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Cimatu: River dredging to reduce floods in Cagayan this coming rainy season

Published February 2, 2021, 11:15 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

The dredging of the Cagayan River—an ambitious endeavor launched Tuesday—could show its positive impact to the region in time for this year’s typhoon season.



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, chief coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response implementor in the Viayas (NTF AGAINST COVID-19 / MANILA BULLETIN)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu mentioned this during his keynote speech at the event in Lal-lo, Cagayan.

“Today we are on a mission to reduce the perennial flooding of the region of Cagayan Valley. During our Cabinet meeting in December, the President himself approved the widening of the Magapit Narrows (part of the river) and the removal of 19 sandbars in Cagayan River,” Cimatu said.

“Aabutin ito ng taon (It might take years), several years probably that we will be able to dredge the river. Pero (But) within 100 days, that’s about three and a half months, we would be able to partially remove the sandbars,” he said.

“Anong ibig sabihin nito? Kung lalabas nanaman ang mga malalakas na ulan by July, para makita na natin ang resulta nito. Makita rin natin mabawasan na rin itong flooding dahil nakabawas na tayo sa sandbars at nakabawas na tayo sa lupa (What does this mean? By July when strong rains hit us again, we will have seen the results of this. We will see less flooding since we’ve reduced the number of sandbars as well as earth),” explained the former Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) earlier identified a total of 19 sandbars, but immediate dredging was recommended for the three sandbars that were significantly hindering the flow of flood water to the Aparri Delta draining to the Babuyan Channel.

In the same speech, Cimatu noted how typhoon “Ulysses” caused millions worth of damages to property in the region last year. So huge was the damage that President Duterte came over to see it for himself.

“All of government is taking this matter seriously. As you can see, the equipment and assets of our government are now ready to start the mission. The dredging equipment of the DPWH and AFP are already placed in our priority areas,” he said.

Referring to the dredging, Cimatu said: “Ito ay ang simula sa ating plano upang mabawasan ang mapaminsalang baha sa Cagayan Valley (This is the start of our plan to lessen the occurrence of destructive floods in Cagayan Valley).”

The dredging is part of the broader restoration effort on Cagayan River.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/02/02/cimatu-river-dredging-to-reduce-floods-in-cagayan-this-coming-rainy-season/>



DENR promises results in 100 days of dredging Cagayan River sandbanks

February 2, 2021 | 7:39 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/MICHAEL VARCAS

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Tuesday that it hopes to reduce flooding during the next rainy season via the dredging of the Cagayan River, with operations to initially focus on three sandbars in the north of Cagayan province.

“Within 100 days, we will be able to partially remove (the) sandbars... (around) Magapit. *Kung lalabas ka mga July, makikita na natin ang resulta nito. Makikita natin na mabawasan na itong flooding dahil nakabawas na tayo ng sandbars* (You will be able to see results by July in the form of reduced flooding because the sandbars will be partly removed),” Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said in a speech Tuesday at the launch of the Cagayan River Restoration Project.

Mr. Cimatu was referring to the stretch of the river known as the Magapit Narrows, located in the barangay of Bangag in the municipality of Lal-lo and the barangays of Casicallan Norte and Dummun in Gattaran.

The volume of the sandbars is estimated at 7 million cubic meters. The river features are thought to restrict the flow of receding floodwaters into the Aparri Delta and Babuyan Channel.

The Cagayan River overflowed after a series of typhoons late last year, causing widespread flooding in river towns further south.

“Our dredging program is also coupled with nature-based solutions such as the planting of bamboo in stabilizing our river banks. We are also looking at the development of bamboo plantations in Ilagan so we can provide livelihood opportunities,” he said, referring to the capital of Isabela province, also in the Cagayan Valley.

Last month, DENR Regional Executive Director and Regional Build Back Better Task Force Chair Gwendolyn C. Bambalan said various government agencies intend to provide livelihood assistance to residents affected by the river’s rehabilitation.

She said that the Department of Labor and Employment will offer a cash-for-work program for residents, while the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority will provide livelihood training assistance.

She added that the Department of Public Works and Highways plans to hire mainly locals for dredging. — **Angelica Y. Yang**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/denr-promises-results-in-100-days-of-dredging-cagayan-river-sandbanks/>



DENR, DPWH launch Cagayan river restoration project

February 2, 2021 2 min read

By Glen S. Ramos

MANILA — Department of Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu and Department of Public Works and Highways Mark Villa today led the launching of the “Cagayan River Restoration Project” in Cagayan to prevent imminent flooding in the province.

