation of their constitutionally guaranteed preferential right to access their fishing grounds," the groups said.

They also said the siphoning activity and the return of discarded sand from mining magnetite may cause hypersedimentation. This may result in disturbance to benthic organisms in sandy areas, which will affect fishers and people relying on marine resources in the area.

But the project's fact sheet said the siphoning action does not produce significant sea bottom topography disturbances.

The organizations also pointed out that the project may potentially add to reported disputes over the industry between the New People's Army and illegal foreign companies.

Possible violations

According to the groups, the "project goes against the precautionary principle for the protection of the environment, enforcement of our laws and our international commitments."

Its impacts may violate Presidential Decree 979, which prohibits the dumping of any kind of wastes from vessels arising from exploitation of seabed mineral resources, they said

They added that under the Fisheries Code, aquatic pollution through dumping of substances is unlawful. The Clean Water Act also prohibits the discharge of any kind of material that could cause water pollution or impede natural flow in the body of water.

"We demand transparency and for government to make available to the public the documents required under environmental impact assessment laws and regulations and public consultation compliance," the organizations said.

"We demand science-based and sustainable use of our natural resources... We demand compliance to laws and international commitment for sustainable development. We demand that peoples' voices be heard, especially the affected communities who will bear the impacts of this project," they added.

The signatories include Oceana, Alyansa Tigil Mina, Greenpeace Philippines, Philippine Movement for Climate Justice and Large Marine Vertebrates Research Institute Philippines.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/02/01/2074538/groups-oppose-destructive-offshore-mining-project-cagayan>



Groups slam magnetite mining project in Cagayan

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

February 2, 2021

Over 70 civil-society organizations and groups advocating ocean conservation have expressed opposition to the proposed offshore mining by JDVC Resources Corp. in Cagayan province.

In a position paper circulated to the media, the position paper's signatories who call themselves "custodian of the Philippine seas" listed a number of reasons why offshore mining should not be allowed.

An offshore mining, particularly targeting magnetite sand or black sand in Cagayan, pose serious geologic hazards, they argued.

The groups were referring to the company's approved permit for the large-scale mining of magnetite which it intends to export.

In a telephone interview on Monday, Jun Herrera, JDVC Resources Corp., and APL Consultant said environmental concerns raised by various quarters have been addressed by the company.

"We've already answered queries concerning their environmental concerns," he said.

A January 29, 2021 statement issued by the JDVC and APL also quoted Herrera as stating that commercial operations of the project will push through this month as the first newly built deep-sea mining vessel capable of commercial extraction, testing, and sampling, and production of magnetite iron, has arrived in the country. Three more are expected to arrive this year.

APL insisted there's no basis on the complaint from residents of Ballesteros, Cagayan, as well as allegations that the operation will cause damage to coral beds.

"We won't be even mining in the waters. In the first place, our mining operation will be in the waters of Buguey and Gonzaga towns, and at a distance of over 14 kilometers. That's more than two horizon lengths away from the shoreline," Herrera was quoted as saying in the statement.

To be jointly undertaken by JDVC Resources Corp, a subsidiary of publicly listed company, Apollo Global Capital and food entrepreneur Frank Lao of the Choi Garden restaurant group, the project aims to extract an estimated 512 million metric tons of magnetite and other minerals. It has a mine life of up to 47 years, according to a JDVC in a statement on December 7, 2020.

Declared as the largest offshore mining project to date in the Philippines, the company said in a statement and news reports posted in its web site that JDVC's extraction of iron ores would require siphon vessels with magnetic separator and processing apparatuses on board which would not cause any hazard to the environment.

Investments for the project estimated to reach P720 million



Magnetite mining project in Cagayan to start soon

By [VG Cabuag](#)

February 2, 2021



A unit of Apollo Global Capital Inc. on Monday said it has already spent some P900 million to jumpstart the commercial operations of the country's first offshore magnetite iron mining in Cagayan by the end of the month.

The said project will be carried out by JDVC Resources Corp., Jun Herrera, the company's mining consultant said.

He said the newly built deep sea mining vessel has arrived in Cagayan and is currently taking shelter due to strong waves. It will start its mining operations as soon as the ocean swell subsides, possibly before end of the month.

"The first vessel has arrived and three more vessels are expected to arrive this year," Herrera said.

The vessel is capable of commercial extraction, testing and sampling and production of magnetite iron.

The company said it has assured the government that there will be minimal impact on the sea environment as studies conducted by a Singapore-based survey company showed that there was no coral or aquamarine life within the mining area, which is 150 meters below sea level. ([See related story "Groups oppose offshore magnetite mining project in Cagayan province."](#))

"We can only go down to 150 meters with current technology. From the experience of countries like Indonesia, Japan and New Zealand, magnetite iron is known to be toxic to corals, fish and other aquamarine life," Apollo Global said, adding that the study did not look at magnetite iron reserves in the area.

Herrera said the mining project, located in the municipalities of Aparri, Buguey and Gonzaga, in Cagayan province is proceeding as planned since it has already received funding from the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).



Magnetite mining project in Cagayan to start soon

DBP granted an \$8-million credit line for the JDVC magnetite iron mining project, which it has proven to the bank that the project is environmentally safe, Herrera said.

He said the company still has to draw from the said credit line and the project is internally funded by its shareholders.

Apollo Global, formerly Yehey! Corp, was incorporated on June 10, 1998 at the height of the technology bubble that also burst in the US in the late 90s.

In 2014, Vantage Equities Inc. owned is 66.95 percent of Apollo Global.

On October 15, 2015, Yehey ceased to be a majority-owned subsidiary of Vantage when the company sold its shares to a group of individual shareholders.

In October 2016, the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the company's name change as it wound down its digital marketing operations and the shift in primary purpose to that of a holding company.



DENR reports completion of 1,300 river cleanup drives in Luzon since Jan. 2019

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

February 2, 2021

Despite the community quarantines, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) never ceased to conduct cleanup drives in various rivers and coastal areas in Central Luzon.

In Bulacan alone, more than 1,300 cleanup drives were conducted since the launch of “Battle for Manila Bay” on January 27, 2019, and that the effort will be further intensified this year, officials of the DENR Central Luzon Office and Bulacan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office said in a news statement.

Bulacan PENRO Emelita Lingat said the river cleanup has resulted in the collection of over 357,000 tons solid waste and was actively participated in by more than 6,000 volunteers from various locality in the province.

“We are serious with our program to clean Manila Bay portion in Bulacan. And we are now seeing the results of our collaborative efforts with local governments and communities, but still we need to do more to end this battle,” she explained.

The DENR Bulacan has also recovered a total of 30 kilometers of easement or riverbank along the towns of Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando river system as an important strategy to clean Manila Bay and free from illegal structures.

“We need to protect our river easement from littering and illegal construction of structures to ensure the cleanliness of Manila Bay,” she added.

Five floating trash traps measuring 120 linear meters were also installed in the five barangays of Meycauayan town to prevent solid waste from reaching the shoreline of Manila Bay.

This was collected daily and monitored by 100 estero rangers hired by the DENR to help in the cleanup and rehabilitation and monitoring of rivers.

Removal of submerged solid wastes in Meycauayan-Obando river system were also conducted through mechanized cleanup or using back-hoe, the process also known as “grubbing.”

A total of 2,160 cubic meters of mixed silt and trash were grubbed, Lingat said, adding that this process can facilitate the faster cleaning of rivers and tributaries especially those heavily polluted.

Paquito Moreno Jr., executive director of DENR in Central Luzon, said the DENR is set to conduct more river and coastal cleanups, delineation and recovery of river easement areas, grubbing, installation of floating trash traps, information, education and communication (IEC) campaign and resettlement of informal settlers this year in the Manila Bay areas in Region 3 covering Pampanga, Bulacan, Bataan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

He also appealed to the public and local government units to support the government initiatives in saving Manila Bay and encouraged them to strictly practice the proper solid waste management.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/02/02/denr-reports-completion-of-1300-river-cleanup-drives-in-luzon-since-jan-2019/>



DENR conducts 1,300 cleanup drives to save Manila Bay

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

February 01, 2021

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has conducted more than 1,300 cleanup drives on various rivers and coastal areas in Bulacan since Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu launched the #BattleForManilaBay in 2019.

