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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



EMB, MGB find no toxic chemicals in dolomite sand from Manila Bay

Published October 1, 2020, 10:10 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has not found toxic chemicals on the dolomite sand from the Manila Bay beach nourishment project, based on the test results released by its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).



(JANSEN ROMERO / MANILA BULLETIN)

EMB and MGB released on Wednesday evening the test results of the analyses conducted on the dolomite sand samples taken from the beach nourishment project on Sept. 18 to determine if they contain heavy metals that are harmful to health and marine life.

Both bureaus conducted testing on the presence of iron, nickel, lead, and mercury; grain size analysis; acidity/alkalinity (pH) and specific metals using the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP); and x-ray diffraction analysis.

The metals analyzed also include arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and selenium.

According to EMB OIC Director William P. Cuñado, the results of the analysis were compared to the limits set in DENR Administrative Order No. 2013-22, or the Revised Procedures and Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes (Revising DAO 2004-36).

Basing from the results of the TCLP, the EMB and MGB cited that none of the values obtained from the sample leachate exceeded the limits stated in the DENR AO 2013-22, “hence the sample is not classified as hazardous.”

“It does not contain mobile forms of the mentioned metal constituents that may leach into the environment under conditions similar to that in a landfill,” they pointed out.

“Moreover, the pH value is also less than the set limit for pH in the provisions of the same AO to be classified as hazardous,” they said.

In a statement issued last Wednesday, the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) noted that acid rain close to cities, such as in Metro Manila and groundwater seeping across the beach will slowly dissolve these dolomite granules and dissociate them into ions including carbonates.



“Carbonates are important in maintaining the alkalinity (or basicity) of the seas or raising the pH level to balance the effects of ocean acidification,” it said.

However, ocean acidification occurs on a much larger scale, such that augmentation in the carbonate ion budget from dolomite addition is not a solution to the potential acidification happening in Manila Bay, it pointed out.

Likewise, the UP-MSI pointed out that the addition of white sand invites more contact of people with a chemically uncharacterized material. “The finer particles of dolomite are more problematic as with other rock materials that are pulverized.”

Dust inhalation may “cause discomfort in the chest, shortness of breath, and coughing. Prolonged inhalation may cause chronic health effects.”

“Grain size of particles should be monitored to make sure these are not the size which may cause health problems,” it added.

The UP-MSI pointed out that “there are no short-cuts 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 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.

Source: https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/01/emb-mgb-find-no-toxic-chemicals-in-dolomite-sand-from-manila-bay/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=emb-mgb-find-no-toxic-chemicals-in-dolomite-sand-from-manila-bay



This September 20, 2020 shows artificial white sand along the shore of Manila Bay.
The STAR/Miguel de Guzman



DENR's own tests find crushed dolomite in Manila Bay not 'hazardous'

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - October 1, 2020 - 6:03pm

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the dolomite sand used to overlay a portion of Manila Bay’s shoreline is not hazardous, based on the analyses done by its attached agencies.

The department earlier initiated to have its own analysis of the material to ease concerns about the effects of crushed dolomite rocks on humans and the environment.

The DENR released Wednesday night the results of the analyses conducted on the dolomite sand samples from the Manila Bay beach nourishment project to determine whether they have heavy metals that are harmful to health and marine life. EMB and MGB are attached agencies of the DENR.


 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 

on Wednesday

LOOK: Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the DENR released the results of the analyses conducted on the dolomite sand samples from the Manila Bay Beach Nourishment Project to determine whether they contain heavy metals that are harmful to health and marine life.

Included are the following tests:

1. Determination of Iron, Nickel, Lead, and Mercury;
2. Grain size analysis; ... [See More](#)

 Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
DENR Compound, Vayas Ave, Diliman, QC
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REPORT OF ANALYSES

Page 1 of 1

Client : DENR Central Office SSCOC No. : 20-0175A
Address : DENR Compound, Vayas Ave, Diliman, QC Date/Time Received : September 18, 2020 1555 H
Project Name : Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program Date Reported : September 24, 2020
Source : Manila Bay Shore Line
Sampled by : CF Mada

Laboratory Sample No.	Sample Type	Date/Time Sampled	Sample Identification
20-0175A-001	Dolomite	9-18-2020 / 1555 H	Manila Bay Shoreline

REPORT OF ANALYSES

ANALYST: MARIA ROSARIO B. BUSTOS

DATE: 9/24/2020

PROJECT: MANILA BAY BEACH NOURISHMENT PROJECT

CLIENT: DENR CENTRAL OFFICE

ADDRESS: DENR COMPOUND, VAYAS AVE, DILIMAN, QC

DATE/TIME RECEIVED: 9/18/2020 1555 H

DATE REPORTED: 9/24/2020

ANALYST: MARIA ROSARIO B. BUSTOS

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CLIENT: DENR CENTRAL OFFICE

ADDRESS: DENR COMPOUND, VAYAS AVE, DILIMAN, QC

DATE/TIME RECEIVED: 9/18/2020 1555 H

DATE REPORTED: 9/24/2020



Engineer William Cuñado, EMB OIC director, said the results of the tests were compared to the limits set in DENR Administrative Order or the Revised Procedures and Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes.

“Basing from the results of the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure, none of the values obtained from the sample leachate exceeded the limits stated in the cited DENR AO, and hence the sample is not classified as hazardous,” Cuñado said.

The metals analyzed include arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and selenium.

"It does not contain mobile forms of the mentioned metal constituents that may leach into the environment under conditions similar to that in a landfill. Moreover, the pH value is also less than the set limit for pH in the provisions of the same Administrative Order to be classified as hazardous," he added.

Last month, toxicologist Rommel Quijano said that dolomite may contain heavy metals, which can result in autoimmune diseases.

The artificial white sand beach was briefly opened to the public last September 19 despite opposition from environmental organizations and civil society groups.

The DENR earlier said that a “nourished” beach will prevent erosion and crushed dolomite rocks will help neutralize the acidity of water in Manila Bay.

The University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute said that topping a small portion of the baywalk is expensive and temporary effort that will not help solve the problems besetting the bay

“There are no shortcuts to a cleaner environment. The use of crushed dolomite sand will not help solve the environmental problems in Manila Bay,” it said.



Dolomite 'di nakalalason sa Manila Bay – EMB, MGB



October 1, 2020 @ 3:54 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Inihayag ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na walang nakalalasang kemikal sa dolomite na itinatambak sa Manila Bay.

Batay umano ito sa pag-aaral na isinagawa ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) at Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) na parehong sangay ng ahensya ng DENR.

Ayon sa ulat, kumuha ng mga sampol mula sa dolomite ang EMB at MGB nitong Setyembre 18 at isinalang sa mga pagsusuri kung may taglay ang mga ito na mabibigat na metal na nakasasama sa kalusugan ng tao at buhay ng mga lamang-dagat.

Kabilang sa mga lumitaw na kemikal o metal ang iron, nickel, tingga, mercury, arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium at selenium.

Sinuri rin ang sukat, antas ng pagkakaroon ng mga ito na asido o alkaline (pH).

Sinukat ang antas ng lasong dala-dala ng mga ito sa pamamagitan ng Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) at tinatawag na x-ray diffraction analysis.

Ayon kay EMB OIC Director William P. Cuñado, ikinumpara ang resulta ng mga pagsusuri sa hangganan ng nakalalasang kemikal at metal na isinasaad ng DENR Administrative Order No. 2013-22 o Revised Procedures and Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes (Revising DAO 2004-36).

Wala umanong natagpuang tagas sa mga sampol na kemikal o metal na labis sa sukatan upang maituring ang mga ito na nakalalason at delikado sa kalusugan ng tao at buhay ng mga lamang dagat.

Mas maliit din umano ang pH value o pagkaasido ng mga kemikal at metal sa pamantayan sa nasabing AO para maituring na nakalalason.

Kaugnay nito, sinabi ng University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) na ang mga acid rain sa mga katulad ng Metro Manila at mga tubig na dumadaloy o tumatagas sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay ay kayang tunawin ang mga dolomite nang napakaliliit at maaari pang maging carbonate.



Magkagayunman mainam ang carbonate dahil kaya nitong balansehin ang alkalina sa karagatan na sinisira ng nakalalasang carbon dioxide na bumabagsak at humahalo sa tubig-dagat, subalit hindi pa rin ito solusyon sa masamang acidity ng karagatan.

Sinabi rin ng UP-MSI na maaaring makasasama ang dolomite kung ang sukat ng mga ito ay sobrang liit at malanghap ng mga tao na pumupunta sa Manila Bay hanggang sa magkaroon ang mga ito ng karamdaman sa dibdib at hirap sa paghinga.

Tiyakin lang umano na may sukat ang mga dolomite upang hindi matulad sa alikabok na nalalanghap ng tao. **RNT**



DENR: No toxic chemicals found in Manila Bay dolomite sand

October 1, 2020 | Filed under: News | Posted by: Tempo Desk

BY ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Local and foreign tourists are safe to enjoy watching the beautiful sunset at the Manila Bay. This is because the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has found no toxic chemicals on the dolomite sand used in the Manila Bay beach nourishment project.

Based on the test results released by its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), the dolomite sand samples taken from the beach nourishment project do not contain heavy metals that are harmful to health and marine life.

Both bureaus conducted testing on the presence of iron, nickel, lead, and mercury; grain size analysis; acidity/alkalinity (pH) and specific metals using the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP); and x-ray diffraction analysis.

The metals analyzed also include arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and selenium.

According to EMB OIC Director William P. Cuñado, the results of the analysis were compared to the limits set in DENR Administrative Order No. 2013-22, or the Revised Procedures and Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes (Revising DAO 2004-36).

Basing from the results of the TCLP, the EMB and MGB cited that none of the values obtained from the sample leachate exceeded the limits stated in the DENR AO 2013-22, “hence the sample is not classified as hazardous.”



MANILA BAY LILINISIN NG DENR HANGGANG SA MAPAGLALANGUYAN NA



October 1, 2020 @ 7:38 AM 24 hours ago

NOONG nakaraang buwan ng Enero 2019, nagbabala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa publiko na hindi pa ligtas paliguan ang Manila Bay dahil sa mataas nitong fecal coliform bacteria sa tubig.

“Bathing in Manila Bay can expose people to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria, which could increase their chances of developing illnesses,” pahayag ni DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Ayon kay Cimatu, isang araw matapos ang paglulunsad ng rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay ay nakapagtala ang water monitoring stations na nakalagay sa tabi ng baybayin na umabot sa 35 million most probable number (mpn) kada 100 milliliters ang tubig sa Rajah Soliman outfall (Station 5).

Naglagay ng walong water quality monitoring stations ang Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) ng DENR sa kahabaan ng Roxas Boulevard mula sa United States Embassy hanggang sa Manila Yacht Club.

Base sa pag-aaral, ang standard coliform level sa lahat ng coastal waters na ligtas paliguan at iba pang aktibidad sa tubig ay 100 mpn/100ml.

“We have not yet gotten rid of pollutants such as those from untreated wastewater being discharged into the bay, so we strongly advise the public, especially children, to refrain from swimming in the bay for now,” sabi pa ni Cimatu.

Ito naman ang naging mensahe ni Secretary Cimatu sa publiko sa ginanap na selebrasyon ng 2020 International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day, na ang Manila Bay rehabilitation ay hindi matatapos sa “short-term snapshot of a trash-free bay” ng okasyon.

Tiniyak ni Cimatu sa mga Filipino na ang DENR at ang iba pang mandamus agencies ay hindi titigil hanggang hindi nakakamit ng Manila Bay ang “ideal water quality level” nito na maaari na itong paliguan at paglanguyan.