The project will start in the town of Lal-lo, Cagayan as part of the Build Back Better Task Force organized by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte under Executive Order No. 120.

Secretary Cimatu led the ceremonial dredging and planting of bamboo to prevent soil erosion during the rainy season and stabilize the banks of the river.



Under the project, the sandbars in the river along Barangay Bangag in Lal-lo and Barangays Casicallan Norte and Dummun in the town of Gattaran will be removed.

The sandbars impede the flow of water in the river which goes to the Aparri Delta.

Also present during the launching is Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, Department of Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba and other government officials of the province. (AI/MTVN)

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2021/02/02/denr-dpwh-launch-cagayan-river-restoration-project/?fbclid=IwAR2QIMZgPy24obj3-MVjbTm_biPEO9QiULQr7s2Wmvoc2cK2ffLsCU1d1zg



Cagayan River rehab kicks off with sandbar dredging

By Villamor Visaya, Jr. February 2, 2021, 5:35 pm



RIVER REHAB. Dredging of sandbars was launched on Tuesday (Feb. 1, 2021) as one of the restoration activities at the Cagayan River (shown in photo) in Lal-lo, Cagayan. The river beds are already heavily silted, causing massive flooding during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses in November last year. *(Photo by DENR-Region 2)*

TUGUEGARAO CITY – Hoping to end flooding in Cagayan and Isabela provinces, the Build Back Better (BBB) Task Force formally launched on Tuesday the Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project through ceremonial dredging of sandbars along the Magapit Narrows and bamboo planting along the riverbank in Barangay Bangag in Lal-lo, Cagayan.

The event coincided with the Feb. 2 celebration of the 25th World Wetlands Day.

The task force identified 19 sandbars through the Department of Public Works and Highways, which include those in the said village and Barangays Casicallan Norte and Dummun in Gattaran as the priority sites for immediate dredging as these obstruct floodwater flow to the Aparri Delta and the Babuyan Channel as its final destination.

These three sandbars covering a total of 275 hectares have a total estimated volume of seven million cubic meters.

As a measure to rehabilitate the Cagayan River, the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) led the planting of bamboos and other suitable species for riverbank stabilization.

During the launch, 185 bamboo propagules were planted in the 925-meter stretch of Cagayan Riverbank along Barangay Bangag.

The traditional “patuno” or groundbreaking was led by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Public Works Secretary Mark Villar, the BBB Task Force chair and co-chair, respectively; Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff, General Gilbert Gapay.

Environment forester Pablo Agustin has cited the bamboos’ help in curbing flooding by protecting riverbanks against erosion.

“This is a whole-of-government at its best with the support from almost all national agencies and the Cagayan provincial government,” Cimatu said, adding that the “reduced disaster impacts” would be seen through the rehabilitation and restoration programs.

Cimatu also cited six key-result areas which include resilient infrastructure through management, dredging and desilting and construction of structural measures for flood control; delineation of areas prone to climate-related hazards, relocation of affected families and construction of evacuation centers; provision of basic needs, medical services, electricity, road lines, sewers, telecommunication and transportation that can be mobilized during typhoons; sustainable livelihood programs; improved land-use planning and enforcement of Building Code, and intensive watershed management.

DENR-Cagayan Valley Regional Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said the dredging has been just one of the restoration activities because the river beds are already heavily silted.



"The intention of the dredging activity is to deepen, widen and protect Cagayan River from further destruction, and not mining," she said. "If there are mineral contents to be assessed in the materials to be dredged, the dredging companies will pay the corresponding taxes due to the government."

Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba and Isabela Governor Rodolfo Albano III were also present during the event.

Earlier, the DENR and DPWH officials initiated a site assessment of the sandbar along the Magapit Narrows.

Mayor Florence Oliver Pascual assured the DENR and the DPWH of the full support of the local government of Lal-lo to the rehabilitation program.

The Regional BBB Task Force has earlier announced that livelihood assistance will be provided to local residents that will be affected by the Cagayan River Rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, at least 100 villagers were initially hired for bamboo planting and maintenance in Tuguegarao City and the towns of Alcala, Enrile and Gattaran under the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) program of the Department of Labor and Employment.

Twenty residents of Barangay Bangag were also contracted to engage in bamboo planting.

Forty-eight laborers and operators trained by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority were likewise tapped for the project.

As the lead agency in the activity, the DENR identified families living within or adjacent to the easement areas of Cagayan River and its tributaries displaced workers to initiate planting activity and maintenance. It will provide the bamboo seedlings for planting along the Cagayan River and its tributaries.