Bulacan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (Penro) Emelita Lingat said the river cleanup has resulted in the collection of over 357,000 tons solid waste and was actively participated in by more than 6,000 volunteers from various locality in the province.

"We are serious with our program to clean Manila Bay portion in Bulacan. And we are now seeing the results of our collaborative efforts with local governments and communities, but still we need to do more to end this battle," she said.

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According to Paquito Moren, Jr., executive director of DENR in Central Luzon, the DENR is set to conduct more river and coastal cleanups, delineation and recovery of river easement areas, grubbing, installation of floating trash traps, information, education and communication (IEC) campaign and resettlement of informal settlers this year in the Manila Bay areas in Central Luzon covering Pampanga, Bulacan, Bataan Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

He also appealed to the public and local government units to support the government initiatives in saving Manila Bay and encouraged them to strictly practice the proper solid waste management.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1884556/Pampanga/Local-News/DENR-conducts-1300-cleanup-drives-to-save-Manila-Bay>



Private enterprise must help clean up Metro rivers

February 1, 2021 | Filed under: [Editorial,Opinion](#) | Posted by: [Tempo Desk](#)



MANILA Water announced last week that it has begun its massive cleanup of the San Juan River under an agreement with the national government and the three local government units of San Juan, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City.

We welcome any effort to clean up the many rivers and streams flowing from all parts of Metro Manila, many of them into the Pasig River and finally into Manila Bay. The San Juan River and its tributaries are said to be one of the most polluted rivers in the East Zone of Metro Manila.

Manila Water President and CEO Jose Rene Almendras said that as part of the total effort, the company will activate a flow improvement project at Ermitanyo Creek to ensure that water will flow all year round during the dry season. The Ermitanyo is one of four creeks draining into the San Juan River, the others being Maytunas, Buhangin, and Buayang Bato.

The company also plans a river waste treatment project to cut down the bacteria content of the river, regular desludging, and periodic water quality monitoring. These engineering approaches will have to be combined with social approaches, to ensure community participation in the program.

Any project to clean up any part of the Metro Manila river system is welcome, but the problems are tremendous. Pollution of the entire Metro Manila river system has been going on for decades. All these many years, people from the provinces have been trooping into Manila in search of a better life, settling along the hundreds of streams many of which flow into the Pasig River.





Private enterprise must help clean up Metro rivers

Households and factories poured their wastes, including their sewage, into the streams. Fish began to disappear in the 1930s, Swimming was banned in the 1980s. The Pasig River was declared biologically dead in the 1990s.

In 2009, the Supreme Court stepped into the problem, directing the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and 12 other government agencies to clean up Manila Bay. By this time, the problem may have grown beyond any cleanup and rehabilitation project.

The Manila Water project to clean up the San Juan River focuses on one small part of Metro Manila. There are 20 esteros and creeks in North Metro Manila and 22 in South Metro Manila. Some of them dump water into Laguna de Bay in the east, but most flow west into Manila Bay.

Over the years, many of the streams and creeks and esteros were cleaned up of unsightly floating garbage from kitchens, but the pollution from untreated sewage – the kind that flows from millions of toilets – has remained.

We welcome the Manila Water project for the San Juan River in the East Zone of Metro Manila. Every effort helps, so big is the overall problem. But we hope other private enterprises with an interest in clean water, clean air, clean surroundings, will seek to tie up with the DENR to clean up the many other areas of Metro Manila that are now so helplessly polluted.



Eco groups to govt: Implement policy vs non-environmentally acceptable products

Published February 1, 2021, 1:11 PM

[by Jhon Aldrin Casinas](#)

Two environmental groups called on the government Monday to implement a “long overdue” policy that could help propel the country into a zero-waste and toxic-free circular economy.

The EcoWaste Coalition and Oceana Philippines asked the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) to release the list of non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAPs) for prohibition as required under Section 29 of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (R.A. 9003).

In a statement, the environmental groups said list has long been overdue and should have been released by the commission, a year after the R.A. No. 9003 took effect in 2001.

“After two decades, the NSWMC has yet to produce the list of NEAP for phase-out and eventual elimination,” said EcoWaste Coalition National Coordinator Aileen Lucero

“It’s time for the commission to work doubly hard in order to get a game-changing list out by this year to reduce both the volume and toxicity of our discards,” she added.

The groups also pushed for the implementation of Section 30 of RA No. 9003, which prohibits the sale or conveyance of products placed, wrapped or packaged in non-environmentally acceptable packaging materials.

“The commission’s inability to fast track the formulation of such list has badly affected the efforts of local government units, communities and households to achieve zero waste with the unrestrained production, distribution, consumption and disposal of products and packaging materials that are too difficult to recycle due to their chemical composition,” said Lucero.

Atty. Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Vice-President of Oceana Philippines, likewise scored the NSWMC for failing to prioritize the formulation of the NEAP list, saying that the country’s waste products are also contributing to the contamination of the world’s oceans.

“We strongly urge the NSWMC to draw up the long-overdue list of products that are ‘unsafe in production, use, post-consumer use, or that produce or release harmful by-products when discarded,’ with single-use plastics (SUPs) on top of the list,” Ramos said in the same statement.

“The effect would be a tremendous reduction at the source of plastic pollution as production, use and trade of SUPs as a NEAP will be prohibited, with a hefty fine and other sanctions,” she noted.

According to the groups, the adoption of the NEAP list and its implementation will create investments in product redesigns and delivery systems that will ultimately reduce, if not eradicate, the use of toxic chemical additives and waste generation.



Eco groups to govt: Implement policy vs non-environmentally acceptable products

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) conducted a virtual public consultation last January 22 to identify single-use plastic items that will be included in the NEAP list.

The virtual consultation was participated in by 169 representatives from local government units, private sector, and key stakeholders from civil society groups, including EcoWaste Coalition and Oceana Philippines.



Implementasyon ng polisiya vs non-environmentally acceptable products inihirit



February 1, 2021 @ 5:06 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Inihirit ng dalawang environmental groups sa pamahalaan na ipatupad na ang “long overdue” polisiya sa non-environmentally acceptable products.

Humiling ang EcoWaste Coalition at Oceana Philippines sa National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) na ilabas na ang listahan ng non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAPs) na ipagpapabawal sa ilalim ng Section 29 ng Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (R.A. 9003).

“After two decades, the NSWMC has yet to produce the list of NEAP for phase-out and eventual elimination,” ayon sa EcoWaste Coalition National Coordinator Aileen Lucero.

“It’s time for the commission to work doubly hard in order to get a game-changing list out by this year to reduce both the volume and toxicity of our discards,” dagdag nito.

Isinusulong din ng mga ito ang pagpapatupad ng Section 30 ng RA No. 9003 na magbabawal sa pagbebenta o pagpapadala ng mga produktong nakalagay o nakabalot sa non-environmentally acceptable packaging materials.

“The commission’s inability to fast track the formulation of such list has badly affected the efforts of local government units, communities and households to achieve zero waste with the unrestrained production, distribution, consumption and disposal of products and packaging materials that are too difficult to recycle due to their chemical composition,” saad ni Lucero.

Samantala, ayon naman ni Atty. Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Vice-President of Oceana Philippines na hindi pinrayoridad NSWMC ang pagbuo ng NEAP list.



Implementasyon ng polisiya vs non-environmentally acceptable products inihirit

“We strongly urge the NSWMC to draw up the long-overdue list of products that are ‘unsafe in production, use, post-consumer use, or that produce or release harmful by-products when discarded,’ with single-use plastics (SUPs) on top of the list,” pahayag nito.