Bahagi ito ng talumpati ni Cimatu sa harapan ng 600 volunteers mula sa 21 ahensya ng gobyerno at ibang civic organizations na gumugol ng kanilang oras upang linisin ang kahabaan ng Manila Baywalk area noong Setyembre 19.



KABILANG sa mga nagpakita ng kanilang pagsuporta ay sina Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga (nasa kaliwa), Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Silvestre Bello, III (pangalawa sa kaliwa), Commission on Higher Education Chairman Prospero de Vera, III (pangatlo sa kaliwa).

Dumalo rin sina Manila Mayor Isko Moreno, mga opisyal ng mandamus agencies at mga miyembro ng gabinete na bumati kay Sec. Cimatú at nagbigay ng kanilang pahayag ng pagsuporta sa beach nourishment project ng DENR.



Too late to realign Manila Bay rehab funds: Palace

By Azer Parrocha **October 1, 2020, 6:30 pm**



MANILA BAY'S WHITE SAND. People visit a segment of the Manila Bay covered with white sand made of crushed dolomite when it opened to the public on Sept. 20, 2020. Malacañang on Thursday (Oct. 1, 2020) said the beach nourishment is just part of the rehabilitation of the entire Manila Bay. (PNA photo by Avito Dalan)

MANILA – Malacañang on Thursday said it is too late to realign the budget meant for the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay to the government's coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) response.

This was after marine scientists of the University of the Philippines (UP) said dumping crushed dolomite along parts of the Baywalk would not help solve the root cause of environmental problems in Manila Bay.

In a virtual presser, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the executive branch could no longer realign the budget because the project has already started.

"Nasimulan na po iyan eh, so kinakailangan tapusin na po iyan. (It has already begun so we need to finish it)," Roque said.

He noted that the funds used to beautify Manila Bay were already part of the 2019 national budget.

"And as I said, itong project na ito (this project) was proposed two years ago, included in last year's budget, and only being implemented," Roque added.

He also explained that only funds for projects that have not yet started may be realigned.

Meanwhile, Roque defended anew the project from criticisms on the timing of the project amid the prevailing health crisis.

"Iyong budget po kasi diyan, hindi lang siya (The budget appropriated for the project, it's not just) budget actually for the beach nourishment. It's actually for the entire program of (the) government in rehabilitating Manila Bay," he said.

Roque earlier claimed that the project could prevent soil erosion and flooding.

He also said it could help improve mental health.

Last month, a crowd of visitors flocked to the segment of Manila Bay's shoreline to take photos and enjoy the new attraction.

Roque said the people's reception showed that the project was a "good decision."

President Rodrigo Duterte himself was impressed, saying that people are now "enjoying" the reclaimed area with white sand. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1117241>



'Too late to realign 'Manila Bay Sands' funds to COVID-19 response' — Roque

Published October 1, 2020, 3:18 PM

by [Argyll Cyrus Geducos](#)

Malacañang said the executive branch could no longer realign the budget appropriated for the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay to the government's COVID-19 response efforts as the project has already started.



Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque (CAMILLE ANTE / MANILA BULLETIN)

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque made the statement after marine scientists from the University of the Philippines (UP) said that dumping of crushed dolomites along parts of the Baywalk to make a white-sand beach will not help solve the root of Manila Bay's problems.

In his Thursday presser, Roque addressed the public's long-standing question: Why not use the funds for the beautification of the Manila Bay for the government's COVID-19 response?

"Nasimulan na po 'yan, eh so kinakailangan tapusin na po 'yan (It's already begun so we need to finish it now)," he said.

"Itong project na ito (This project) was proposed two years ago, included in last year's budget and only being implemented now," he added.

According to Roque, the executive branch can only realign the funds allocated for projects which have not started yet.

"Ang mga nare-realign eh yung mga hindi pa po nagsisimulang mga proyekto (The only thing we can realign are the funds of those projects that have not started yet)," he said.

"Yung budget po kasi diyan, hindi lang kasi siya (The budget for the Manila Bay project is not just the) budget for the beach nourishment. It's actually for the entire program of government in rehabilitating Manila Bay," he added.

The public had slammed the timing of the implementation of the project since the government had repeatedly claimed that the country is already running out of funds to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

The reopening of the Manila Bay last month also drew in many visitors who ignored physical distancing protocols.

Despite these, President Duterte said he was elated about the artificial white sand beach at Manila Bay, saying the Filipino people are now enjoying the benefits from a determined action of the government.

Roque had defended the said rehabilitation project, saying the white sand at the Manila Bay will actually help in improving the mental health of citizens amid the pandemic.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/01/too-late-to-realign-manila-bay-sands-funds-to-covid-19-response-roque/>



Funds for Manila Bay ‘white sand’ project can’t be realigned for COVID-19 response -Palace

Published October 1, 2020 4:33pm

By VIRGIL LOPEZ, GMA News

Malacañang said Thursday the government could not realign the funds intended for the Manila Bay “white sand” project for COVID-19 response.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque insisted that the government would finish the project despite criticism from the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, which said the dumping of crushed dolomite along the shoreline would not help solve the root of the environmental problems in Manila Bay.

He said only funds for projects that have yet to be implemented could be diverted to COVID-19 response.

“Nasimulan na po iyan eh, so kinakailangan tapusin na po iyan,” Roque said at a news conference in Bataan.

“Iyong budget po kasi diyan, hindi lang siya budget actually for the beach nourishment, it’s actually for the entire program of government in rehabilitating Manila Bay. And as I said, itong project na ito was proposed two years ago, included in last year’s budget and only being implemented.”

Interior Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya said last month that the [project was approved](#) by Congress under the 2019 national budget, underwent competitive bidding and was awarded prior to the global pandemic.

Aside from environmental and health concerns over the crushed dolomite, critics also pointed out that the project was ill-timed as the country is still facing a health crisis and its effects on the economy.

But Malaya said the government could not stop a project “when it is already under contractual obligation to proceed.”

Only P28 million of the P389 million allocation for Manila Bay’s rehabilitation and cleanup project was used for the crushed dolomite rocks, he said.—**AOL, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/758056/funds-for-manila-bay-white-sand-project-can-t-be-realigned-for-covid-19-response-palace/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1xMh9giWLGYeiZmrz9RmYiVFHw8Dn1b2McHnjUb4OdUmxFLi7HtR1xMvY



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The Palace says government can no longer realign the budget for Manila Bay's rehabilitation to more urgent concerns such as COVID-19 response because the project has already begun.

“

Nasimulan na po 'yan eh. Kinakailangan tapusin na po 'yan.
Ang mga nare-realign ay 'yung mga hindi pa nagsisimulang mga proyekto. 'Yung budget po kasi diyan, hindi lang siya budget for beach nourishment. It's actually for the entire program of government into rehabilitating Manila Bay.

SEC. HARRY ROQUE
PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN
OCTOBER 1, 2020

file photo: PCOO, The Philippine STAR/Miguel de Guzman

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Anti-open defecation drive in Manila Bay

posted October 01, 2020 at 10:00 pm

by [Willie Casas](#)

The Manila City government on Wednesday entered into an agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to minimize open defecation affecting the Manila Bay.

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

Under the project “Kubeta Ko”, portable toilets will be placed in Parola, Tondo to provide “dignified toilet facilities” to informal settler families (ISFs).

“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 project also aims to “to immediately stop and minimize open defecation by ISFs into Manila Bay” in line with the ongoing rehabilitation of the area.

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

The project will be using the viable portable, container-based toilet technology developed by Loowat, Limited. 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 (MWSS) and Maynilad Water Services and will be effective for one year.



DENR, Manila gov't to provide portable toilets to LSIs in Tondo

October 1, 2020 12:19 PM by [Kristan Carag](#)

The local government unit of Manila City entered an agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in order to place portable toilets in Tondo.

Project 'Kubeta Ko' aims to immediately stop and minimize open defecation by informal settler families into Manila Bay in line with the on going rehabilitation of the area.

Manila City mayor Francisco Domagoso and DENR Director for Administrative Service Rolando Castro signed the supplemental memorandum of agreement.

"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.

DENR allotted a total of Php 10 million to Manila City for the said project, and an additional Php 5 million for the city 'to cover the operational costs during the implementation of the project'.



Maynilad intensifies cleanup drive

posted October 01, 2020 at 11:10 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

In support of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, west zone Maynilad Water Services Inc. has intensified its sewer connection and septic tank cleaning drive.

From January 2019 to August this year, Maynilad connected over 32,000 additional customers to its sewerage system, including households and establishments located along waterways that drain into Manila Bay.

The water firm was able to convince more customers to connect to the sewer network.

Also for the same period, Maynilad provided septic tank cleaning services to some 1.6 million customers from North Caloocan down to Cavite.

Around 317,000 cubic meters of sewage had been collected and treated by the company since the start of 2019.

“As we continue to implement our sewerage and sanitation services under ‘new normal’ conditions, we appeal to our customers to connect to our sewer lines or have their septic tanks desludged. Doing so will help protect our environment, as well as the health of our families and communities,” chief operating officer Randolph Estrellado said.

Maynilad is encouraging its customers in sewerred areas to apply for a sewer connection so their wastewater could be conveyed directly to the sewage treatment plants.



Environment strategies

posted October 01, 2020 at 09:25 pm



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu (second from right) and Atty. Antonio Oposa (right) discuss environment improvement strategies with (from left) Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Danilo Lim, Rotary Club of Manila president Robert Lim Joseph Jr. and immediate past president Jackie Rodriguez . Rotarians are active in protecting the environment in support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.



UP marine scientists explain why dumping dolomite can't solve Manila Bay problems

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 01 2020 09:14 PM | Updated as of Oct 01 2020 11:16 PM



A view of the "white sand" project in Manila Bay as it temporarily opens to public on September 19, 2020. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA — Marine scientists from the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman on Wednesday said there are no shortcuts to address the environmental problems in [Manila Bay](#), and dumping dolomite does not offer a solution.

"There are no short-cuts to a cleaner environment. The use of crushed Dolomite sand will not help solve the environmental problems in Manila Bay," the UP Marine Science Institute (UP MSI) said in a statement.

"At most, it is a beautification effort that is costly and temporary. 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.

The institute explained the implications of dumping dolomite, the environmental problems in Manila Bay that should be addressed, and the solutions that need to be executed.

'Implications of using crushed dolomite in Manila Bay'

It said the "addition of Dolomites crushed to 2-5 mm diameter cannot serve to anchor the loss of beach sand, nor serve as replacement for eroded sediments."

"Dolomite sand grains will erode given the hydrodynamic conditions in coastal Metro Manila during storms. Even with 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," the institute said.

Considering the rising sea levels and the country's weather, "the Dolomite sand will wash away into the Bay with subsequent intense and heavy rainfall events and wave action especially during storms."

The dolomite addition will not help solve as well the potential acidification happening in Manila Bay.

Lastly, the institute also stated that "the finer particles of Dolomite are more problematic as with other rock materials that are pulverized."

"Dust inhalation may 'cause discomfort in the chest, shortness of breath, and coughing. Prolonged inhalation may cause chronic health effects'," it said.

"Grain size of particles should be monitored to make sure these are not the size which may cause health problems," the institute said.



Environmental problems in Manila Bay

The institute said authorities should address "poor water quality" and the "threat of erosion" in Manila Bay under the government's rehabilitation program.