The department has started capacitation works for the local government units in the implementation of sustainable environment and natural resource management interventions within the Cagayan River.

The DOLE will provide financial assistance in a form of daily subsidy to the selected planters for 14 days.

The DSWD will provide financial assistance through food packs to the planters for the protection and rehabilitation of the Cagayan River. It will also allocate funds for necessary and urgent projects within the Cagayan River under its Risk Resiliency Program—Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.

The Cagayan and Isabela local governments and the cities and municipalities have been tasked to provide technical, financial, and legislative support to the initiatives and will also take charge of removing obstructions such as illegal encroachments within the Cagayan River and the river easements with the assistance of concerned agencies.

The barangay local government unit will conduct periodic maintenance and protection activities of planted seedlings along the Cagayan River and submit a report to the nearest Community Environment and Natural Resources Office of any disturbance and the need for replanting. **(PNA)**



Cagayan River rehab to end illegal sand mining

posted February 02, 2021 at 08:35 pm

by [Manila Standard Business](#)

Tuguegarao City—Cagayan’s decades-old problem on illegal black sand (magnetite) mining may finally end with Tuesday’s launch of the Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project, institutionalizing government’s regulation while plugging the perennial flooding in the area.

The Build Back Better Task Force, a multi-agency mechanism spearheading the Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project in Lal-lo, Cagayan, kicked off the Cagayan River upkeep coinciding with the 25th World Wetlands Day.

Dredging of the sandbar along the Magapit Narrows in Barangay Bangag, Lal-lo town began Tuesday with Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Public Works Secretary Mark Villar leading the start of the river rehabilitation.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Gilbert Gapay joined the ceremonial start of the dredging.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Cagayan Valley director Gwendolyn Bambalan, who personally conducted site assessment of the sandbar along the Magapit Narrows a week ago, said of the 19 total sandbars identified by the BBB Task Force, the sandbars in Barangay Bangag and Barangays Casicallan Norte and Dummun in Gattaran are the priority sites for immediate dredging as these obstruct the floodwater flow to the Aparri Delta and to the Babuyan Channel as its final destination.

The government identified dredging to plug the perennial flooding in Cagayan and nearby Isabela, both earlier devastated with the release of massive rainwater from the Magat Dam in Isabela that drains down to the Cagayan River and its tributaries that had been heavily silted since.

The Philippine Coast Guard and the Bureau of Customs seized last week an undocumented Chinese dredging vessel off Orion Point in Bataan province.

The DENR said Cagayan River Rehabilitation Project is a pilot implementation of a landmark game-changing river restoration policy for the environment and river ecosystem protection while undertaking flood control river dredging.

Seen to be copied all over the country’s river systems as a pro-forma strategy in river protection and rehabilitation, the river rehabilitation program that President Rodrigo Duterte himself fully supports, promises to solve the perennial illegal black sand mining on rivers around the country done by unscrupulous groups.

The only mining allowed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Cagayan province is the first-ever large-scale offshore magnetite mining being conducted by JDVC Resources controlled by listed Apollo Global Capital which is set to start this month off the mouth of the Cagayan River in the Babuyan Strait off Gonzaga, Cagayan.

As the first large-scale deep-sea mining in the Philippines, JDVC obtained environment, mining and social permits, licenses and certifications and “secured satisfactory community acceptance” from nearby local government and communities.

The deep-sea mining and exploration will be within JDVC’s 1,897 hectares of mining tenement, located 14 kilometers offshore from the municipality of Gonzaga.



Anti-illegal logging task force launched anew

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

February 02, 2021

THE anti-illegal logging taskforce of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was re-launched on Saturday, January 30, to further strengthen the forest protection capability and boost the anti-illegal logging campaign of the government.

The launching was held at the more than 2,000-hectare Biak na Bato National Park in Dona Remedios Trinidad town in Bulacan.

Undersecretary for Special Concerns of the DENR Edilberto Leonardo, who spearheaded the event, said the goal of further strengthening the anti-illegal logging campaign is to prevent the actual cutting of trees in the forests and not just apprehend illegal loggers and forest products.

"Our trees are important. It provides numerous benefits to human and biodiversity. It acts as natural barriers against disaster and calamities including strong typhoons," he said.

He said the new approach to forest protection is that the police, military and foresters from the DENR will be deployed in every exit and entry of protected areas and regular patrolling will be conducted to give support in the enforcement of environmental laws.

According to Paquito Moreno Jr., executive director of DENR regional office, forest protection is one of the most challenging activities of the DENR and it takes strong collaboration and partnership with the police and military including the local government units and local communities.