“The effect would be a tremendous reduction at the source of plastic pollution as production, use and trade of SUPs as a NEAP will be prohibited, with a hefty fine and other sanctions,” aniya pa.

Anil ana ang NEAP list at implementasyon nito ang gagawa ng pamumuhunan sa product redesigns at delivery systems na babawas sa paggamit ng toxic chemical additives at waste generation.

Nagsagawa na ng virtual public consultation ang Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) nitong Enero 22 upang tukuyin ang mga single-use plastic items na isasama sa NEAP list. *RNT/ELM*

Miners allowed to use dev't, safety funds to buy vaccines

February 1, 2021 | 7:41 pm



THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said that it authorized miners to repurpose funds intended for social development, safety and health to procure vaccines for their host communities.

The authorization covers the funds miners are required to set aside by law for social development and management programs (SDMPs), and safety and health programs (SHPs) for the procurement of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccines.

According to the revised rules and regulations implementing the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, the SDMP must be geared towards the “sustained improvement in the living standards of host and neighboring communities.”

“The mining contractor or permit holder shall realign the 2021 funds and the said procurement shall be chargeable against the development of host and neighboring communities of the SDMP for the impact barangays or municipalities, and health and control services of the SHP for employees or workers,” MGB said in a memorandum issued Friday.

MGB Acting Director Wilfredo G. Moncano said in a Viber message Monday that “the funds coming from a portion of the annual budget of the SDMP are to be used in procuring vaccines for non-employees of the mining companies, but are residents of the host and neighboring community, while the funds coming from the SHP are meant to be used for buying vaccines for mining employees.”

In its memorandum, the bureau said it authorized the realignment of SDMP and SHP funds “in the interest of public service and to help fight against COVID-19.” It said that its pronouncement was in line with the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, its revised implementing rules and regulations, and mine safety and health standards.

The MGB added that the miners that buy vaccines with the realigned funds must follow the guidelines and procedures of the Department of Health and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases.



Miners allowed to use dev't, safety funds to buy vaccines

The MGB also required firms to disclose the use of the realigned funds in their quarterly reports.

“The implementation of this memorandum shall be included in the quarterly accomplishment reports to be submitted by mining companies subject to monitoring of the MGB Regional Office concerned,” the MGB said.

Asked about his estimate of the total funds that could be rechanneled into COVID-19 vaccine efforts, Mr. Moncano provided no figures but estimated that miners could end up reallocating up to 75% of the available funds.

“How much percentage from the SDMP and SHP will depend on how large is the SDMP but with a cap of 75% of it, although it is not mentioned in the guidelines,” he told *BusinessWorld*.

He added that the miners will still need to consult with their respective communities during the realignment of funds as the latter may have already been included in the local government unit’s vaccine procurement plan.

In November, the MGB released a memorandum that allowed miners to reallocate unused funds from their SDMPs to assist typhoon victims in their respective host and neighboring communities.

— **Angelica Y. Yang**



2021 Waterbird Census in Manila Bay shows 20% decline over 2 years



BULACAN. Gathering of thousands of globally threatened Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosalimosa*) at the Pamarawan wetlands, a few kilometers from the new Manila International Airport in Bulacan. (PR/Mads Bajarias)

February 01, 2021

IN TIME for World Wetlands Day on February 2, celebrated to raise global awareness about the high importance of wetlands for people and planet, results on the annual Asian Waterbird Census in Manila Bay were released.

The January 2021 count tallied 110,000 waterbirds, and of the 60 species observed, over two-thirds are migratory birds from as far away as Siberia and Alaska. All are dependent on wetlands for their survival. Flagged was a continued decline of nearly 20 percent since 2019, or a shortfall of 25,000 birds over just two years.

The Wild Bird Club of the Philippines (WBCP), in collaboration with Wetlands International Philippines Program and IUCN Netherlands Committee, assisted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Luzon, Calabarzon and National Capital Region in the Asian Waterbird Census in Manila Bay. This was part of the International Waterbird Count, which Wetlands International coordinates globally in January every year.

First organized in 1967, the census covers over a hundred countries, making it one of the largest and longest-running biodiversity monitoring programs in the world.

The counts included the Provinces of Bataan (Balanga), Pampanga (Pasac and Pampanga River), Bulacan (the coastal wetlands of Sta. Cruz, Pamarawan, Caliligawan, Bambang, and Taliptip), Cavite (Imus River mouth and Noveleta), and the National Capital Region-NCR (Valenzuela fishponds, Tanza mudflats and Parañaque Wetlands Park).

A bird count was also undertaken in Candaba Marsh.



2021 Waterbird Census in Manila Bay shows 20% decline over 2 years

Manila Bay, a clear candidate for protection of waterbirds but less than 1% is protected

Of the 60 species listed in the Manila Bay census, no less than 15 species were present in internationally important numbers. Recorded onsite were 30,000 individuals or almost 30 percent of the Whiskered Terns breeding in Chinese wetlands; and around 7,000 or seven percent of the Pacific Golden Plovers, 6,000 or five percent Kentish Plovers, and nearly 6,000 or six percent Marsh Sandpipers of their respective populations found in East Asia.

"Manila Bay hosts the highest number of waterbirds of any Philippine wetlands yet it has less than 200 hectares protected and with a mountain of threats to its habitats and birds," said Arne Jensen, Wetlands International Associate Expert and WBCP records committee chair.

"With 87 percent or about 95,000 waterbirds present in Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan, it would not be an exaggeration to say North Manila Bay is one of the last Philippine wetlands refuge. At the shallow coastal waters, tidal flats and sandbars to man-made salt beds and fishponds, about 37,000 shorebirds and 37,000 terns were counted together with 23,000 gulls and 15,000 egrets. Coastal fisherfolk and waterbirds alike all depend on the different types of wetlands found in the Bay," said Jensen.

With habitat loss, waterbird populations decline annually

The recorded decline in number of waterbirds since 2019 is not evenly distributed across the provinces. Most severe is the decline of long-distance shorebirds in Bulacan and gulls in the Pampanga rivers. These mirror reductions in tidal flats as their feeding habitats.

"In contrast, there was an increase in waterbird presence by more than 100 percent representing just about 12,000 birds in NCR, mostly at the tidal mudflats in Tanza, Navotas. However, these are now being reclaimed, signaling what is to come in Bulacan, Cavite and other areas," said Jensen.

Without protection, further biodiversity loss can be projected in Manila Bay

Many of the waterbirds in Manila Bay are threatened as their populations decline annually due to loss of their feeding wetland habitats across their flyway.

"In Manila Bay in the past four years alone, four of its just 10 critical wetland sites of national or international importance are being lost due to development such as airport development, reclamation and, increasingly, removal of mudflats and shallow areas as dredging has now become commercialized," said Mike Lu, President of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines.

"The massive reclamation masterplans of the Philippine Reclamation Authority, and the approach of the Department of Public Works and Highways to flood mitigation that includes coastal embankment involving the provinces from Bataan to Cavite would destroy the whole ecosystem of



2021 Waterbird Census in Manila Bay shows 20% decline over 2 years

Manila Bay. Reclamation should be stopped and the PRA and DPWH be reorganized for restoration and climate change adaptation to support global and national policies to implement nature-based solutions that maintain the wild birds habitats while also protecting people," added Lu.

More species are being added to the threatened list, meanwhile. In Manila Bay, 14 species are now either near threatened or directly threatened with extinction, lost forever in the world. The most threatened species include the iconic Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*), Chinese Egret (*Egretta eulophotes*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Asian Dowicher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*), and Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*).

Are wetlands wastelands?

According to Dr. Annadel Cabanban, head of Wetlands International Philippines, wetlands have traditionally been viewed as wastelands or sick lands, little more than breeding grounds for mosquitoes, and available for coastal development and land reclamation.