"The lack of wastewater treatment plants surrounding the watershed of Manila Bay, and the loss of natural clean-up from wetland, mangrove, and seagrass ecosystem services, are not able to filter and remove pollutants that drain from urban and residential areas. These include wastewaters that are discharged by homes or establishments or channeled into storm drains," it noted.

"Some components in wastewaters are emerging pollutants detected in Manila Bay, which include personal care and pharmaceutical products, endocrine disrupting substances (e.g. hormones, pesticides), fecal steroids, and plastic components in micro- and nano- sizes," it added.

The threat of erosion is worsened by additional reclaimed areas found south of the baywalk, the institute said.

What should be done?

The UP MSI said that the rehabilitation of Manila Bay is an "arduous task" and effort should be exerted by both residents, people using the area, and the government.

"This will entail infrastructure infusion for wastewater treatment plants, transfer of informal settlers especially those living in the dangerous riverbanks and coastal areas, "operationally clean" effluent discharge, decreased sedimentation from the watershed, and zero garbage inputs," it said..

"These are achieved with government interventions, social and community behavioral change, and legislations and policy guidelines implemented."

"In addition, we need to review closely the parameters that are tested for water quality monitoring in DAO-2016-08. This is timely as the guidelines are due for review every few years. The range of allowable values, component measured, protocols for how and where water samples were collected are some of the major items to review," the institute said.

It said that monitoring the area for emerging organic pollutants and massive reforestation should also be done.



Manila fake white beach defied laws, science, history, heritage

[GOTCHA](#) - [Jarius Bondoc](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 2, 2020 - 12:00am

As expected, backwash is eroding the fake white sand beach along Manila Bay. With it is wasting the P400 million to prettify a half-kilometer of seafront. It did not need earth scientists to foretell that. In these 7,641 islands Filipinos stroll the coast and learn that “what the sea giveth, the sea taketh away.”

And yet bureaucrats vainly are sandbagging the synthetic baywalk against onrushing waves. More money is to be spent to whiten five kilometers.

None have thought to reforest mangroves along Manila Bay’s entire 190-kilometer coastline. Lost on them is why the ancients called it Maynilad. It teemed with “nilad” native mangrove. Aside from barring storm surges and avulsion, mangroves provide food and greenery.

The artificial sand is made of crushed dolomite boulders, a common construction concrete mix. It came from seaside conservation zones in Cebu. Dumping it in Manila bayside further harmed the already overfished, heavily polluted waters. All the more will it degrade marine habitat, vital water-bird sites, sardine spawning grounds and remnant mangroves and wetlands.

Environment lawyers, scientists and fishers groups demand accountability from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. “That this is the brainchild of DENR, whose very mandate is to protect the environment and enforce environmental laws, erodes trust in our institutions,” they state in a position paper.

The white-sanding broke five laws:

(1) Environmental Impact Systems Law. No person may undertake projects in environmentally critical areas without an Environment Compliance Certificate. Even buildings beyond four stories require ECCs. More so, dolomite quarrying and seaside dumping. Dolomite sand spills reportedly choked corals while being loaded onto barges in Cebu. It was dumped on bio-diverse Manila Bay.

(2) Fisheries Code. The Code requires a detailed environmental impact study prior to undertaking projects that “will affect the quality of the environment”. It prohibits aquatic pollution – anything introduced to water bodies that can harm living and non-living marine resources, or humans. Violators can be penalized P15,000 a day until the illegality stops, plus P1 million and 12 years imprisonment.

(3) Clean Water Act. The Act prohibits depositing of any material into water bodies or their margins that cause pollution. Those include materials “liable to be washed into such surface water, either by tide action or by storm, floods – which could cause water pollution or impede natural flow in the water body”. Penalties: P200,000 with 10 percent escalation every two years; and closure, suspension or cessation of (company) operations.

(4) National Cultural Heritage Act. The Manila bayside from Del Pan Bridge, Intramuros, Manila, to the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Pasay City, is a national historical landmark. The National Historical Commission so declared in 2012. The Act prohibits alteration of its original features unless approved by the Commission. A stone’s throw from Rizal Monument, the fake white beach is within that stretch. Penalties: P200,000, plus ten years imprisonment.



(5) Local Government Code. National agencies like DENR must consult stakeholders of the local government unit on projects. Specified are those “that may cause pollution, climatic change, depletion of nonrenewable resources, loss of cropland, rangeland or forest cover, and extinction of animal or plant species.” The city or municipal council, in this case, Manila’s, must approve the project.

The New Civil Code declares: “Article 5. Acts executed against the provisions of mandatory or prohibitory laws shall be void, except when the law itself authorizes their validity.

“Article 7. Laws are repealed only by subsequent ones, and their violation or non-observance shall not be excused by disuse, or custom or practice to the contrary... Administrative or executive acts, orders and regulations shall be valid only when they are not contrary to the laws or the Constitution.

“Article 25. Thoughtless extravagance in expenses for pleasure or display during a period of acute public want or emergency may be stopped by order of the courts at the instance of any government or private charitable institutions.”

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu was asked to investigate the breaches. So were Directors Ricardo Calderon of the Biodiversity Management Bureau and William Cuñado of the Environment Management Bureau. Agriculture Secretary William Dar and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Director Eduardo Gongona were asked to stop the dumping. So were NHC Chairman Rene Escalante and Manila Mayor Isko Moreno. The ombudsman was requested to file charges.

Signatories: Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, Oceana-PH; Rodne Galicha, Living Laudato Si; Atty. Gerthie Mayo-Anda, Environmental Legal Assistance Center; Atty. Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, Philippine Earth Justice Center; Dr. Jurgenne Primavera, Zoological Society of London-PH; Godofredo Villapando Jr., National Movement for Food Sovereignty; Mayette Rodriguez, NGOs for Fisheries Reform; Dinna Umengan, Tambuyog Development Center; Dr. Francis Magbanua, Philippine Society of Freshwater Science; Pablo Rosales, Pangisda Pilipinas; Leon Dulce, Kalikasan People’s Network; Jaybee Garganera, Alyansa Tigil Mina; Gerry Arances, Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development; Aileen Lucero, Eco Waste Coalition; Ramon San Pascual, Health Care Without Harm-Asia; Jerwin Baure, Advocates of Science and Technology for the People; Cynthia Adeline Layusa-Oliveros, Isla Biodiversity Conservation; Rainier Manalo, Biodiversity Conservation Society; Lia Alonzo, Center for Environmental Concerns; Grace Diamante, Mindoro Biodiversity Foundation; Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya; Kisha Erah Muana, STEP Philippines; Harold Banggay, Project MariKnows; Jon Bonifacio, Saribuhay; Xian Guevarra, Youth Advocates for Climate Action; Hannah Bolante, Hirakaya; Chuck Baclagon, 350.orgpilipinas; and Teody Navea, Sanlakas-Cebu.

(Read also Gotcha, 11 Sep. 2020, “Plant Mangroves, Not Cancerous Fake Sand”: <https://tinyurl.com/yattypph>

* * *

Catch Sapol radio show, Saturdays, [8 to 10 a.m.](#), DWIZ (882-AM).

My book “Exposés: Investigative Reporting for Clean Government” is available on Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/Amazon-Exposes>

Paperback: <https://tinyurl.com/Anvil-Exposes> or at National Bookstores.

* * *

Gotcha archives: <https://tinyurl.com/Gotcha-Archives>

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/10/02/2046550/manila-fake-white-beach-defied-laws-science-history-heritage>



DENR Shares Ecosystems Research Findings Online

BY VILLAGE CONNECT ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

DENR Shares Ecosystems Research Findings Online



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has launched an online platform providing public access to various significant studies on environment and natural resources generated by its Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB).

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the platform hosts various ERDB research findings and scientific publications that proved crucial in formulating DENR programs, policies, and decisions for the protection and conservation of the environment.

“As Secretary of the DENR, I am very pleased that through the collective efforts of the scientists, experts, researchers, and employees of the ERDB, the Department gets to understand more about our environment and every little [thing]that goes with it,” Cimatu said.

Cimatu’s speech was delivered by Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources, and Legislative Affairs Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. during the virtual launch of the online platform via Facebook live last Sept. 15.

“They spend months, even years, doing rigorous research to provide the Department with the scientific knowledge that we need,” he added.

The research materials can now be downloaded from the ERDB’s official website, <https://erdb.denr.gov.ph/>.

Among those that can be downloaded from the website are *Sylvatrop*, *Canopy International*, and *Research Information Series on Ecosystems* or RISE.

Sylvatrop is the DENR’s official technical journal for new and original scientific information and research breakthroughs on ecosystems and natural resources, while *Canopy International* is a semi-technical publication on science-based stories about ecosystems issues and solutions.

RISE, on the other hand, is a compilation of pertinent knowledge on the propagation and planting techniques of important indigenous reforestation species to help students and researchers save these species from extinction.

Cimatu said the online platform is one of the innovative ways of the DENR to reach the public, especially amid the coronavirus pandemic.



“Even in the midst of a pandemic, this is our response to the growing demand for information that may empower us Filipinos into achieving sustainable growth and development,” he stressed.

The DENR chief also noted how research is vital to the agency’s strategic programs and policies that help address major environmental problems in the country.

“This pool of knowledge serves as a vehicle to allow us to move further. Science helps us arrive at more informed decisions. It tells us what to do next, which steps to take, and how far we will go. This is how we use knowledge in the DENR as a fuel towards growth and productivity,” he pointed out.

For his part, ERDB Director Henry Adornado vowed that the bureau will continuously update and populate its website with new research information.

“We assure the public, more so, the DENR bureaus, offices, and attached agencies that ERDB will live up to its mandate of providing more technologies and information for the protection and betterment of the environment,” Adornado said.

ERDB’s research publications are widely used by different DENR offices, state universities and colleges, public libraries and other institutions.



DENR reminds ‘plantitos,’ ‘plantitas’: Collecting wildlife, plants punishable by law

September 30, 2020 2 min read

MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) reminded “plantitos and plantitas” that collection of wildlife, whether animals or even plants, is illegal and is punishable by law.

In a Facebook post on Tuesday, the DENR-NCR said this is stated under Section 27 of Republic Act 9147, otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

The agency stated in its post that while they promote urban gardening and greening in the cities, there may be people or individuals who are unaware that such law exists, thus the reminder.

“Nais naming paalalahanan ang lahat na ang pagkolekta o pagkuha ng buhay-ilang (wildlife), halaman man o hayop, mula sa kanilang natural habitat ay ipinagbabawal (we want to remind everyone that collecting or harvesting of wildlife, may it be plants (flora) or animals (fauna) from its natural habitat is not allowed by law),” the post reads.

The DENR-NCR urged the public to report to proper authorities if they know anyone or any group who may be involved in such illegal acts.

“Maaring makulong ng hanggang apat na taon at pagmultahin ng hanggang PHP300,000 ang mga mapapatunayang iligal na nangongolekta ng halaman mula sa kabundukan at kagubatan (anyone who will be caught and proven to be violating this law may be jailed for up to four years and fined for up to PHP300,000 for collecting plants from the mountains or the forests),” the agency said.

Because of the pandemic, most parts of the country were placed under community quarantine.

Businesses and work were grounded to a halt and people were encouraged to stay at home to control the spread of Covid-19 virus.

People have resorted to different hobbies and rediscovered love for plants, which led to the labels “plantitos” and “plantitas”. (PNA)

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2020/09/30/denr-reminds-plantitos-plantitas-collecting-wildlife-plants-punishable-by-law/?fbclid=IwAR0eXAETNXsvr4L6r7aLesalsApMa3va21Kw_R0333AdnWV9AKykMM6nqzE



Leyte municipal council seeks probe on dumping of infectious wastes by quarantine facilities

Published October 1, 2020, 10:53 AM

by [Marie Tonette Marticio](#)

TACLOBAN CITY – The municipal council of Palompon, Leyte has sought an investigation on the alleged illegal dumping of infectious wastes coming from the quarantine and isolation facilities in the municipality.