"We admit that the DENR cannot win this battle alone. But with the support and cooperation of our law enforcement and civil society, we are more confident now that we can put an end to this vicious cycle of forest degradation," he said.

Moreno also reported that given the limited number of forest rangers patrolling the more than 900,000 hectares forestland of the region, they managed to reduce the illegal logging hotspots from 23 to only four at the moment and have apprehended over 218,000 board feet of illegal lumber worth P10 million last year.

The DENR-Central Luzon has also regularly manned its eight-forest product monitoring station strategically located in Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Aurora to check movement of forest contraband.

Moreno also expressed his appreciation to the police, military, local government units and the civil society for their all-out support in the anti-illegal logging campaign of the DENR.

Some 200 seedlings of Narra and Molave were planted also inside the Biak na Bato National Park during the event to provide additional forest cover to the protected area.

Section 3 of Executive Order 23 series of 2011 provides for the creation of anti-illegal logging task force composed of DENR as chair and the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Department of National Defense, Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines as members.

The task force is mandated to take the lead in the anti-illegal logging campaign and assist the DENR in the enforcement of other environmental laws.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1884668/Pampanga/Local-News/Anti-illegal-logging-task-force-launched-anew>

DENR honors solid waste management ‘champions’

By DENR Published on February 3, 2021



QUEZON CITY, Feb. 3 -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has given recognition to the agency's environmental partners for their valuable contributions to help carry out the closure of open dumpsites and to prevent the dumping of waste in Manila Bay.

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu handed over the awards and certificates of recognition to government agencies, a non-government organization, and a private company for their support to the strengthened solid waste management campaign of the DENR during the celebration of the 20th year of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 and culmination of Zero Waste Month on January 26.

"For the past years, we have been boosting our campaign to address the solid waste problem in our country," Cimatu said.

"The numerous achievements of our Department would not be possible without the help of our active partners," he added.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation-Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD), Ecological Waste (EcoWaste) Coalition, and Maersk Philippines were among the recipients of the award.

Since 2018, the awardees have been participating in the operations of the DENR to tackle the solid waste problem in Manila Bay and the closure of open dumpsites in Bataan, Pampanga, and Cavite.

Former PNP-National Capital Region Police Office Director and now Deputy Chief for Administration, Lt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar led the roster of the awardees, alongside former Regional Police Office Central Luzon Director Maj. Gen. Rhodel Sermonia, who is now Directorate for Police Community Relations.



NBI-EnCD chief Czar Eric Nuqui, Brig. Gen. John Mitchell Jamili of PNP-Maritime Group, Col. Raynold Rosero of Regional Maritime Unit-NCR, Maj. Rommel Sobrido of Northern NCR Maritime Police Station, and Cpt. Randy Ludovice of RMU-NCR Intelligence and Investigation Branch were also given recognition.

Also recognized were Maersk Philippines head of delivery Cherryl Ann Dela Vega and EcoWaste Coalition, represented by board secretary Ramon San Pascual, for their support to DENR initiatives.

"We thank them for their relentless effort to help us in enforcing environmental laws, specifically RA 9003," said Cimatu, who is also the chair of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC).

Cimatu said the DENR has been aggressive in its campaign on solid waste management and in the implementation of the provisions of RA 9003.

These include the closure of open dumpsites, establishment of materials recovery facilities (MRF), and provision of assistance to local government units (LGU) for the development of their 10-year solid waste management plans.

"Our action against open dumpsites has been relentless," Cimatu said.

He emphasized that, the DENR, through Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny D. Antiporda and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), has shut down 38 open dumpsites in one day, just ahead of the celebration of the 20th year of RA 9003.

Cimatu, however, directed Antiporda as the NSWMC's Alternate Chair, and the EMB to shut down the remaining open dumpsites in the country in two months.

"This is my directive to them (EMB) and to you Benny, all open dumpsites must be closed by end of March this year," Cimatu stressed.

The DENR chief also committed that the department will work hand-in-hand with the LGUs to increase the number of sanitary landfills (SLF) in the country and to review the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9003 to explore the establishment of bigger SLFs.

He also mentioned that the Commission is coming up with the list of non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging (NEAP) amidst the resistance from the plastic industry.

"We will make sure that NEAP will not be left behind in the waste management of our country," Cimatu said. (DENR)



DENR pinagpapaliwanag sa illegal dredging activities ng Chinese vessels sa PH sea

Posted by: [Rose Novenario](#) on February 2, 2021 in [News](#) [Leave a comment](#)

PINAGPAPALIWANAG ng Palasyo ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa ginagawang illegal dredging activities ng Chinese vessels sa Filipinas.