"This misperception on the function of wetlands has dramatically reduced the amount and quality of habitat available to waterbirds. As the demand for water, land and food increases, wetlands have become the ecosystem most in decline in the world and the decline is worst in Asia. Counting waterbirds allows us to see whether a wetland is under threat," said Cabanban.

"Waterbird monitoring is the foundation for managing and understanding wetlands. It has helped species and populations that were once in serious decline make remarkable recoveries in other countries, but not yet in the Philippines -- that challenge and opportunity remain, to act given the inseparable connection of wetlands, water, and our wellbeing," said Jensen. (PR)



DENR urged to find out purpose of Chinese dredging vessels in PH

By Azer Parrocha February 1, 2021, 7:09 pm



MANILA – Malacañang on Monday urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to shed light on the reason why Chinese dredging vessels were reportedly conducting illegal dredging activities in the country.

This, after the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) seized a Chinese dredger for "illegal and unauthorized presence" about 13 kilometers southwest off Orion Point in Bataan province.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque wondered whether the Chinese dredger was given permission to operate by local government units, saying it would not have come to Philippine waters if it has no purpose.

"Ang tanong: saan ginagamit itong mga dredging vessels na ito? Baka naman iyan ay ginagamit dito sa ilang mga lugar sa Pilipinas na may pagpayag ng mga lokal na pamahalaan (The question is: what were these dredging vessels used for? Perhaps it was used in some areas in the country with the approval of local government units)?" he said.

He wondered whether the Chinese dredger was used for supposed black sand operations since it was found near Orion in Zambales.

"So ang nais kong malaman: Ginagamit ba ito para sa black sand operation diyan sa mga karatig bayan ng Bataan at sinong nagbibigay permiso rito (I want to know, is this used for black sand operation in places near Bataan and who gave permission)?" he added.

Roque asked the DENR to find out whether the Chinese dredger is being used to get natural resources and bring them to other countries.

"Ibig sabihin po, hindi naman pupunta iyan dito kung walang gumagamit niyan at ang nais kong malaman - sana po mabigyan ng kasagutan ng DENR - ay ginagamit ba itong mga Chinese dredging vessels na ito para kunin iyong tanging yaman ng Pilipinas at ipadala sa ibang bansa (It means, it won't go here if it's not being used. I want to know, and I hope the DENR will answer,



DENR urged to find out purpose of Chinese dredging vessels in PH

are these Chinese dredging vessels used to get the Philippines' natural resources to be brought in other countries)?" he said.

Propaganda

Roque dismissed as "propaganda" claims that the military has been too focused on red-tagging to guard Philippine waters versus threats posed by China.

"Wala pong katuturan iyan, iyan na po iyong propaganda na sinasabi ni Vice President Leni [Robredo] (That has no basis, that's just propaganda being spread by Vice President Leni)," he said, after Robredo said the government should not use its Covid-19 response as propaganda, but a way to resolve issues sooner.

He pointed out that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is composed of several service branches that play different roles, so it is impossible to miss out on any form of aggression in the West Philippine Sea.

"Ang ating depensa po ng teritoryo primarily Philippine Navy at Coast Guard. Iyong mga nagsasalita laban sa pulahan ito po iyong ELCAC [National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict] na tinatawag na kabahagi po ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (The Philippine Navy and the Coast Guard are primarily in charge of defending our territory. Those speaking against the Reds are members of the ELCAC which is also part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines)," he said.

Since authorities have already seized the dredger, Roque said it was wrong to assume that the country's military is sleeping on the job.

"Hindi po totoo na obsessed sila sa isa at napapabayaan na iyong isa. Eh nahuli nga po iyong dredging vessel, ano ba kayo; kung natutulog sa pansitan ang ating Hukbong Sandatahan eh nakalusot iyang dredging vessel na iyan. The fact na nahuli belies the propaganda (It's not true that they're obsessed with one aspect that's why they were negligent in other matters. The dredging vessel was seized, if our Armed Forces was sleeping on the job, then they would have missed it)," he said. (PNA)



Roque to DENR: Identify purpose of Chinese dredging vessels in PH

By [Glee Jalea, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Feb 1, 2021 5:16:47 PM



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque calls on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to look into the "illegal activities" of Chinese dredging vessels in Philippine territory. FILE PHOTO

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, February 1) — Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque on Monday called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to identify the purpose of Chinese dredging vessels reportedly conducting illegal activities in the country.

"Nais kong malaman, sana magbigay kasagutan ang DENR, eh ginagamit ba itong Chinese dredging vessels na ito para kunin iyong tanging yaman ng Pilipinas at ipadala sa ibang bansa?" he said in his briefing.

[Translation: I want to know, I hope the DENR has answers, are these dredging vessels being used to get natural resources from the Philippines and transport them to other countries?]

This comes after reports the Philippine Coast Guard and the Bureau of Customs caught a Chinese dredger, identified as MV Zhonhai 68, for its illegal presence off Orion Point in Bataan last week.

"Malapit po iyan sa lugar na kinukuhaan ng black sand diyan sa Zambales. Nais po nating malaman, ginagamit po ba ito sa mga black sand operation sa mga karatig-bansa ng Bataan at sino ang nagbibigay permiso dito?" Roque said.

[Translation: That is near an area where black sand is usually sourced in Zambales. We want to know, is this (vessel) being used for black sand operations by a nearby country in Bataan, and who gave it permission?]

House probe sought



Roque to DENR: Identify purpose of Chinese dredging vessels in PH

The Makabayan bloc on Monday also filed House Resolution 1258, calling on the Committee on Natural Resources to investigate the proliferation of Chinese dredging ships conducting illegal activities in the Philippines.

The resolution noted that illegal Chinese dredging activities have long been reported in the country since 2017, and there are even reports of dredged materials allegedly "being used in the creation of artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea."

"It is the duty of Congress to ensure the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity are intact, local and international laws be honored and recognized, and more importantly, the safety and economic rights of the people are protected and ensured," the resolution read.



Roque pinatutukoy sa DENR ang pagkakaroon ng Chinese dredging vessels sa Pinas



February 1, 2021 @ 7:19 PM 11 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Pinatutukoy ni Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang pagkakaroon ng Chinese dredging vessels na iligal umano ang aktibidad sa Pilipinas.

“Nais kong malaman, sana magbigay kasagutan ang DENR, eh ginagamit ba itong Chinese dredging vessels na ito para kunin iyong tanging yaman ng Pilipinas at ipadala sa ibang bansa?” giit ni Roque sa isang briefing.

“Malapit po iyan sa lugar na kinukuhaan ng black sand diyan sa Zambales. Nais po nating malaman, ginagamit po ba ito sa mga black sand operation sa mga karatig-bansa ng Bataan at sino ang nagbibigay permiso dito?” lahad pa nito.

Ito ay matapos mahuli ng Philippine Coast Guard at ng Bureau of Customs ang Chinese dredger na MV Zhonhai 68 sa Orion Point sa Bataan nitong nakaraang linggo.

Inihain naman ng Makabayan bloc sa Kamara ang isang resolusyong maiimbestiga sa presensya ng Chinese dredging vessels sa karagatan ng bansa. *RNT/ELM*

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/roque-pinatutukoy-sa-denr-ang-pagkakaroon-ng-chinese-dredging-vessels-sa-pinas/>



Palace puts DENR to task for presence of Chinese vessel in local waters

Published February 1, 2021, 2:11 PM

by [Genalyn Kabiling](#)

Malacañang is demanding answers from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) about the presence of a Chinese dredging vessel in the country's waters.



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque Jr.
(YANCY LIM / PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said they want to know who allowed the foreign vessel to operate in the country and if it was involved in black sand mining.

“Mga kababayan ang tanong, saan ginagamit ang dredging vessel na ito? Baka naman ‘yan ay ginagamit dito sa ilang mga lugar sa Pilipinas na may pagpayag ng lokal na pamahalaan (The question is where is the dredging vessel being used? It is probably being used in some parts of the Philippines with permission from the local government unit),” Roque said during a televised press briefing.