PHOTO VIA MARIE MARTICIO/ MANILA BULLETIN

A resolution has been signed by the municipal council to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau 8 (DENR-EMB8), Department of Health-8 (DOH-8), appealing for an immediate investigation following reports and social media posts in the first week of September of the alleged dumping of infectious wastes in Brgy. San Miguel of the said town.

Photos have also circulated online of personnel wearing personal protective equipment (PPEs) dumping wastes in an open dumpsite. They were on board a vehicle purportedly owned by the local government unit with its logo on it.

Section 37 of Republic Act 9003 prohibits the use of open dumps for solid wastes by any person, including local government units (LGUs).

Section 38 of the said law also provides that an environmental compliance certificate (ECC), including permits and other clearances, must be first obtained before the construction, operation, and expansion of a solid waste management facility.

Last week, an environmental suit was also filed against DBSN Farms Agriventures Corporation (DBSN) allegedly owned by a top official of Palompon.

The said complaint seeks for the issuance of a Writ of Environmental Protection Order, Clean-up, Restoration, Rehabilitation of the affected environment with Prayer for Temporary Environmental Protection Order against the official and the Environment Management Bureau as an unwilling complainant for its alleged failure to enforce its decision finding various environmental violations committed by private respondent since 2017.

The case stemmed from a dumping site owned by DBSN in Brgy. San Joaquin, Palompon, Leyte. Some residents complained of suffering from vomiting and diarrhea due to the flies and odor coming from the wastes in the dumping site.

One of the complainants alleged that wastes such as chicken dung, carcasses, and blood placed in drums, plastic bags, or sacks are transported to the land owned by DBSN.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/01/leyte-municipal-council-seeks-probe-on-dumping-of-infectious-wastes-by-quarantine-facilities/>



Alokasyon ng tubig sa NCR mula Angat Dam ibababa simula Oktubre

Posted by: [Micka Bautista](#) on September 30, 2020 in [News](#)

IBABABA ang distribusyon ng tubig sa Metro Manila simula 1 Oktubre dahil sa patuloy na pagsadsad ng water level sa Angat Dam, ayon sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Itinuturing ang Angat Dam sa bayan ng Norzagaray, sa lalawigan ng Bulacan, na pangunahing pinagkukuhaan ng water supply sa Metro Manila ng mga water concessionaire sa lugar.

Ayon kay NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David, Jr., ibababa ulit sa 44 cubic meters per second ang alokasyon sa Kamaynilaan.

“Considering the level of Angat Dam at around 3 meters below the minimum operating level of 180 meters and to manage the relatively low level of the dam, the Board approved the allocation of 44 meters per second for MWSS and 25 cms for NIA for the month of October,” pahayag ni David.

Noong Setyembre, ibinaba ng NWRB sa 46 cubic meter per second ang alokasyon ng tubig sa Metro Manila mula 48 dahil sa pagbaba ng water level sa naturang dam. **(MICKA BAUTISTA)**

Source: https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2020/09/30/alokasyon-ng-tubig-sa-ncr-mula-ang-at-dam-ibababa-simula-oktubre/?fbclid=IwAR2x_Pg9NZhTaX4q5n4dNaeAoPNjmbNoDK6iQE9U7yhvnZwLBLRH_EJoSr8



ACB at 15: responding to biodiversity challenges post-2020

By ACB Published on October 1, 2020

LAGUNA, Oct. 1 -- The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) on Wednesday celebrated its 15th founding anniversary, taking stock of its milestones and challenges in the past years as the regional response to biodiversity loss.

Under the theme ACB@15: One ASEAN for Biodiversity, 2020 and beyond, the ACB has slated a series of virtual events this month, which culminated with the announcement of the finalists of the ASEAN-wide photo contest Zooming in on Biodiversity in a ceremony broadcast live on Facebook today. The online anniversary event was hosted by Ms. Katrina Kendall, Miss Earth England 2015 and protected area ambassador.

The contest aimed to celebrate the beauty and diversity of ASEAN's natural resources, including its revered ASEAN Heritage Parks, with Healing with Biodiversity: Building a Better Normal as its overall theme. The announcement of the contest finalists was one of the highlights of today's online anniversary celebrations that took place through Facebook live.

"While as a region we are endowed with a variety of diverse ecosystems and species, each ASEAN member state possesses its own unique biodiversity. We boast of a diverse cultural heritage that is truly characteristic of our region's identity," ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim said during the FB live event.

The ACB, the only ASEAN centre headquartered in the Philippines, was created through an agreement signed by all the ASEAN Member States on 27 September 2005.

Lim highlighted some of the ACB's milestones in the past 15 years, including the expansion of its network of partners within and outside ASEAN and its strategic and technological support for the ASEAN Heritage Parks, including the capacity development of AMS in law enforcement and conducting monitoring activities. She also cited the livelihood opportunities it has provided to local communities in and around protected areas.

"Protected areas form a significant part of the world's biodiversity, and provide a wide range of ecosystem services to the people of ASEAN," said Lim highlighting that through the ASEAN Heritage Parks Programme, the Region's network of the best and biodiversity rich protected areas and nature reserves or ASEAN Heritage Parks has significantly grown from 22 in 2005 to 49 at present.

Lim likewise announced the upcoming release of the third edition of the ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook (ABO 3), a comprehensive report on the state of biodiversity and key strategic policy recommendations in the Region. "With the ABO 3, along with the ASEAN Clearing House Mechanism, the ACB has been creating avenues for sharing and exchange of biodiversity information and knowledge," she added.

The ACB executive director also called for intensified collaboration with different sectors on integrating biodiversity consideration in the development processes, with 2020 marking the deadline for global targets to reduce biodiversity loss while the world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.



Representatives from the AMS, including the managers of AHPs and ACB's past seconded officers, as well as development partners, likewise shared their appreciation to ACB's conservation work.

Dr. Lena Chan, senior director of the International Biodiversity Conservation Division of Singapore's National Parks Board of Singapore and a Governing Board member of the ACB, congratulated the ACB and extended gratitude to its partners, the European Union, the Federal Government of Germany, the Government of Japan and other international organisations, which have been strongly supporting the ACB's activities since its inception.

She added that the global pandemic is an opportunity to advocate transformational change to achieve the vision of living in harmony with nature in the development and implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. "The ACB stands with the global community to effectively contribute to this vision," she said.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Elizabeth Buensuceso in her video message described ACB as "a trusted institution in the service of the ASEAN Member States' desire to preserve biodiversity for generations to come—our children, their children and grandchildren will be the beneficiaries of the important work that the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity is doing."

Other conservation leaders also participated in the online event. Ivonne Higuero, Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) underlined the role that the AMS play as Parties to CITES in the fight against wildlife crime.

"(The AMS) are deploying considerable means to fight trafficking and to keep the use and trade of wild fauna and flora legal and sustainable. As the scale and gravity of the global biodiversity-loss crisis become increasingly clear, the work of institutions like the ACB remains crucial," she said in her message.

Despite the mobility restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACB, in support of the AMS and its various partners, remained active in its communication campaigns to inform, raise awareness, and mobilise support for biodiversity conservation.

A series of diverse virtual events in collaboration with the AMS was likewise held as part of the ACB anniversary celebration. These include Episode 3: #ASEAN Youth Getting Ready for the New Normal with the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Foundation, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent; Dialogue for Potential Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures Sites with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat; ASEAN Heritage Parks and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Impacts, Responses and Recovery with the Directorate General of Nature Resources and Ecosystem Conservation (KSDAE) of the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF); and the Kick Off Event: ASEAN-CBD Virtual Dialogue on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework with the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (KeTSA) of Malaysia. (ACB)



Nestlé, Pure Oceans launch Basura Bangka waste management

By The Manila Times

October 2, 2020



Nestlé, Pure Oceans

FOOD and beverage manufacturer Nestlé Philippines and marine conservation social enterprise Pure Oceans have partnered to design, procure and operate a prototype boat called Basura Bangka to transport plastic waste from coastal and island communities in Batangas to recycling facilities.

Together with other stakeholders, Nestlé is engaged in recovering and diverting post-consumer waste away from landfills, waterways and oceans with the boat as component of the company's high-priority strategy to reduce its environmental footprint and collect and recycle soft plastic waste.

Pure Oceans, led by Founder and CEO Pia Roxas Ocampo, is based in Mabini, Batangas and works with coastal and island communities on sustainable solutions to the problem of marine plastic litter, aiming to keep reefs and seas plastic-free.

Under the partnership, Nestlé funds the development of the Basura Bangka to support Pure Oceans programs in Mabini and Tingloy.

“Given the geographical set-up of the Philippines, we need to find waste management solutions as well for coasts and islands. We therefore warmly welcome our partnership with Pure Oceans in our first direct initiative to divert plastic waste from coastal areas and islands,” Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki said.

The Philippines as an archipelago has been identified, after China and Indonesia, as a country most responsible for the leakage of plastics into seas and oceans.

Meanwhile, Ocampo said Nestlé's support for programs like Linis Islas shows a company trying to do better in a changed world, conscious of the impact of their manufacturing choices on the environment and the farthest, most underserved of their customers.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/02/public-square/nestle-pure-oceans-launch-basura-bangka-waste-management/775104/>



Phase out coal, church leaders urge

By: [Iodee Agoncillo](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:12 AM October 01, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Over 80 dioceses and 69 out of the 85 diocesan social action centers in the country have called on various sectors to work toward the phaseout of “dirty, deadly and costly” coal.

Bishops and church officials of the Social Action Network and different dioceses recently attended an online gathering called “Withdraw from Coal: Stewardship and Energy for the Earth” as part of this year’s Season of Creation to push for clean and renewable energy.

Earlier this week, the National Secretariat for Social Action/Caritas Philippines, the social action arm of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, urged the government to declare a climate of emergency, and honor international agreements on caring for the Earth.

NASSA/Caritas Philippines executive secretary Fr. Antonio Labiao Jr. and national director Rev. Jose Bagaforo noted that the Philippines has largely been dependent on coal, the cheapest fuel option but the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

“Coal is our unfortunate contribution to the nonstop destruction of our natural and rich ecosystems, the displacement of communities, especially indigenous peoples, and premature deaths due to health risks posed by coal operation,” they said.

Quoting the Department of Energy, the religious organization said that as of December 2018, there were 27 fully operational coal-fired power plants in the country even as some nations in Europe and Asia had turned to cleaner energy sources.

The country’s dependence on imported coal, mostly from Indonesia and Australia, has reduced its energy self-sufficiency and puts it at greater risk in terms of climate change exposure, price volatility and unfavorable foreign exchanges, it added.

These in turn have resulted in high electricity rates, unstable power supply and bad investments both for the government and private energy players.

In June, Pope Francis issued guidelines for carrying out the environmental encyclical Laudato Si and called on the Church to divest itself of investments in fossil fuel companies.



Pregnant Fraser's dolphin found dead in Bohol

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 01 2020 08:25 PM



The dead Fraser's dolphin on the beach area of Sitio Talisay, Barangay Bil-isan, Panglao, Bohol, on Sept. 23, 2020. Photo from Bohol Environment Management Office's Facebook page

MANILA — A pregnant Fraser's dolphin was found dead at the beach area of Sitio Talisay, Barangay Bil-isan, Panglao, Bohol, authorities said recently.