Inihayag ng Palasyo ang direktiba kasunod nang pagdakip ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) at Bureau of Customs (BoC) sa isang Chinese dredger dahil sa “illegal and unauthorized presence” sa karagatan sa Orion Point sa Bataan.

“Ang tanong: saan ginagamit itong mga dredging vessels na ito? Baka naman iyan ay ginagamit dito sa ilang mga lugar sa Filipinas na may pagpayag ng mga lokal na pamahalaan,” ani presidential spokesman Harry Roque kahapon.

Nais malaman ng Palasyo kung ginagamit ang Chinese dredger sa black sand operations nang mabisto ito sa Orion.

“Ako po ay taga-Bataan ‘no, e anong ginagawa niyang dredging vessel na iyan sa malapit sa Orion, ang hometown ng aking lola, e malapit po iyan doon sa lugar na alam nating kinukuhaan ng black sand diyan sa Zambales. So ang nais kong malaman: ginagamit ba ito para sa black sand operation diyan sa mga karatig bayan ng Bataan at sinong nagbibigay permiso rito?”

“So ibig sabihin po, hindi naman pupunta iyan dito kung walang gumagamit niyan at ang nais kong malaman — sana po mabigyan ng kasagutan ng DENR – ay ginagamit ba itong mga Chinese dredging vessels na ito para kunin iyong tanging yaman ng Filipinas at ipadala sa ibang bansa?” diin ni Roque.

Sa kanyang talumpati noong 1 Agosto 2016 ay binigyan ng go signal ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte si noo’y DENR Secretary Gina Lopez para imbestigahan ang ulat na tinulungan ni dating Zambales Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane ang China para matambakan ng lupa upang maangkin ang Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal na sakop ng Masinloc, Zambales at bahagi ng West Philippine Sea (WPS).

Buo aniya ang kanyang suporta kay Environment Secretary Gina Lopez kay ipasisiyasat niya ang isiniwalat ni Zambales Governor Amor Deloso na pinayagan ni Ebdane na magbenta sa China ng lupa at malalaking bato mula sa tatlong bundok ng lalawigan na ginagamit sa mga reclamation projects sa Panatag Shoal.

“Yes, Gina Lopez has my full support,” anang Pangulo kung paiimbestigahan si Ebdane sa media interview sa Rizal Hall ng Palasyo kahapon.

“You sell your country to the dog, oppressing the people ,” sabi pa niya.

Kung natuloy ang imbestigasyon o kung ano ang resulta nito ay hindi na nagpahayag ang Palasyo.
(ROSE NOVENARIO)

Source: <https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2021/02/02/denr-pinagpapaliwanag-sa-illegal-dredging-activities-ng-chinese-vessels-sa-ph-sea/?fbclid=IwAR1mfncIRr3-Vq7mQ5QChntN6-LuFnEUM0zjH3aFKnH5yangZbJpRTWYe4A>



Hey!

**DID
YOU
KNOW?**



A total of 557,542.99 cu.m of mixed wastes were dredged from the 36 priority esteros in Metro Manila from January to December 2020.

Source: Manila Bay Coordinating Office



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Private enterprise must help clean up Metro rivers

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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



Mga alkalde dapat magkusang ipasara ang mga bukas na imbakan ng mga basura

On Feb 2, 2021



BATAY sa rekord ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), mayroon pang natitirang 233 bukas na imbakan ng mga basura (open dumpsites) sa maraming bahagi ng bansa. Maliwanag pa sa sikat ng araw na labag sa Republic Act 9003, o Ecological Solid Waste Management Law ang mga bukas na imbakang ito.

Ngunit, hindi ko maintindihan kung bakit ayaw sundin at ipatupad ng mga alkalde ang R.A. 9003.

Ipaalala ko lang na napakalinaw ng nakasaad sa R.A. 9003 na: “no open dumps shall be established and operated, nor any practice or disposal of solid waste by any person, including LGU (local government units), which constitutes the use of open dumps for solid wastes, is allowed”.

Noong 2017, 385 pa ang bukas na mga imbakan ng basura sa maraming panig ng bansa.

Ibig sabihin nito, bago pa naging pangulo ng bansa si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ay napakarami nang mga imbakan ng mga basura.

Napakarami nang mga alkalde ang sadyang hindi kinikilala at lumalabag sa R.A. 9003.

Pokaragat na ‘yan!

Ngayon ay 233 na lang ito, ayon sa DENR.

Ibig sabihin, 152 ang nabawas mula noong 2017.