“Hindi naman pupunta ‘yan dito kung walang gumagamit niyan at ang nais kong malaman at sana bigyan ng kasagutan ng DENR ay ginagamit ba ito mga Chinese dredging vessels para kunin ang tanging yaman ng Pilipinas at ipadala sa bang bansa (It won't travel here if no one uses it. I want to know and I hope the DENR will respond. Are these Chinese dredging vessels getting our natural resources in the Philippines and sending them to other countries?)” he asked.

Coast guard and customs authorities recently seized a Chinese dredging vessel for alleged illegal presence off the coast of Orion Point in Bataan province.

The Chinese ship flying a Sierra Leone flag was supposedly staying in the country for more than a year after it was permitted to leave the country.



Palace puts DENR to task for presence of Chinese vessel in local waters

Roque said the seized ship will undergo the process under the country's laws. The Palace official admitted though he was puzzled about the presence of the foreign dredger off the waters of Orion, Bataan.

He noted that the ship was spotted near the area known to be a source of black sand in Zambales.

“Ang nais kong malaman — ginagamit ba ito para sa black sand operations diyan sa mga karatig bansa ng Bataan at sino ang nagbibigay ng permiso rito (We want to know if this is being used for black sand operations for neighboring areas of Bataan and who gave them permission to do so,” he said.

“Ang dapat i-report sa taumbayan sino ang gumagamit sa dredging vessels na ito (They must report to the people who are using these dredging vessels),” he added.

On allegations the military was focused on alleged red-tagging instead of guarding local waters from threats, Roque dismissed such claims as part of the “propaganda” against the government.

He pointed out the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard continue to handle matters related to the defense of the territory. A separate military unit, on the other hand, is included in the national task force battling the local armed communist group.

“Hindi totoo na obsessed sila sa isa at napabayaang ang isa. Eh nahuli nga ang dredging vessel. Ano ba kayo. Kung natutulog sa pansitan ang hukbong sandatahan, eh di nakalusot ang dredging vessel na yan. The fact na nahuli belies the propaganda (It is not true the military is obsessed with one and ignored the other. The dredging vessel was caught. If the Armed Forces was sleeping on the job, the dredging vessel could have slipped past them. The fact it was caught belies the propaganda),” he said.



Illegal dredging ng China sa karagatang sakop ng bansa, pinaiimbestigahan sa Kamara

By RadyoMaN Manila - Feb. 1, 2021 at 4:25pm

36

1 Republic of the Philippines
2 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3 Batasan Hills, Quezon City
4
5 EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
6 Second Regular Session
7
8 HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. _____
9
10 Introduced by BAYAN MUNA Reps. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
11 FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
12 ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,
13 GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS
14 and KABATAAN Party-List Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

15
16
17 RESOLUTION
18 URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE COMMITTEE
19 ON NATURAL RESOURCES, TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF
20 LEGISLATION, ON THE PROLIFERATION OF CHINESE DREDGING SHIPS
21 CONDUCTING ILLEGAL DREDGING ACTIVITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES
22
23
24 WHEREAS, on January 29, 2021, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Customs
25 (BOC) seized MV Zhonghai 68, a Chinese dredger sailing under the Sierra Leone flag, for illegal and
26 unauthorized presence in Philippine waters more than a year it was asked to leave the country. The
27 dredging ship operated by HK Wofeng Hangyu Co. Ltd. was spotted 13 kms southwest off Orton
28 Point in Batangas province;
29
30 WHEREAS, according to the PCG, "the joint operatives discovered the automatic identification
31 system transponder of the said vessel was turned off and its two (2) Cambodian crew members
32 failed to present proper documents;"
33
34 WHEREAS, this incident is not the first time when Chinese-licensed dredging ships were caught
35 conducting illegal activities in the Philippines. Since 2017, there are several reports of illegal Chinese
36 dredging activities in different parts of the country. Residents near the areas repeatedly raised alarms
37 over these activities as these cause adverse environmental effects and negatively impact to their
38 livelihood. Moreover, there are reports saying that the dredged materials from these illegal Chinese
39 operations are being used in the creation of artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea;
40
41 WHEREAS, last February 16, 2019, Bayan Muna Partylist Chair Atty. Nest Cerdenas and his
42 team documented the Zhonghai 68, along with Zhonghai 88 and another one, anchored offshore in
43 Marikina, Zambales. Local fishermen also saw pictures of quarrying ships with Chinese crew in
44 Calagan, Zambales. Some sources from Zambales claim that these dredging activities continued
45 even in 2020;

1
2 WHEREAS, last January 2017, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources served a
3 cease-and-desist order on the operations of MV Zhong Hai 18 and STX Pansy Resources Co. Ltd in
4 Alilan River. Some 15 undocumented Chinese nationals were also apprehended;¹
5
6 WHEREAS, last April 2019, MV Emerald, a Chinese-licensed hopper dredger appeared without
7 prior notice off Lobo town, Barangay Laguilasin, Batangas province and anchored close to a 30-
8 hectare mangrove forest, alarming residents and triggering a plan by a private company to ship tons
9 of sand from a river running through the municipality to build a runway at Hong Kong International
10 Airport;
11
12 WHEREAS, last September 2019, seven (7) undocumented Chinese workers were also arrested
13 when they were found to be involved in an illegal dredging operation in Marikina town, Zambales
14 province. They were arrested on a dredging vessel and a sand carrier anchored at a local pier;²
15
16 WHEREAS, there are growing apprehensions that more undocumented illegal Chinese dredging ships
17 are still operating in different parts of the Philippines that continue to cause environmental
18 destruction and adverse effects to the people and the environment;
19
20 WHEREAS, the proliferation of these illegal dredging activities is also seen as part of the
21 worsening Chinese aggression in the West Philippine Sea, which jeopardizes the country's
22 sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is the duty of the State and all its instrumentalities to protect
23 the country and its people from external threats such as these illegal foreign operations;
24
25 WHEREAS, it is the duty of Congress to ensure that the country's sovereignty and territorial
26 integrity are intact, local and international laws be honored and recognized, and more importantly,
27 the safety and economic rights of the people are protected and ensured. It is also the duty of
28 Congress and all patriotic Filipinos to condemn these illegal activities and defend our territories
29 from foreign dominance and intrusion;
30
31 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, through the
32 Committee on Natural Resources to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the
33 proliferation of Chinese ships conducting illegal dredging activities in the Philippines.
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¹ <https://www.denv.gov.ph/index.php/news-events/press-releases/518-denv-seizes-alilan-river-dredging-ship>
² <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/19441/chinese-dredger-seized-off-bataan>

Pinasisiyasat ng Makabayan Bloc sa Kamara ang illegal dredging activities ng Chinese dredging ships sa karagatang sakop ng bansa.

Ang pagpapaimbestiga ay kasunod na rin ng pagkakahuli ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) at Bureau of Customs (BOC) sa Chinese dredging ship na MV Zhonghai 68 sa karagatan sa Zambales noong nakaraang linggo.



Illegal dredging ng China sa karagatang sakop ng bansa, pinaiimbestigahan sa Kamara

By RadyoMaN Manila - Feb. 1, 2021 at 4:25pm

36

Sa House Resolution 1528, tinukoy na mula 2017 ay ilang Chinese dredging ships na ang nahuli sa karagatan ng bansa na gumagawa ng mga ilegal na aktibidad.

Inaatasan sa resolusyon ang Committee on Natural Resources na imbestigahan ang epekto ng illegal dredging activities ng mga Chinese dredging ships sa kapaligiran at maging sa kabuhayan ng mga residente malapit sa karagatan.

Naniniwala ang mga kongresista ng Makabayan na marami pang illegal Chinese dredging ships ang hindi pa natitimbog ng mga otoridad at patuloy na nagdudulot ng pagkasira ng kapaligiran.