According to the Bohol Environment Management Office, a fisherman from the area saw the body of the animal floating in the sea at 5:00 in the morning of Sept. 23.

“A fisherman from the said barangay first saw the dolphin floating and lifeless at the sea at 5 in the morning and washed into the beach area during the low tide,” it said in a Facebook post.

“The fisherman reported the incident to the officials of the barangay. The barangay officials, fishery technician of LGU-Panglao, staff of BFAR-PFO Bohol and staff from this office examined and took the morphometrics of the dead dolphin,” it added.

The dead dolphin underwent necropsy last Monday.

They later on found out that the dolphin was pregnant.

“During the necropsy of Doc. Jo Marie V. Acebes, Senior Museum Researcher of National Museum Philippines and volunteers from Balyena.org, they found out that the dead Fraser's Dolphin that was recently reported stranded in Bil-isan, Panglao was actually pregnant,” it said.

“A fetus of a Fraser's Dolphin was found inside her with a length of 49.5 centimeters.”



CDN Digital 16h · 🌐

LOOK: A dead Fraser's dolphin was found by a fisherman along the beach area of Panglao in Bohol province on September 23. After necropsy, it was revealed that the dolphin was pregnant.

Bohol Environment Management Office | via [INQUIRER.net](https://www.inquirer.net)



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Red tide spreads to Biliran

Published 3 hours ago on October 2, 2020 03:20 AM

By [Elmer Recuerdo](#)



RED tide has made its way to the waters of Biliran, an island-province located in Eastern Visayas. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WSJ/STPETECATALYST

The red tide contamination that is sweeping bodies of water in Eastern Visayas has crept into the coastal waters of Biliran island-province.

Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) officer Luzviminda Robin said seawater samples off Biliran waters were found positive for pyrodinium bahamense, a toxic microorganism that causes paralytic shellfish poisoning.

Robin advised the public to refrain from gathering, selling and eating all types of shellfish and alamang (small shrimp) to avoid possible poisoning.

BFAR and local government units are closely monitoring the coastal waters of Biliran Islands to safeguard public health and protect the shellfish industry.

Leni Dejeto-Yap, a marine biology professor at the University of the Philippines, said unpredictable weather condition in Region VIII is one of the contributing factors for presence of toxic algal blooms.

“It is the continuous and alternate rainy and sunny days. The rains bring in nutrients from sewers which act as fertilizers, and then, the sunny days provide the light,” she said. “These are microscopic plants, so they bloom, multiply under these conditions.”

Yap added that the spread of red tide can also be an indication of pollution if nutrients in the seawater is unusually high.

Previously, 12 bodies of water in Eastern Visayas were declared contaminated — in Daram, San Pedro Bay in Basey, Villareal Bay, Cambatutay Bay in Tarangnan, Zumarraga and Irong-irong Bay in Catbalogan all in Samar province; in Eastern Samar the Matarinao Bay in the towns of General MacArthur, Hernani, Quinapondan and Salcedo, and coastal waters of Guiuan; and Leyte’s Cancabato Bay in Tacloban, coastal waters of Leyte town and in Carigara Bay affecting the towns of Babatngon, San Miguel, Barugo, Carigara and Capoocan.

Red tide also wreaked havoc on the livelihood of Jiabong, the mussels capital of Eastern Visayas. Residents said they have incurred losses of at least P300,000 a day since contamination began in July.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/02/red-tide-spreads-to-biliran/>



NCR's shift to MGCQ possible, says Palace

Published 13 hours ago on October 1, 2020 05:13 PM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) @tribunephl_MJB



Metro Manila's shift to a less restrictive form of community quarantine next month is possible due to the declining number of coronavirus infections, Malacañang said Thursday.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said this after Paranaque Mayor Edwin Olivarez and Metro Manila Council President Edwin Olivarez floated the possibility that the capital region might be downgraded to modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) in November.

"It is not an impossibility because we were really able to decrease the number of cases," Roque said at a Palace briefing.

Metro Manila, considered as the epicenter of the pandemic, has been placed under general community quarantine (GCQ) for nearly four months. The said quarantine status allows public transportation and most industries but prohibits tourism activities, entertainment events, and mass gatherings.

Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., who serves as chief implementer of the National Action Plan against COVID-19, said the government's pandemic task force has been discussing if it would "implement a stricter MGCQ or a more permissive GCQ."

He said officials have observed that Filipinos are being complacent in areas classified under MGCQ – the most relaxed form of quarantine status in the state's four-tier quarantine classification.

"In our visits all over the country, when MGCQ is declared, there seems to be too much relaxation of restrictions," Galvez said in a separate briefing.

The Philippines has so far recorded over 310,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, more than half of which came from Metro Manila.

Quezon City has tallied the highest number of cases among all cities in the metropolis, followed by Manila, Caloocan, Taguig, and Makati.

Business groups have been pushing to allow the reopening of more establishments and public transportation in the capital region.

Analysts and statisticians, however, have warned that a premature imposition of MGCQ would lead to an "exponential" rise of COVID-19 cases in December.

The government has been constantly reminding the public to practice health measures against the dreaded virus, including mask wearing and physical distancing.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/01/ncrs-shift-to-mgcq-possible-says-palace/>



Gov't eyes improved contact tracing

Published 14 hours ago on October 1, 2020 04:44 PM

By [Gabbie Parlade](#) [@tribunephil_gabs](#)



The national government is targeting to improve its contact tracing efforts as it aims to detect all close contacts of a COVID-positive individual within 24 hours, National Task Force Chief Implementer Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said on Thursday.

He said that currently the contact tracing team is able to identify 10 close contacts for every positive patient as compared to its previous development of only tracing five individuals.

“Ang ano po talaga natin mapalakas ang contact tracing team na at least from 1 is to 5 to 1 is to 10 or 1 is to 15 until such time na makuha na po natin na perfectly na yung first contact makuha po natin within 24 hours, 100 percent,” he said in a televised briefing.

However, he said that with more individuals traced the capacity and release of results in testing should also be able to keep up with it.

This includes a faster turnaround time for RT-PCR tests and a higher capacity to test more people.

“Yung testing po natin palakasin lumalagay na po tayo sa 36,000 per day pero kailangan po yung turn around time po natin iimprove po natin sya na from 72 hours kailangan malagay po natin talaga na within 48 to 24 hours,” he said.

Galvez said that these initiatives are part of the strengthening of response among local government units as imposed through the recalibrated coordinated operations to defeat the pandemic (CODE) strategy.

The CODE strategy was first implemented during the two-week lockdown proposed by medical workers, where officials go into local communities to lay down protocols in containing the virus especially in high-risk areas.

But with its expansion under the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) resolution, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire earlier said that it will now be included even among workplaces and to further areas.

In addition, Galvez said that the government will be augmenting the available beds among quarantine facilities to around 42,000 more.

“Kailangan na maprepare natin is all in all... kasama na ‘yung hotel at quarantine facilities, kailangan natin ng more than 42,000 beds para lahat ng positive ay mailagay po natin doon,” he said.



He noted that a P4.5 billion fund has been allocated under the Bayanihan 2 or the Bayanihan to Recover As One to pay for the isolation among hotels and motels of about 128,000 infected patients.

Another P4.5 billion, meanwhile, he also said will be utilized by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to help hospitals and other isolation facilities to increase the number of beds.

As of posting, the Philippines has reported more than 311,000 individuals infected with COVID-19 with active cases at 52,702.



National Government to borrow P540 billion for BSP

[Lawrence Agcaoili](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 2, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The national government is borrowing an additional P540 billion from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to beef up its war chest to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno told reporters the national government has requested a provisional advance from the central bank.

“The national government has requested for fresh provisional advance of P540 billion to be settled on or before Dec. 29 at zero interest,” Diokno said.

He said the request would be submitted to the Monetary Board for approval soon.

The BSP chief said the fresh borrowings would be used for budgetary support and to plug the widening budget shortfall as a result of the pandemic.

Diokno said terms of the request would be shared once approved by the Monetary Board.

Last March 24, the BSP launched a P300-billion stimulus package to revive the pandemic-stricken economy.

It also entered into a repurchase agreement with the Bureau of the Treasury to lend as much as P300 billion to the national government, at zero interest, with a maximum repayment period of six months.

On top of the repurchase agreement, the BSP has been purchasing government securities in the secondary market.

The recently signed Republic Act 11494 or the Bayanihan to Recover as One (Bayanihan 2) raised the cap on the amount the BSP could advance to the national government to 30 percent of its earnings from the previous 20 percent.

In other words, the BSP could provide as much as P850 billion instead of the previous ceiling of P540 billion.

ING Bank Manila senior economist Nicholas Mapa earlier said the new law signed by President Duterte on Sept. 11 opened the door for more burden-sharing for the central bank.

“The advance was made via a three-month repurchase agreement (extendable to six months) that will expire at the end of this month and with the timely passage of Bayanihan 2, this opens the door for a more hefty burden sharing arrangement between the fiscal and monetary authorities,” Mapa said.

The Duterte administration is expected to leave behind a record P13.7 trillion in debt as it struggles to fight COVID-19 and revive the economy.

Data from the Treasury showed the government borrowed P1.86 trillion from domestic creditors through the sale of Treasury bills, Treasury bonds and Retail Treasury Bonds, as well as P481.2 billion from the offshore debt market from January to July.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/10/02/2046510/national-government-borrow-p540-billion-bsp>



ARTA hastens automation initiatives to cushion Covid-19 impact

October 1, 2020, 8:14 pm



MANILA – The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) is working to speed up the implementation of existing government programs on streamlining and automation to encourage business activities and help cushion the economic impact of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

In line with its continuous push toward e-governance, ARTA called on all local government units (LGUs) to adopt the Integrated Business Permits and Licensing System Software (iBPLS) developed by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

The iBPLS is a software that would enable LGUs and their constituents to apply and process business, building permits and occupancy permits electronically.

The ARTA, on the other hand, strongly encouraged the LGUs who have already automated their permits systems to start working toward linking their systems with the Central Business Portal (CBP) which will be rolled out by ARTA and DICT by November this year.

The goal is to have LGUs and national government agencies (NGAs) integrate their processes to the CBP to have one consolidated platform that will receive applications and capture application data involving business-related transactions.

Through the portal, a virtual National Business One-Stop Shop will be made available to the public, making it easier to register One-Person Corporations and Less than Five–Person Corporations.

The portal has been launched last Friday to a targeted market which consists of select law and accounting firms.

With its national launch in November, ARTA projects that business registration in the country could be completed in one step within just a day in 2021.

By the end of 2020, ARTA also seeks the mandatory on-boarding of trade regulatory government agencies involved in issuance of license, permit, clearance and certification for movement (import-export-transit) of cargo to the Department of Finance's TradeNet System, the National Single Window System that will allow for the online processing of import and export permits. (ARTA PR)

Tourism Dept., may paalala sa mga magbabakasyon sa Boracay

Robie de Guzman • October 1, 2020



MANILA, Philippines – Muli nang binuksan ngayong araw ang isla ng Boracay para sa mga turista matapos ang mahigit anim na buwang pagsasara bunsod ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Ibig sabihin, maaari nang bumisita sa isla ang mga nais mag-bakasyon. Ngunit paalala ng Department of Tourism (DOT), may mga requirement na kailangang sundin.

Batay sa ibinabang panuntunan ng DOT, ang mga magbabakasyon sa Boracay ay obligadong sumailalim sa RT-PCR test para sa COVID-19, at ipakita ang dokumentong nagpapatunay na negatibo sila sa virus dalawa hanggang tatlong araw bago ang petsa ng kanilang biyahe.