Kung 152, mayroong 50 bukas na imbakan ng mga basura ang naipasara bawat taon.

Napag-alaman ko na ang dahilan ng pagpapasara sa mga imbakan ng mga basura ay dahil agresibo ang DENR laban dito.

Naniniwala ako rito.

Ang nangunguna sa DENR sa kampanya laban sa basura ay si Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny Antiporda.

Naniniwala ako dahil karamihan ng mga alkalde ay walang pagkukusa na ipasara ang mga imbakan ng mga basura sa kani-kanilang nasasakupan.

Katunayan, hindi nga nila kagyat na ipinagbabawal ang pagkakaroon ng mga bukas na imbakan ng mga basura.



Pokaragat na ‘yan!

Nasabi ko ‘yan dahil kahit nga mga estero na lantarang maitim, nalilimahid, barado, napakaraming burak at mayroon pang mga basura ay hindi agresibong ipinag-uutos ng maraming alkalde ang pagpapalinis ng mga ito.

Ihahalimbawa ko ang Maynila, ang kabisera ng Pilipinas.

Hanggang ngayon ay napakaraming estero ang mabaho, napakarumi, barado at may mga basura.

Pokaragat na ‘yan!

Hindi ko alam kung bakit hindi ito inaaksyonan ni Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso hanggang ngayon – Pebrero 2021 na.

Ganoon din sa Lungsod ng Taguig na napabayaang na ang mga estero hanggang ngayon.

Akala ko malilinis na ang mga ito nang maging alkalde ng Taguig si Mayor Lino Cayetano mula 2019 dahil noong ang hipag niyang si Rep. Ma. Laarni Cayetano ang alkalde ng lungsod mula 2010 hanggang 2019 ay hindi ito naging masigasig at tuluy-tuloy ang paglilinis sa mga estero.

Malapit nang matapos ang unang termino nina Domagoso at Cayetano, hindi ko alam kung kikilos pa sila laban sa napakaruming mga estero.

Tiyak ako na mayroon ding umiiral na batas laban sa marumi, mabaho, tambak ng burak at iba pa sa mga estero tulad sa mga bukas na imbakan ng mga basura.

Kung noong una pa lang ay naghigpit na ang mga alkalde laban sa mga imbakan ng mga basura, pihadong hindi na ito kasama sa kampanya ng DENR.

Basura na lang ng mga kumpanya ang aasikasuhin ni Antiporda na wala sa ayos ang pangangasiwa at pagtatapon.

Pero, dahil sa maraming alkalde ang sadyang hindi tumatalima sa R.A. 9003, sabi ni Usec. Antiporda sa akin, handa niyang pangunahan ang pagpapasara sa mga bukas na imbakan ng mga basura kapag hindi kumilos ang mga opisyal ng mga pamahalaang lokal hanggang Marso ng taong kasalukuyan.

Idiniin din ni Antiporda na sasampahan niya ng kaso ng paglabag sa R.A. 9003 ang mga opisyal ng mga pamahalaang lokal kung hindi nila tutupdin ang target sa Marso tungkol sa pagpapasara ng nasabing mga imbakan ng mga basura.

Abangan natin ang aksiyon ni Usec. Benny Antiporda!

Source: <https://www.policefilestonite.net/2021/02/02/mga-alkalde-dapat-magkusang-ipasara-ang-mga-bukas-na-imbakan-ng-mga-basura/?fbclid=IwAR3fJcL0ZfQ1CbBPiFeigFnPutbk5nKNQ2likN-4rR74DmAsa4BjgD9WvUU>



DENR seeks protection of migratory bird sites in E. Visayas

By Sarwell Meniano February 2, 2021, 1:11 pm



MIGRATORY BIRD. A grey heron takes flight on a mangrove forest along Carigara Bay in Leyte. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Monday (Feb. 1, 2021) asked local government units to step up efforts in the conservation of migratory bird sites in Eastern Visayas. *(Photo courtesy of DENR Region 8)*

TACLOBAN CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has asked local government units to step up efforts in the conservation of migratory bird sites in Eastern Visayas.

The DENR has strongly recommended the passage of a local government resolution formally declaring as migratory bird sites in those areas where migrating birds are regularly observed.

“The passage of a municipal resolution declaring these as migratory bird sites will empower local government units to have a direct management of its protection and conservation,” said DENR regional office development manager officer Ingelina Lantajo in a statement on Monday.

The DENR reiterated this call to local governments to take active participation and conservation of migratory bird sites as the agency participates in the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) for the year.

AWC forms part of the International Waterbird Census, which takes place every January of each year. This is in support of the conservation and management effort of wetlands and waterbirds worldwide.