Binigyang diin pa sa resolusyon na ang paglaganap ng mga dredging ships ng China ay isang paraan ng pagiging agresibo nito sa ating teritoryo na malinaw na paglabag sa soberenya at territorial integrity ng bansa.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/2316600095231066/posts/3640183222872740/?app=fbl>



Sinas leads PNP “Maka-Kalikasan” drive

[February 1, 2021](#) 2 min read

By Arwen Pascua

MANILA — The Philippine National Police, in cooperation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is taking active steps to reforest a portion of the Marikina Watershed Area in Rizal as part of the police organization’s social responsibility to environmental protection.

“This initiative is not only socially relevant but is deeply rooted in the PNP core values of Maka-Diyos, Makabayan, Makatao at Maka-Kalikasan,” PNP chief Police General Debold M Sinas said as he led 900 PNP personnel, DENR employees, and the 4×4 Expedition Philippines, an NGO partner of the police agency, in a massive tree-planting program in Rizal Sunday morning.

Some 10,000 assorted seedlings of hardwood and fruit-bearing species were planted in portions of the 368-hectare reservation awarded to the PNP Special Action Force under Presidential Proclamation 1355 series of 2007 in Sitio Canumay, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City, Rizal.

Also present during the activity were DENR Undersecretary for Special Concerns, Edilberto C Leonardo, actor Albert Martinez, 4×4 Expedition PHL ambassador, and Bureau of Corrections head Gerald Bantag whose agency has also been awarded by DENR with land reserve.

Sinas said the PNP is committed to see these trees grow under the care of PNP SAF, to become living monuments of the national advocacy for environmental protection.

He also pledged to work closely with the DENR in addressing the protection of mangroves in the country, adding that, “the police can serve as instrument of the DENR in pursuit of ecological balance and against natural resource degradation due to “kaingin,” illegal mining, illegal logging, illegal fishing, and other violations of environment laws. (AI/MTVN)



Solon wants car dealers to plant 10 trees for every car sold



[Jose Altoveros Author Info](#)

If House Bill 8337 is signed into law, we might see more trees around the country

AutoIndustriya.com February 01, 2021 16:55

Typhoons and floods are something we have to contend with each year. It's part of living in the Philippines. Last year, however, a trio of storms battered the country, affecting thousands of lives and destroying hectares of agricultural lands. As a result, the prices of vegetables have risen sharply over the months. One of the main causes of the widespread flooding? Deforestation in flood-prone areas.

To prevent a similar event from happening again, the government has begun reforestation programs. To help with the reforestation efforts, one lawmaker wants dealerships to plant trees for each vehicle sold.

Hon. Luis Raymund "LRAY" Villafuerte recently [filed House Bill 8337](#), "An Act Requiring All Dealers, Retailers, and Similar Entities Engaged In The Sale of Motor Vehicles to Plant At Least Ten (10) Trees For Every Sales Transaction" or shortened to "Mandatory Tree Planting for Every Motor Vehicle Sales Act". As the name of the house bill implies, each vehicle sold by a dealer translates to ten trees being planted.

Interestingly, it's not only manufacturers that are required by the bill. Even private importers and gray market dealers will have to plant trees too. Reading the fine print, Section 3b says that "Dealer or retailer refers to any person, natural or juridical, that sell new motor vehicles to retail buyers and the public". The requirement of tree planting should also be accomplished within six months from the date of the sales transaction.

Not all new vehicles sold at dealerships are required to plant trees. Specifically, only four-wheeled passenger vehicles are included in the proposed tree planting bill. Motorcycles, trucks, and forklifts, bulldozers, and other heavy equipment are exempted. The specific trees to be planted and the location shall be also coordinated with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). So no, they can't just plant trees anywhere and call it a day.

At the moment, the "Mandatory Tree Planting for Every Motor Vehicle Sales Act" has to pass the first reading. If signed into law, we might just see more trees growing in the country. Should the local auto industry bounces back, imagine the number of trees that each dealer will be able to plant.

Source: <https://www.autoindustriya.com/auto-industry-news/solon-wants-car-dealers-to-plant-10-trees-for-every-car-sold.html>



Philippines wins Earth Camp photo contest

posted February 01, 2021 at 09:30 pm by [Manila Standard Lifestyle](#)

The Philippine office of the International Labor Organization (ILO) was proclaimed winner of the Earth Camp Photo Contest in Japan via a virtual awarding ceremony on Jan. 31.

The contest gathered photos from around the world that capture scenes of international cooperation.



ILO Philippines was recognized for its submission, which features the ILO-Japan Water and Sanitation Project, in South Upi, Maguindanao. The representative of ILO Japan accepted the award on behalf of ILO Philippines during the ceremony.

ILO Philippines country director Khalid Hassan says the photo depicts a message of hope as communities now have their water system amid the COVID-19, poverty, climate change, and conflict. “It shows how decent work can contribute to fulfill basic human rights in fragile communities and build peace.”

According to Hassan, the project hired community members as contractors and provided skills training.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/lifestyle/home-living/345913/philippines-wins-earth-camp-photo-contest.html>



Siargao home to hundreds of flora and fauna — DOST National Research Council

Published February 1, 2021, 8:29 AM

by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

Siargao Island is not just a home to the famous “Cloud 9” wave, but also a home to hundreds of species of plants and fauna.

The teardrop-shaped island’s biodiversity was uncovered in a study conducted by the Department of Science and Technology’s (DOST) National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) members of Division V (Biological Sciences).



Led by Dr. Cecilia Banag-Moran, the NRCP team logged around 110 species of plants and 403 species of animals from the aquatic and terrestrial habitats in the municipality of Del Carmen alone.

The study showed that “remarkable plant and beach forest species and possible new species of frog, rat, tarsier, insects, marine fish and decapod crustaceans” can be found in Del Carmen, Siargao in Surigao del Norte.

“With this rich diversity, a move for the global importance of Del Carmen, Siargao should be considered for its conservation and sustainability,” the NRCP said in a statement posted on its website.

Included in the list of identified species of animals are the 11 amphibians, 14 mammals, 23 reptiles, 52 birds, and 81 marine fish.

“It was found that nine species of plants and 34 species of terrestrial vertebrates are endemic to the Philippines,” according to the NRCP.

“In addition to this, 45 species of plants and 17 species of terrestrial vertebrates are not yet assessed for their conservation status.”



Siargao home to hundreds of flora and fauna — DOST National Research Council

The NRCP study also cited the “excellent condition” of the amphibians and reptiles in mangroves and surrounding habitats, which prodded the Banag-Moran’s team to recommend that protection measures be put in place in the area.

Through biological field surveys, the project researchers found out that Del Carmen’s mangrove forest also houses interesting species, and is endowed with unique floral assemblages, and high floral diversity.

“Out of the 54 mangrove species in the world, Del Carmen is composed of 19 or 35.19 percent of the world species,” the study pointed out.

Considering that about new 90 species of marine flora, the NRCP team underscored the need for continuance of correct and diversified mangrove planting.

The NRCP said given the data presented by the project researchers, there is no reason for Siargao not to be listed as new Ramsar site in the country.

The data was conducted under the SAKLAW (Saklolo sa Lawa – Sustainable Communities) of the National Integrated Basic Research Agenda (NIBRA) after the local government unit of Siargao requested scientific evidence to support their bid for Ramsar.

It noted that currently, there are six wetland habitats in the Philippines that have been designated as Ramsar wetlands of international importance.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, signed in 1971 in Iran’s city of Ramsar is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands.

“The presence of a threatened and endemic flora and fauna and possible new species, aside from the high diversity in the area is sufficient support for the Del Carmen Mangrove Forest to be listed under Ramsar for its long term conservation and sustainable utilization,” the NRCP said.

Aside from the inclusion of Del Carmen in the list of Ramsar sites in the country, the project researchers also sought the policy conservation and protection of Siargao ecosystems and its biodiversity resources.

The NRCP noted that a three-pager Photoguide of the Birds of Del Carmen Siargao has been produced under the study.