Habang hinihintay ang resulta ng test, dapat ding sumailalim sa quarantine ang pasahero hanggang sa araw ng kanilang biyahe.

Sinabi rin ni Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat na kailangang may kumpirmadong booking ang pasahero sa alinman sa 200 accredited hotels sa Boracay.

“Pwede ngang galing sa NCR at saka no age restrictions. Of course, ang importante pala, kailangan naka-book ka sa isang hotel. Lahat ng hotel doon dapat DOT-accredited hotel kasi ‘yon ay pumasa sa health and safety protocols ng DOT,” ang wika ni Romulo-Puyat.

Payo ng kalihim sa mga biyahero, alamin sa website ng DOT ang iba pang requirement bago sila magbiyahe upang maiwasan ang aberya.

Kasabay ng pagbubukas ng turismo sa isla ay ibinalik na rin ang biyahe ng mga eroplano patungong Boracay. Dalawa hanggang tatlong flight schedules kada linggo ang inilaan ng Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific at Air Asia.

Ayon kay Michelle Lim, ang Corporate Communications Specialist ng Cebu Pacific Air, kakaunti lang ang bumiyaheng pa-Boracay ngayong araw ngunit inaasahan na nila ito lalo’t marami ang nangangamba sa kanilang kaligtasan sa gitna ng pandemiya.

“The flight was about, it had about 10 percent of the seats occupied. The load kasi are building pa at the moment. In the next few weeks or months, as more people are inspired to travel as well and are assured that everything is safe and everything is all set for them, then it would encourage them to go out and travel,” ang pahayag ni Lim.

Paalala rin ng mga otoridad na mahigpit pa ring ipinatutupad ang health protocols gaya ng pagsusuot ng face mask at face shield, physical distancing at minimum contact upang maiwasan ang pagkalat ng COVID-19.

Nanawagan rin ang airline companies sa mga pasahero na alamin ang updated travel restrictions at regulations na inilalatag ng pamahalaan sa gitna ng nararanasang krisis. – **RRD (mula sa ulat ni Correspondent Asher Cadapan Jr.)**

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/tourism-dept-may-paalala-sa-mga-magbabakasyon-sa-boracay/>



Boracay reopens tourism

The locality is likewise required to ensure the strict enforcement of minimum health and safety guidelines as well as emergency response protocols.

Published 6 hours ago on October 2, 2020 12:45 AM

By [Harry Roque](#) @AttyHarryRoque



The paradise island of Boracay was reopened to the public as a tourist destination yesterday, 1 October, following its closure because of the current pandemic.

Tourists from areas under the general community quarantine can now enter Boracay, as well as those coming from the Western Visayas as was previously allowed.

I am happy with this development as I consider myself a son of Boracay, being one of the firsts to visit the island back in 1988 when it was still untouched by development.

I believe that reopening Boracay will help reinvigorate tourism in the country, as the island paradise is considered as one of our top tourist destinations. Its reopening is also part of the economy's gradual restart to provide jobs and livelihood to those who have been affected by the pandemic.

However, in the excitement of the prospect of visiting Boracay, let us not forget that we are still in the middle of our battle against COVID-19. The virus is still very much around us and we still have to be extra careful, and we need to consider this matter as we plan our travel itineraries.

Thus, visitors who wish to come to Boracay will still have to comply with the minimum health standards and other requirements to ensure everyone's health and safety. Prior to traveling to Boracay, visitors should first do the online health declaration via the web page aklan.gov.ph, fill out the necessary information and save a copy of the health declaration.

Attach a copy of the health declaration, a negative RT-PCR test result taken not more than 48 hours prior to travel to Boracay, a confirmed accommodation booking slip, and a proof of identification and send the documents to touristboracay@gmail.com. Wait for the email response form the validator, and if processing is successful, a tourist QR code will be sent along with a copy of a health declaration.

IATF Resolution 74 underscores the test-before-travel requirement that necessitates a negative RT-PCR test result 48 hours prior to travel. To ensure the validity of the RT-PCR test result, travelers are strongly advised to observe strict quarantine immediately after undergoing the test until the date of travel.

Both young and old alike can come to Boracay as the IATF relaxed the age restrictions for this purpose. However, those who have comorbidities or other existing health conditions that would make them vulnerable to COVID-19 are still restricted from visiting the island.



The IATF also directed the establishment of a central point for screening tourists who will be coming from land, air, or sea. The locality is likewise required to ensure the strict enforcement of minimum health and safety guidelines as well as emergency response protocols. Lastly, the protocols require an operational COVID-19 laboratory in the locality.

All of these protocols and guidelines were put in place to ensure that tourists visiting Boracay will have a worry-free and enjoyable experience to truly enjoy what the island paradise has to offer.

The reopening of Boracay to tourism will be good not only for the economy but also for the mental and emotional health of people who have been cooped up in their homes for too long now and are longing to find a brief escape from their quarantined lives.



Heresy, bishop says of Boracay reopening

Published 3 hours ago on October 2, 2020 03:40 AM

By [Perseus Echeminada](#)



BORACAY island has yet to regain its party vibe despite welcoming back tourists from GCQ areas on Thursday.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MALAY TOURISM

Ozamiz Diocese's Archbishop Martin Jumoad blasted the reopening of Boracay island to tourists while church-related activities, including the traditional visit to cemeteries on All Saints' Day are still banned.

Jumoad, in a radio interview, expressed dismay over the opening of the world-famous white-sand beach, even to the elderly and those aged below 21.

"I cannot understand this IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force). They opened Boracay to the elderly and young tourists but still bans people from going to church," he said, adding it is a move which can be considered heresy.

He lamented the IATF has not consulted religious leaders in issuing guidelines on church-related activities.

Jumoad said the shutdown of cemeteries, most from 29 October to 4 November, to prevent large gatherings is an indication of the complete disregard of the centuries-old tradition of the Catholic faithful.

Boracay first opened its shores to Western Visayas tourists only, except senior citizens and those aged 21 and below, on 16 June following three months of a coronavirus-induced lockdown. By July, tourists of all ages in the region were allowed.

On Thursday, tourists from areas under general community quarantine, including Metro Manila, were also allowed as long as they are negative from the coronavirus based on reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests from accredited laboratories valid 48 hours before arrival and have confirmed hotel or resort bookings.

Currently, Boracay has at least 4,474 rooms and 204 other accommodations.

Aklan residents are not required to submit RT-PCR negative tests while non-Aklan residents staying even for just a day must also submit negative results.

Phase three of the Boracay reopening may allow international tourists from low-risk countries in December.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said an increase in the number of tourists are expected on 1 and 2 November, both non-working holidays.



“We urge our visitors to be responsible tourists. Follow the guidelines, respect the rules. We can never be too complacent, even on vacation, we must adhere to the minimum health protocols.

Let’s wear our mask when possible,” she said in a virtual media conference.

WITH A REPORT FROM RAYMART T. LOLO



Duterte sa revival ng Bataan Nuclear Power Plant: Itanong sa tao kung gusto nila

By [James Relativo](#)(Philstar.com)

- October 1, 2020 - 5:40pm



Litrato ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte habang nakikipagpulong sa mga miyembro ng Inter-Agency Task Force on the Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), ika-28 ng Setyembre, 2020

Presidential Photos/Robertson Ninal

MANILA, Philippines — Hindi isinasara ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang posibilidad na muling mabuksan ang kontrobersyal na nuclear power plant sa Morong, Bataan ayon kay presidential spokesperson Harry Roque — ngunit dapat daw muna itong idaan sa dayalogo kasama ang mga nakatira sa probinsya.

Ayon sa Malacañang, ito raw ang naging tugon ni Digong sa pakikipag-usap ni dating Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuanco at Energy Secretary Alfonso kamakailan.

"[A]ng sabi ng presidente, 'Start from the ground. Pag-aralan ng mabuti but start from the ground,'" wika ng tagapagsalita ni Duterte, Huwebes, habang nasa isang [press briefing](#) sa Mariveles, Bataan.

"Ibalik sa ground level. Tatanungin ang taumbayan ng Bataan kung ano ba talaga ang gusto nila. Hindi pupwede na nasa taas nanggagaling ang desisyon."

Mahalaga sa mga usapin tulad ng nuclear power ang input ng tinatawag na eksperto.

Dekada '60 hanggang '80 nang simulan ang konstruksyon ng nasabing planta noong panahon ni dating Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos sa isang 389-ektaryang lupain ng gobyerno sa Morong, dahilan para mauna ang Pilipinas sa Southeast Asia pagdating sa nuclear power development,

Gayunpaman, hindi pa rin ito napatatakbo ni isang beses magpahanggang sa ngayon, dahil sa sari-saring pangamba sa kaligtasan. Tuluyan itong na-"mothball" simula nang manungkulan si dating Pangulong Corazon Aquino.



"Tayo raw po ang unang dapat konsultahin kung mabubuksan uli ang Bataan Nuclear Power Plant," dagdag ni Roque, na kilalang taga-Bataan din.

"My family is very active in an advocacy on the nuclear plant. I think everyone here has the same position on the nuclear plant."

Marso 2020 nang matatandaang imungkahi ni Cusi kay Duterte na maglabas ng executive order para maisama sa "energy mix" ng Pilipinas ang nuclear power, lalo na't inaasahang lalaki ang pangangailangan sa kuryente ng Pilipinas.

Enero taong 2019 naman nang [hikayatin](#) ni Michael Shellenberger, presidente ng Environmental Progress, ang gobyerno para buhayin ito ng bansa ang programang nukliyar lalo na't "mas ligtas at mura" raw itong alternatibo kumpara sa pagkamahal-mahal na electricity rates sa bansa — na isa sa pinakamagastos sa mundo.

"In the Philippines, energy is just too expensive. Moving to nuclear electricity gives you cheaper and cleaner energy," ayon sa TED Talk niya na inilabas sa [Facebook live](#) ng Department of Energy (DOE).

"Wind and solar don't generate electricity most of the time. In the Philippines every year, solar generates only 15% of the time... So you have to basically pay for electricity twice: for the solar panels and for power plants to operate when the sun is not shining or the wind is not blowing."

Panganib at utang sa nuclear power?

Sa kabila niyan, tutol ang pa rin ang iba't ibang environmental at advocacy groups sa panunumbalik ng programang nukliyar ng Pilipinas — lalo na't "iresponsable" raw ito at magbabaon sa Pilipinas sa sandamakmak na utang.

"Nuclear power is the most dangerous source of electricity and throughout their life cycle, nuclear plants contribute significantly to climate change. In other parts of the world, nuclear facilities are being decommissioned and phased out from energy plan," ani Khevin Yu, campaigner ng grupong Greenpeace, nitong Marso.

Malaking isyu rin daw na walang ligtas at permanent storage para sa radioactive spent fuel, dagdag ni Yu.



'Yan din ang sinabi noon ni Gerry Arances, executive director ng Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CCED) sa panayam ng **PSN** noong 2019. Bukod sa isyu ng nuclear waste, problematiko rin daw ang pag-ooperate dito lalo na't nakapwesto ang Pilipinas sa Pacific Ring of Fire — rehiyon kung saan madalas lumindol at sumabog ang mga bulkan.

"[O]ur geographical location along a typhoon belt and the Ring of Fire threatens to exponentially magnify the risks of pursuing nuclear energy," ani Arances.

"This type of waste, being radioactive, poses a threat to the biological integrity of the environment in which it is emitted."