In Eastern Visayas, DENR has identified seven bird sites in the provinces of Leyte, Southern Leyte, Samar, and Eastern Samar, where the presence of diverse and numerous species of migratory birds was documented.

These are the Ormoc Bay Wetlands in Ormoc City, Lake Bito Inland Wetland in MacArthur town, Carigara Bay Wetlands in Carigara and Barugo; and the Tres Marias Islands in Palompon, all in Leyte province.

Outside Leyte, these sites are Southern Leyte Bird Sanctuary in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte; Maqueda Bay Wetlands within the towns of Motiong, Jiabong, and Paranas in Samar; and Guiuan Intertidal Flats in Eastern Samar.

Most migratory birds consistently found on the identified bird sites were Philippine Duck, Little Egret, Greenshank, Purple Heron, Common Sandpiper, Whiskered Tern, Great Knot, Whimbrel, Lesser sand Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Rufous night Heron, Kentish Plover, Intermediate Egret, Common Tern. Moorhen, Grey Heron, Javan pond Heron and Black-winged Stilt.

“Just like last year, there was a noted decrease in the number of migratory birds counted although the same types of species were identified. Since there was no apparent denudation of mangroves forest and degradation of their wetland habitat, we can surmise that the typhoons of last year may have forced the migratory birds to shift to other sites for their food and roosting place,” Lantajo added.

The annual AWC is conducted mainly to monitor the population, as well as the changes in waterbird numbers and distribution by regular and standardized counts of representative wetlands. It is also an activity meant to increase the awareness of the communities on the importance of wetlands, considered as the kidneys of the earth and as the natural habitats of these birds. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1129277>



This January 13, 2019 photo shows birds spotted flying over Manila Bay
The STAR/KJ Rosales, File

Fewer waterbirds seen in Manila Bay with loss of wetland areas

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - February 2, 2021 - 3:05pm

MANILA, Philippines — The number of waterbirds in Manila Bay has decreased by nearly 20% since 2019, according to a census conducted by a bird-watching group, which said the loss of the birds' feeding habitats has contributed to the decline.

The 2021 Waterbird Census in Manila Bay of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines tallied 110,000 waterbirds. Of the 60 species observed, over two-thirds are migratory and are from as far away as Siberia and Alaska.

But the latest figure showed a 20-percent decline since 2019, or a shortfall of 25,000 birds.

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

Among those tallied were 30,000 Whiskered Terns, 7,000 Pacific Golden Plovers, 6,000 Kentish Plovers and nearly 6,000 Marsh Sandpipers.

'Last Philippine wetlands refuge'

Jensen said that northern Manila Bay—which includes the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan—is “one of the last Philippine wetlands refuge.”

“At the shallow coastal water, tidal flats and sandbars to man-made salt beds and fish ponds, about 37,000 shorebirds and 37,000 terns were counted together with 23,000 gulls and 15,000 egrets. Coastal fisherfolk and waterbirds alike depend on the different types of wetlands found in the bay,” he added.

The areas covered by the census were Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan — including the coastal village of Talipit — Cavite and Metro Manila.

The Philippines is on the flight path of some 50 million migratory birds that travel through the East Asian-Australian Flyway, which stretches from Russia to Alaska in the United States at the northern end and Australia and New Zealand at the southern end.



Habitat loss

WBCP said the most severe decline in the number of waterbirds was seen in Bulacan and in the rivers of Pampanga, mirroring the loss of their feeding habitats across their flyway.

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

Meanwhile, an increase in waterbird presence by more than 100% was observed at the tidal mudflats in Tanza in Navotas.

“However, these are now being reclaimed, signaling what is to come in Bulacan, Cavite and other areas,” Jensen said.

The case of Taliptip

In a forum last year, WBCP vice president Cristina Cinco said the planned New Manila International Airport will be built on a “key bird area” in Manila Bay, [potentially affecting thousands of waterbirds](#), including several endangered and vulnerable species.

The airport will reclaim 2,500 hectares of fishing and mangroves areas in Barangay Taliptip, which is located on the northeastern shore of Manila Bay. Most sitios in Taliptip are located on tidal flats along the coast, according to a 2019 study of the UP National Institute of Geological Sciences.

In Manila Bay, 14 species are considered either near threatened or directly threatened with extinction. Cinco said at least nine threatened or near threatened bird species would be affected by the airport project.

Lu stressed the massive reclamation masterplans of the Philippine Reclamation Authority and the coastal embankment approach of the Department of Public Works and Highways to mitigate flooding would destroy the ecosystem of Manila Bay.