The project results were virtually presented by the NRCP team during the stakeholders meeting held on January 6, 2021. The heads of the municipality of Del Carmen, Mayor Proserfina M. Coro and Vice Mayor Alfredo M. Coro II attended the event.



City Council adopts green infrastructure

By [Mary Ruth R. Malinao](#) (The Freeman)

- February 2, 2021 - 12:00am



Cebu City Vice Mayor Michael Rama, presiding officer of the City Council.
File

CEBU, Philippines — The Cebu City Council has passed an ordinance requiring the design, construction or retrofitting of buildings and other structures to meet the minimum standards of a green infrastructure.

Authored by Councilors Nestor Archival Sr. and Jerry Guardo, the ordinance is entitled “Green Building Ordinance of the City of Cebu”.

“To support the government’s efforts to fight climate change, there is a need to institutionalize eco-friendly systems and technologies that reduce greenhouse gases and other hazardous emissions from buildings and other structures,” read the ordinance.

“For promoting sustainability, and helping the national government realize its agreement, it is essential to make all buildings ‘green’ as places of working, living, studying, shopping, healthcare, and entertainment,” it added.

Section 4 states the ordinance shall cover all vertical structures to be newly built, remodeled, renovated, retrofitted, whether or not used for commercial, industrial, residential, institutional, or agricultural purposes within the territorial jurisdiction of the city, except those expressly exempted by law.

In the case of proposed and new structures, in addition to the requirements provided for by the National Building Code, an applicant must include in the building design, planning and construction, to be submitted with the Office of the Building Official (OBO) for purposes of acquiring a building permit as certified by the City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) and Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CCENRO), at least three features of a green building like provision of an alternative source of energy, such as, but not limited to the



City Council adopts green infrastructure

installation and use of solar panels, installation of skylights, provision of urban green space, among others.

The applicant must also submit a sworn statement with the OBO that the proposed facility and its operation and information showing that the facility will operate as represented in the application.

Section 6 states the building official may order the revocation of the building permit upon the recommendation of the CCENRO, if he finds that the permit was obtained by fraud or misrepresentation, or the holder of the permit has substantially failed to construct or complete the facility in compliance with the plans, specification, and procedures in such certificate.

In processing an application for the issuance of a building permit, the building official shall ensure that the applicant satisfies and conforms with the approved standard requirements on zoning and land use, lines and grades, structural design, sanitary and sewerage, environmental health, electrical and mechanical safety as well as with other rules and regulations promulgated in accordance with the provisions of the National Building Code of the Philippines.

Per Section 9, a system of tax discount shall be devised for compliance based on the criteria: use of renewable energy, use of energy efficient technology, provision of open spaces, and use of environment-friendly materials.

An evaluation committee will be created to devise a system and guidelines for the grant of tax discount in compliance with the criteria set in the ordinance.

The committee shall be tasked to evaluate and recommend tax discount for the consideration of the City Council.

It shall be composed of the City Treasurer, City Assessor, CCENRO head, City Building Official, CPDO, and two non-government organizations in the field of environment.

The OBO shall be the office primarily tasked to implement the provisions of the ordinance.

The same office together with CCENRO, CPDO, as well as the City Treasurer and Assessor shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within 90 days after the effectivity of the ordinance. — **GMR (FREEMAN)**

OCTA Research Group: 'Too early' to ease virus lockdown in Metro Manila

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Feb 1, 2021 3:34:23 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, February 1) — Independent research group OCTA said it's "still too early" to put Metro Manila under more relaxed quarantine restrictions as the Philippines cannot afford to face another surge in COVID-19 cases while it is rolling out its mass vaccination drive.

During Monday's Laging Handa briefing, OCTA Research fellow Dr. Guido David said shifting the capital to a modified general community quarantine is not advisable yet, as warding off the spread of the coronavirus remains the key to avoid dealing with shortages across the healthcare system.

"I think it's too early to risk at this stage... We can't risk a surge while we're rolling out the vaccine because it will delay the vaccination kung ma-overwhelm 'yung mga hospitals natin (if our hospitals would be overwhelmed)," he said.

"So it's better to keep the status quo," Dr. David added.

The government is set to begin its vaccination program this month. On Sunday, Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. said at least 5.6 million doses from US drugmaker Pfizer and the UK's AstraZeneca are expected to arrive in the Philippines within the first quarter.

Dr. David acknowledged that while he also understands the need to fuel economic activities, the Philippine economy could recover much faster if more Filipinos would be vaccinated.

"Maybe it's going to be for only a few months [of the] vaccine rollout. Once we have that, it would be easy for us to talk about relaxing the economy even further," he said.

Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez over the weekend said he was still hopeful the country's economic center could shift to the lowest form of community quarantine "in the months ahead."



OCTA Research Group: 'Too early' to ease virus lockdown in Metro Manila

Last week, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said Metro Manila mayors expressed readiness to keep the capital under GCQ or MGCQ this February, favoring the gradually opening up of the economy.

The Philippine economy shrank by -9.5 percent in 2020, its worst year since World War II.



NESTLE PH, WFF-PH tackle plastic waste in Donsol

[Monday, February 1, 2021](#) People's Tonight



NESTLE Philippines and World Wide Fund for Nature–Philippines (WWF-PH) have formalized an agreement to tackle plastic waste in Donsol, Sorsogon. Whale shark watching is an ecotourism industry in Donsol, and its coastal location includes many pathways for waste to end up in the sea.

In photo at the agreement signing are Nestlé Philippines Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Affairs and Communications Arlene Tan – Bantoto (seated, right) with Assistant Vice Presidents Christine Garcia (seated, left) and Patricia Rabat (standing, left), WWF-PH Executive Director Joel Palma (center) and Lead, Brand and Innovative Partnerships Kent Rebutan.