Bukod pa ryan, sinabi rin ng Greenpeace na napakamahal daw nito lalo na sa usapin ng power generation.

Taong 2003 nang sabihin ng Massachusetts Institute of Technology na aabot sa US\$2,000 per kilowatt ang estimated cost ng isang planta kung wala itong financing. Nang i-update nila ito noong 2009, lalabas na US\$4,000 na ito.

Dahil sa kamahalan, sinabi rin ni Arances na umaasa raw ngayon sa pagkalaki-laking state subsidies at utang ang mga bansa gayaq ng India at Finland para mamintena ang kani-kanilang nuclear powerplants. Maaaring umasa lang din daw sa mga bansang mayaman sa uranium ang Pilipinas kung ipatutupad ito.



Duterte to DoE: Study, consult residents on reopening of Bataan nuclear plant

By Keith Calayag

October 1, 2020

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte wants the Department of Energy to conduct a thorough study and consult residents of Bataan on the possible reopening of the nuclear power plant in the province.

In a press briefing on Thursday, Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said the Bataan Power Plant was discussed by the President, Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi and former Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuangco, who leads a group of nuclear energy advocates in a recent meeting.

“Pagdating dito sa meeting with Secretary Cusi and former [congressman] Mark Cojuangco, ang sabi po ni President, start from the ground, pag-aralan mabuti and start from the ground.”

“Tatanungin ang taong-bayan ng Bataan kung ano ba talaga ang gusto nila, hindi pupwede na sa taas nanggaling ang desisyon (The residents of Bataan will be asked about what they want exactly and the decision cannot come from above),” Roque added.

The Bataan Power Plant is the country’s only nuclear facility that was built under the late President Ferdinand Marcos. The plant was never fueled due to alleged safety concerns.



Digong ikokonsulta nuke plant sa mga taga-Bataan

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Oct 1, 2020

NEWS



Photo courtesy of pcoo.gov.ph



Nais ng Malacañang na makuha muna ang pulso ng mga taga-Bataan bago pagpasyahan ang planong buksan at gamitin ang Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP).

Ad Asia Banner – below 1st paragraph

Ito ang inihayag ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque kasunod ng naging pulong nina Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte at Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi sa Malacañang.

Sinabi ni Roque na inutos ng Pangulo na kailangan munang konsultahin ang mga taga-Bataan bago umaksiyon sa plano.

“Ang sabi po ni Presidente, kinakailangang pag-aralan at ibalik sa ground level, tanungin ang taongbayan ng Bataan kung ano ba talaga ang gusto nila,” ani Roque.

Ang paggamit sa BNPP ang isa sa tinitingnan ng Department of Energy (DOE) para magkaroon ng katatagan sa supply ng enerhiya sa bansa.

Matagal nang nakatengga ang BNPP at kahit minsan ay hindi nagamit ito ng gobyerno dahil sa pagtutol ng mga taga-Bataan at ilang environmental group na nagsasabing mapanganib umano ito sa kapaligiran at sa kalusugan ng mga taga-Bataan. (Aileen Taliping)



Duterte wants public consultations on revival of Bataan Nuclear Power Plant — Palace

Published October 1, 2020 3:00pm

Malacañang said on Thursday that President Rodrigo Duterte wants public consultations on the possible revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP).

Duterte's spokesperson Harry Roque said the President told Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi during a meeting on Wednesday night that the residents of Bataan should be consulted about the matter.

“Ang sabi po ng ating Presidente, kinakailangan talagang pag-aralan, ibalik sa ground level. Tatanungin ang taumbayan ng Bataan kung ano ba talagang gusto nila. Hindi pupuwede na sa taas nanggagaling ang desisyon,” Roque said at a news conference in Mariveles, Bataan, which was attended by the province's Governor Abet Garcia.

Duterte's directive came more than two months after he formed an inter-agency committee to study the possibility of tapping nuclear energy as the Philippines seeks to ensure steady power supply to meet the demands of a growing population and its economy.

The committee was tasked to formulate a roadmap and timeline in the preparation of the Nuclear Energy Program, measures to address infrastructure gaps, and recommend the necessary steps in the utilization of existing facilities such as but not limited to the mothballed BNPP.

Last year, the Philippines and Russia agreed to explore the possible construction of nuclear power plants in the country, whose current energy mix includes fossil fuels, geothermal and hydro sources as well as biomass.

Environmental groups such as Greenpeace oppose nuclear power, citing concerns over safety and and cost. — **Virgil Lopez/RSJ, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/758038/duterte-wants-public-consultations-on-revival-of-bataan-nuclear-power-plant-palace/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1t8Otr7p-fqZHBO2bdpRte-DqCAzkRv_Yty0bMpuiRQS8zM5uni66HX4



Duterte mulls BNPP opening

By Keith Calayag

October 2, 2020

President Rodrigo Duterte wants the Department of Energy (DoE) to study the reopening of the nuclear power plant in Bataan.



Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. File Photo

In a press briefing on Thursday, Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said the possibility of reviving the mothballed nuclear facility was discussed by the President, Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi and former Pangasinan representative Mark Cojuangco, who leads a group of nuclear energy advocates, in a recent meeting.

“Pagdating po dito sa meeting with Secretary Cusi and former [congressman] Mark Cojuangco, ang sabi po ni President, ‘Start from the ground, pag-aralan mabuti but start from the ground’ (As regards the meeting with Secretary Cusi and former congressman Mark Cojuangco, the President said, ‘Start from the ground; study thoroughly but start from the ground’),” Roque said.

The President also wanted the residents of Bataan consulted as the decision to reopen the plant must not rest on the government alone, he said.

Last July, the President signed Executive Order 116 that calls for the creation of the Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee to be headed by the DoE that will study the viability of tapping nuclear power as part of the country’s energy mix.

The nuclear plant in Napot Point, Morong town is the country’s only nuclear facility. It was built during the time of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

The plant was never fueled because of safety issues.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/02/news/headlines/duterte-mulls-bnpp-opening/775143/>



“At alert level 1, all the aforementioned volcanoes earlier can actually have a steam-driven explosion,” Solidum said.

PHIVOLCS: Four volcanoes under close watch for 'abnormal activity'

Published September 29, 2020 7:44pm

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) said it was monitoring four volcanoes considered to be at "abnormal level."

At a Senate hearing, PHIVOLCS Officer-in-Charge Renato Solidum said that these were the Taal Volcano in Batangas, the Mayon Volcano in Albay, the Bulusan Volcano in Sorsogon, and the Kanlaon Volcano in Negros Island.

“At alert level 1, all the aforementioned volcanoes earlier can actually have a steam-driven explosion,” Solidum said.

“Meaning po, ‘yung mga maiinit na magma can actually boil up the water and cause the explosion. And then people then should not go inside their danger zones. Kasama po sa Taal Volcano Island ang bawal,” he added.

The [Taal Volcano spewed ash](#) in a phreatic eruption in early January due to hydro-thermal activities.

The volcano remained on Alert Level 3 [until the middle of February](#).

According to Solidum, PHIVOLCS observed a “slight change” in the Taal volcano after noting a decrease in its activity from January to March.

“But as of past several weeks, this decline has not continued. We began to see some slight change in its trend from pagbaba po, paghupa po nung pamamamaga because of pressure and nakita na namin na namamaga ulit. So we have to continuously monitor it,” Solidum said.

Meanwhile, the Mayon Volcano showed that it is “slightly again inflating from its base.”

In July, PHIVOLCS said that a slight inflammation at the summit of the Mayon Volcano was observed and that it [continued to emit white steam](#), indicating magmatic activity underneath.



In late June, the agency also reported that hydrothermal or magmatic activity is occurring [beneath the Kanlaon Volcano edifice](#).

Meanwhile, the 2021 budget of PHIVOLCS was [slashed by P133 million](#) earmarked for purchase of equipment and establishment of monitoring stations all over the country. **-NB, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/757739/phivolcs-four-volcanoes-under-close-watch-for-abnormal-activity/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3ozcgiYMV9fIaeUy4ZYTJOPrx6boQnqis7kQ7Mz812xJqzBzFlxy6s52Q



China's other false claims in the SCS

By: [Antonio T. Carpio](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:06 AM October 01, 2020

China's nine-dash line historical claim to 85.7 percent of the South China Sea has been exposed as the fake history of the millennium. An arbitral tribunal formed under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) has ruled with finality that China's claim has no basis in fact and in law. However, China and its propagandists have also invoked other falsities to claim the islands enclosed by its nine-dash line.

First, China and its propagandists claim that the Cairo Declaration of Nov. 27, 1943 awarded the Spratlys and the Paracels to China. The Cairo Declaration was the official statement resulting from the Cairo Conference among US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Chinese President Chiang Kai-Shek. One of the purposes of the conference was to strip Japan of the territories it illegally seized from other countries in the last two world wars.

The Cairo Declaration, however, never awarded the Spratlys and the Paracels to China. The Cairo Declaration stated that "all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, including Manchuria, Formosa, shall be restored to the Republic of China." The Spratlys and the Paracels were not seized or stolen by Japan from China. Japan seized the Paracels from the French and the Spratlys were unoccupied by any state when Japan established a submarine base in Itu Aba in 1939. In fact, in the 1943 China Handbook, an official publication of the Republic of China delineating China's territory, China did not claim the Spratlys. The Cairo Declaration stated that "Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed." The Spratlys and the Paracels fall under these "all other territories," which were not awarded to any state in the Cairo Declaration.

Second, China and its propagandists claim that the Potsdam Declaration of July 26, 1945, issued by US President Harry Truman, UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Chinese President Chiang Kai-Shek, awarded the Paracels and the Spratlys to China. However, the Potsdam Declaration merely reiterated the Cairo Declaration. The Potsdam Declaration stated that the "terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we shall determine." The Spratlys and the Paracels were not awarded to China.

Third, China and its propagandists claim that the San Francisco Peace Conference of 1951 awarded the Spratlys and the Paracels to China. Nothing could be farther from the truth. China, under the People's Republic of China ruled by the Communists, denounced the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty as illegal since China was not represented at the Peace Conference. The USSR's motion to award the Spratlys and the Paracels to China was overwhelmingly rejected by the Peace Conference by a vote of 64 to 3, with one abstention. The 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty rejected the award of the Spratlys and the Paracels to China.



Finally, China and its propagandists claim that since the US has its 1823 Monroe Doctrine in the Western Hemisphere, China should also have its nine-dash line doctrine in the South China Sea. This claim is as ingenious as it is specious. Under the Monroe Doctrine, the US never claimed any territory of countries in Central or South America. Neither did the US claim any maritime area or resources in the Caribbean Sea beyond the then three-nautical-mile territorial sea recognized under international law. Even up to now, the US is not claiming any maritime area or resources beyond what Unclos allows as the US, unlike China, fully respects the exclusive economic zones of Central and South American countries.

The Monroe Doctrine forbade the European imperialist powers from reestablishing their colonies in Central and South America. China's nine-dash line seizes the island territories and maritime zones of Asean coastal states as well as the high seas of the South China Sea, establishing China as the imperialist superpower in the region. The day that China's former Paramount Leader Deng Xiaoping has warned the world about in 1974 — that should China become an imperialist superpower bullying and exploiting weaker states, then the world should unite to overthrow the Chinese government—has dawned on us.

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Magnitude 5.3 quake jolts Surigao del Sur

By Ma. Cristina Arayata **October 1, 2020, 10:34 am**



(Image grabbed from Phivolcs' website)

MANILA – A magnitude 5.3 earthquake jolted Surigao del Sur early Thursday morning, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported.