02 FEBRUARY 2021, Tuesday



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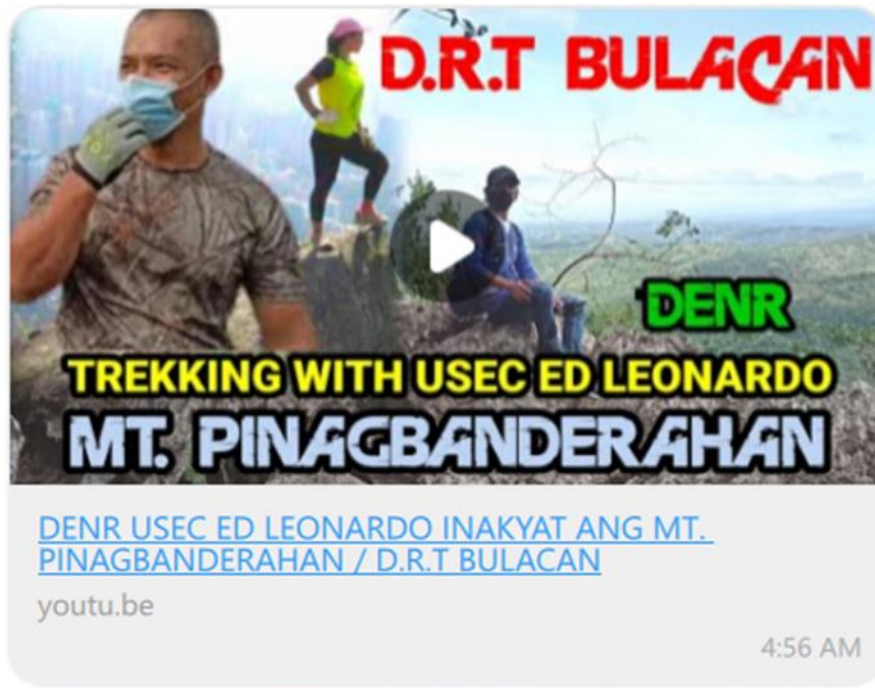
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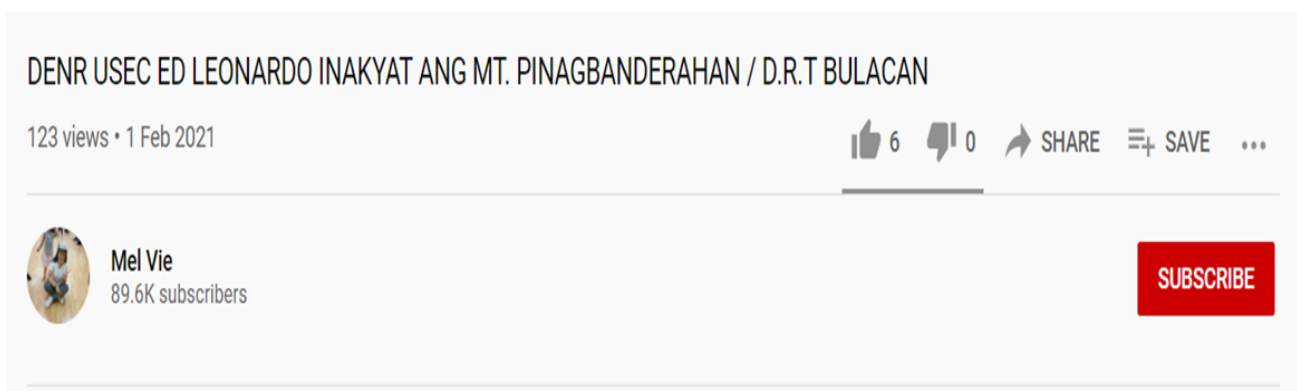
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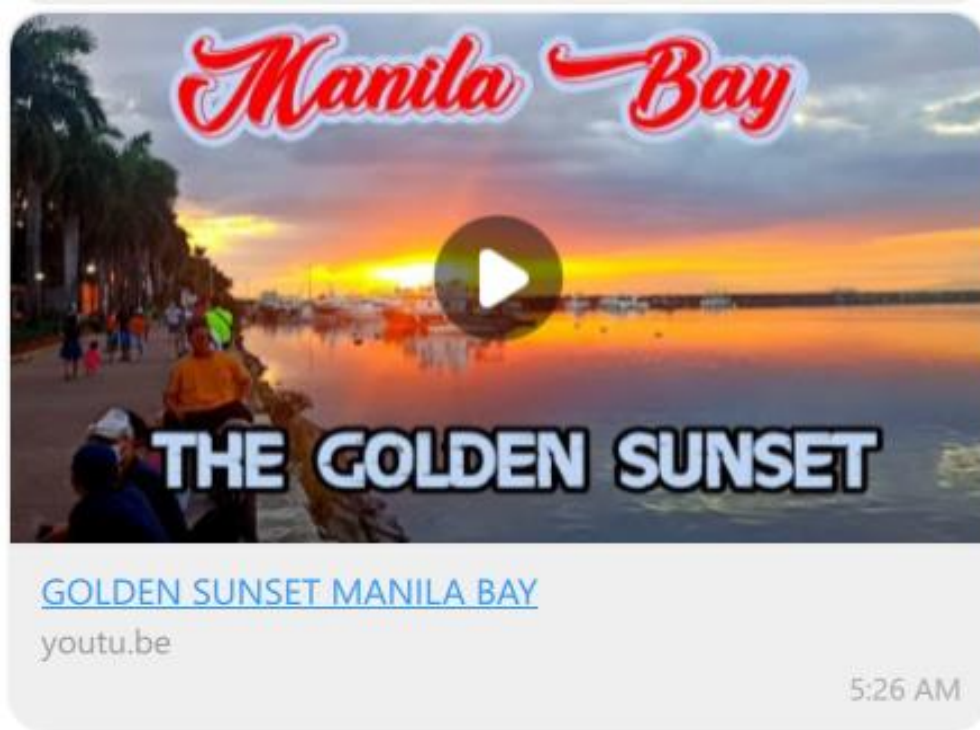
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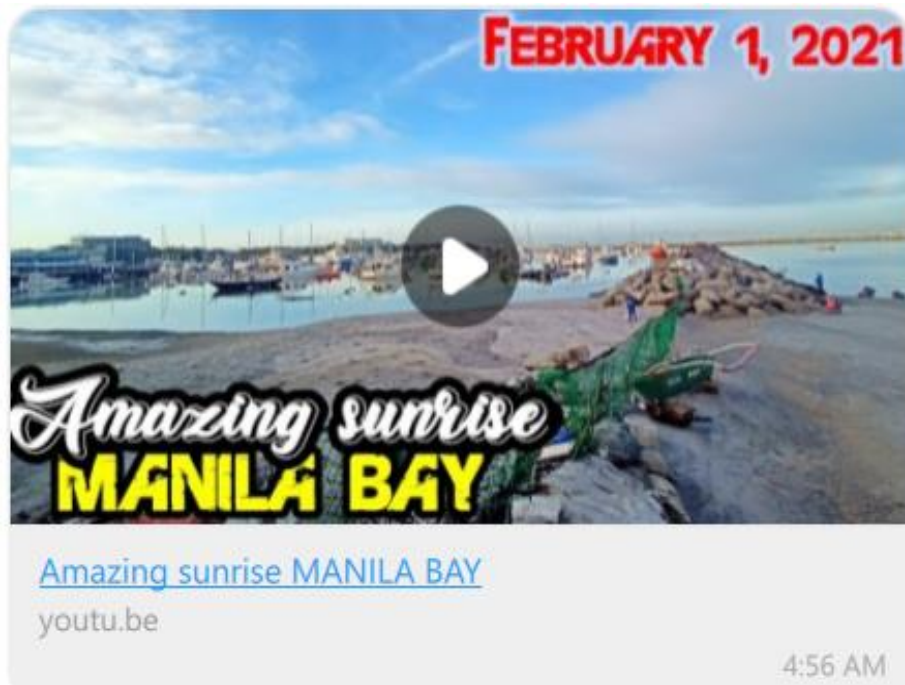
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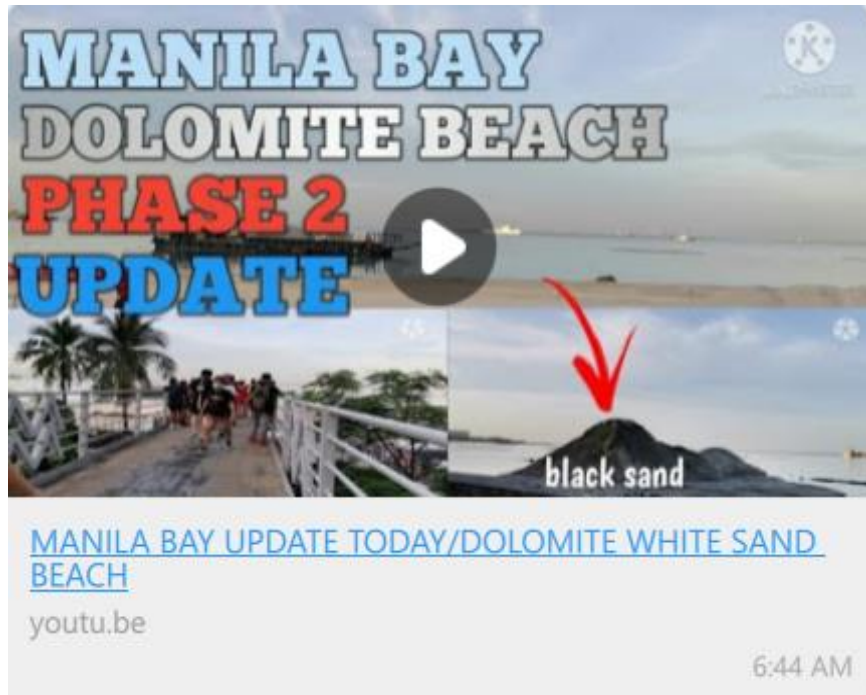
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