The tectonic quake struck 63 kilometers northeast of the municipality of Bayabas at 6:10 a.m. It had a depth of 15 kilometers.

The earthquake is an aftershock of the magnitude 5.7 quake that hit the same epicenter last Sept. 21, according to Phivolcs.

Intensity IV was felt in Bayabas, while instrumental intensity I was recorded in Surigao City.

Reported intensity is the traditional way of knowing the intensity based on reports of people who felt the earthquake. Instrumental intensity, on the other hand, is being measured by intensity meter that measures ground acceleration, Phivolcs director Renato Solidum Jr. explained.

Meanwhile, Phivolcs said no damages and aftershocks are expected from the magnitude 5.3 quake.

Solidum earlier said Intensity V is not damaging yet on Phivolcs' scale. Damage starts at Intensity VI, he said. (PNA)



Biodiversity protection needed – UN

By Xinhua

October 2, 2020

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) called for greater ambition to reverse biodiversity loss.

Biodiversity and ecosystems are essential for human progress and prosperity. They are central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change, he told the UN Biodiversity Summit.

Yet, despite repeated commitments, efforts have not been sufficient to meet any of the global biodiversity targets set for 2020.

Much greater ambition is needed — not just from governments, but from all actors in society, he said. Degradation of nature is not purely an environmental issue. It spans economics, health, social justice and human rights, he warned.

“Neglecting our precious resources can exacerbate geopolitical tensions and conflicts.” Yet, too often environmental health is overlooked or downplayed.

The UN Biodiversity Summit provides an opportunity to show the world that there is another way. Humanity has to change course and transform its relationship with the natural world, he said.

“By living in harmony with nature, we can avert the worst impacts of climate change and recharge biodiversity for the benefit of people and the planet,” said the UN chief.

Guterres saw three priorities for conserving and sustainably managing biodiversity. First, nature-based solutions must be embedded in Covid-19 recovery and wider development plans.

Preserving the world’s biodiversity can yield the jobs and economic growth that are urgently needed today.

The World Economic Forum signals that emerging business opportunities across nature could create 191 million jobs by 2030. Africa’s Great Green Wall alone has created 335,000 jobs, he said.

“Nature-based solutions are also vital tools in our fight to solve the climate crisis. Forests, oceans and intact ecosystems are effective carbon sinks.

Healthy wetlands mitigate flooding. We have natural solutions at our fingertips to protect us from natural disasters, job loss and economic fallout. Let us use them,” said Guterres.

Second, economic systems and financial markets must account for and invest in nature.

Nature’s resources still do not figure in countries’ calculations of wealth. The current system is weighted toward destruction, not preservation, he said.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates the annual global funding needed for nature at between \$300 billion and \$400 billion—less than current levels of harmful subsidies for agriculture, mining and other destructive industries, Guterres noted.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/02/news/world/biodiversity-protection-needed-un/775048/>

ICTSI Australia takes steps to reduce carbon emissions

By Genivi Factao

September 30, 2020

Victoria International Container Terminal (VICT), a fully-automated container terminal subsidiary of International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI) in Australia has started installation of LED lighting upgrades to reduce carbon emissions.



VICT secures energy efficiency credits. Photo shows Tom Wheelan, VICT Electrical Superintendent, and Matt Wheaton, VICT Facilities Manager. PHOTO FROM ICTSI

VICT's Engineering and Facilities team said all five automated quay cranes were installed LED lights which resulted in reduced power consumption and carbon emissions

“The upgrade to LED lighting benefits both VICT's ongoing operational expense reduction program and the environment,” ICTSI said.

The upgrade has reduced the overall electricity usage by 971 megawatt hours and carbon emissions by 1,042 tons, or an 88 percent reduction. The upgrade equated to an average savings of AU\$85,000 per annum for VICT.

Each crane originally utilized 47 1,000-watt high-pressure sodium lights. These were replaced with 14 400-watt LED lights strategically placed to maximize the new fittings.

VICT's highly qualified in-house technicians removed the old fittings and ballast to refit the new LED lights, which further reduced light spill to the residential neighborhood near the terminal.

VICT has successfully demonstrated to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) that under the Victoria energy upgrade program, quay cranes should be reclassified and considered for environmental and sustainability initiatives qualified for rebates, as reward similar to other outdoor settings across Victoria.

The team's hard work thereafter secured VICT's eligibility to receive a rebate from the ESC amounting to AU\$200,715.53 or US\$146,347.32. The company has been working with the ESC for further rebates that could unlock additional sustainability programs and increase the rebate amount under the scheme.

VICT has a capability of servicing the largest existing and next-class vessels on trade. The terminal has been operational since 2017.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/09/30/business/maritime-business/ictsi-australia-takes-steps-to-reduce-carbon-emissions/773979/>



‘Humans behind climate disaster’

By [Associated Press](#)

October 2, 2020

NEW YORK: United States President Donald Trump publicly acknowledged that humans bear some blame for climate change, but scientists say the president still was not dealing with the reality of our primary role.

Pressed repeatedly in Tuesday night’s (early Wednesday in Manila) debate, Trump gave one of his fullest accountings yet of what scientists say is an escalating climate crisis threatening every aspect of life.

Pushed by moderator Chris Wallace, and at one point by rival Joe Biden, Trump also pushed back on scientific findings that his environmental rollbacks would increase climate-damaging pollution.

The climate change exchange represented a rare microburst of policy discussion from Trump in a loud, nerve-abrading debate. And it ever so lightly nailed down the position of the Republican president on climate change.

“It is a sad statement about the President’s history on climate change, but it is a major development to see him clearly acknowledge a role of greenhouse gases from human emissions,” said Chris Field, director of the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford University.

“It’s still outright denial of the science, in addition to denial of the devastating impacts,” such as the record wildfires once again forcing evacuations in the Western US, said Michael Mann, a Pennsylvania State University climate researcher and a veteran in scientists’ battle to make ordinary people and leaders face facts on global warming.

Trump said Tuesday that humans — their tailpipe exhaust, oil and gas production, and smokestack fumes — are just one of many culprits for the weather-disrupting deterioration of Earth’s atmosphere.

“You believe that human pollution, gas, greenhouse gas emissions contributes to the global warming of this planet?” Wallace asked. “I think a lot of things do, but I think to an extent, yes,” Trump finally responded after Wallace’s third question pressing on the point. Trump had evaded a direct answer to Wallace’s previous two questions, instead responding with his administration’s standard lines: it wants clean water and clean air, it supports planting trees and it blames worsening wildfires on Western states’ failure to rake dead leaves, branches and trees on forest floors.

Trump’s eventual answer still dodged the key point, which is that burning oil, gas and coal is damaging the climate.

“Humans more than account for all of the climate change over the last 50 years (when the vast amount of the changes have occurred),” Donald J. Wuebbles, a professor of atmospheric sciences at the University of Illinois, said in an email.



Wuebbles, a lead author in the congressionally mandated National Climate Assessment in 2017 to 2018, said because of a change in energy from the sun, Earth had been on a slight cooling trend before human-made heat-trapping gases kicked in.

Trump's attacks on climate scientists and repeated attempts to undo rules and laws reining in fossil-fuel emissions speak "louder than any reluctant admissions about our changing climate," said Kim Cobb, professor of earth and atmospheric sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

The position Trump took Tuesday is more conservative than that of many lawmakers in his party.

Some Republican members of Congress became more outspoken on human-made climate change after Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and other Democrats demanding aggressive action on global warming triumphed in 2018 midterms.



Fires in Brazil's Amazon the worst in a decade, data shows

Jake Spring, Reuters

Posted at Oct 02 2020 02:27 AM

BRASILIA - Fires in Brazil's Amazon increased 13 percent in the first nine months of the year compared with a year ago, as the rainforest region experiences its worst rash of fires in a decade, data from space research agency Inpe showed on Thursday.

Satellites in September recorded 32,017 hot spots in the world's largest rainforest, a 61 percent rise from the same month in 2019.

In August last year, surging fires in the Amazon captured global headlines and prompted criticism from world leaders such as France's Emmanuel Macron that Brazil was not doing enough to protect the rainforest.

On Tuesday, US Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden called for a world effort to offer \$20 billion to end Amazon deforestation and threatened Brazil with unspecified "economic consequences" if it did not "stop tearing down the forest."

President Jair Bolsonaro lambasted Biden's comment as a "cowardly threat" to Brazil's sovereignty and a "clear sign of contempt."

The data from Inpe show that in 2019, fires spiked in August and declined considerably the month after, but this year's peak has been more sustained. Both August and September of 2020 have matched or surpassed last year's single-month high.

"We have had two months with a lot of fire. It's already worse than last year," said Ane Alencar, science director for Brazil's Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM).

"It could get worse if the drought continues. We are at the mercy of the rain."

The Amazon is experiencing a more severe dry season than last year, which scientists attribute in part to warming in the tropical North Atlantic Ocean pulling moisture away from South America.

The entire Amazon, which spans nine countries, currently has 28,892 active fires, according to a fire monitoring tool funded in-part by US space agency NASA.

The fires in September are not only burning recently deforested areas and farmland, where ranchers set them to clear land, but are also increasingly burning virgin forest, a worrying trend that suggests the rainforest is becoming drier and more prone to fire.

Roughly 62 percent of major Amazon fires were in forests in September, compared with only 15 percent in August, according to an analysis of satellite images by US-based non-profit Amazon Conservation.

The warming of the North Atlantic is also helping drive drought in the Brazilian Pantanal, the world's largest wetland, which has suffered more fires this year than ever previously recorded, according to Inpe data.

A Federal University of Rio de Janeiro analysis found that 23 percent of the wetlands, which are home to the densest population of jaguars in the world, has burned.

"Brazil is on fire," said Cristiane Mazzetti, a forest campaigner for advocacy group Greenpeace Brasil, in a statement.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/10/02/20/fires-in-brazils-amazon-the-worst-in-a-decade-data-shows>



It may not be the right time to do this

Published 1 day ago on October 1, 2020 01:00 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



The search continues for Neha Vasava, who was buried under a garbage heap.

AHMEDADBAD, India (AFP) — The search for a 12-year-old girl buried under a huge garbage heap in western India entered its fifth day Wednesday, with hopes fading fast of finding her alive.

Neha Vasava was on top of a 25-30 metre (80-100 feet) mountain of refuse at Ahmedabad's biggest rubbish dump — where she and her family eke out a living — when it collapsed on Saturday evening.

Rescuers have since been sifting through tonnes of stinking garbage and braving feral dogs that roam the area, spread over some 80 acres (32 hectares).

An estimated four million Indians — many of them children — work in filthy, dangerous conditions, as “ragpickers,” sorting through trash for metal and other materials to sell. “The chance of her being alive is negligible, but we will continue the search till we find her,” fire officer Naitik Bhatt said Wednesday.

He said six earthmovers had been deployed in the frantic search, which had been made more difficult by a spell of rain.

“A few hours after she got buried there was rain because of which more garbage could have fallen from the top,” Bhatt told AFP.

A six-year-old boy, who was scavenging with Vasava, was rescued shortly after the collapse.

Nearly 3,500 tons of waste from Ahmedabad city is dumped at the site every day.

The dump, called Mount Pirana by locals because of its height, is home to several hundred impoverished families who live in shanties without piped water or sewage systems.

“We earn our bread by selling the scrap we collect from the dump,” Mahesh, a ragpicker, told AFP.

“We are lucky if we get picked up by some contractor for labour work... Otherwise the only option we have is to sell the scrap,” added the 30-year-old.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/01/it-may-not-be-the-right-time-to-do-this/>