“Reclamation should be stopped and the PRA and DPWH be reorganized for restoration and climate change adaptation to support global and national policies to implement nature-based solutions that maintain the wild birds habitats while also protecting people,” he said.

The measure granting a 50-year franchise to San Miguel Aerocity Inc. to construct, develop, establish and maintain a domestic and international airport in Bulacan lapsed into law on January 4.

Last month, the [Supreme Court junked the petition](#) of former Taliptip residents and civil society groups to protect the marine ecosystems and resources in Manila Bay that would be threatened by the construction of the airport project.



Another tarsier rescued in Sarangani

By Allen Estabillo February 2, 2021, 2:11 pm



RESCUED PRIMATE. Photo shows the Philippine tarsier (*Carlito syrichta*) rescued on Monday (Feb. 1, 2021) by concerned residents and environment workers in Purok Mangga, Sitio Calatungan of Barangay Burias in Glan town, Sarangani province. Four other primates were rescued in August and October last year in Alabel and Maitum towns. (Photo courtesy of CENRO-Glan)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Concerned residents and environment personnel rescued on Monday a juvenile male Philippine tarsier (*Carlito syrichta*) in a coastal village in Glan town, Sarangani province.

Forester Abdul Cariga, head of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Glan, said Tuesday the tarsier was found at a portion of Purok Mangga, Sitio Calatungan in Barangay Burias.

He said a resident, identified as Julius Cononica, took the tiny primate from a young boy and brought it to Barangay Burias chairman Venancio Wata III.

Wata then reported the matter to the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office and CENRO-Glan that immediately dispatched their personnel to take custody of the tarsier, he said.

During the examination conducted by municipal veterinarian Dr. Verne Rino Asperga, Cariga said the young tarsier was found to be in good condition.

“It didn’t show any signs of injuries and was fit to be released back to the wild,” he said in a report.

The official said they immediately decided to release the rescued tarsier to the area’s forests, which is a known habitat of the tarsiers.

It was released by a composite team from the municipal government and CENRO near the site where it was found Purok Mangga of Sitio Calatungan in Burias.

Tarsiers, one of the world’s smallest primates, are known to be endemic in the forests of Sarangani province.

Three tarsiers were rescued in August last year in a village in Alabel town and another was found and rescued in October in Maitum town.

In Glan, sightings of the primate, called “mal” by indigenous peoples, were previously reported in villages within and near Mt. Gulo, the town’s highest peak.

Cariga said the tarsiers are considered as “near threatened species” based on the assessment of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

He said its population has significantly declined over the years due to various threats, among them the destruction of their habitat, hunting, agricultural pollutants and human disturbance.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through Administrative Order No. 2019-09 or the Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories,” classified the Philippine tarsier under the “other threatened species” category.



He reminded residents that possession of wildlife without permit is punishable under Republic Act 9147 or the “Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.”

Any similar sightings of the animal should be reported immediately to their office or concerned offices to facilitate their immediate rescue, he said. **(PNA)**



PLDT, Smart turn over digital tools for CARAGA Region sustainability efforts

Published February 2, 2021, 10:04 AM

by [Jonathan Castillo](#)



(From left) Ecosystems Management Specialist I, Joyce Susan Se; Ecosystems Management Specialist II, Rej Winlove M. Bungabong; Chief Marlynn Mendoza, and Senior Ecosystems Management Specialist Joy Navarro all from the Caves, Wetlands and Other Ecosystems Division of the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau trying out PLDT-Smart's drone equipment to be deployed with School-in-a-Bag packages for peatlands conservation

The country's largest integrated telecommunications company PLDT Inc. and its wireless unit Smart Communications Inc. (Smart) turned over drones, tablets, and other digital communication tools aimed at promoting environmental stewardship and helping protect peatlands in the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS).

The donation is part of PLDT-Smart's pioneering program for wetlands conservation in the Philippines, signed with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), DENR's CARAGA Regional Office, and the AMWS Protected Area Management Office in 2020. The three-year extendable collaboration aims to strengthen and support the AMWS-Protected Area Management Office and other concerned DENR offices in peatland conservation and management strategies under the AMWS Management Plan. The project will be implemented through PLDT's Chief Sustainability Office until 2023.

Peatlands are dubbed as 'one of the most valuable ecosystems on Earth' according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature or IUCN. A type of wetland whose peat soils consist of carbon-rich partially decomposed plant matter, this fragile ecosystem traps carbon to mitigate climate change, provides safe drinking water, assists in preserving global biodiversity, and reduces flood risks. If kept wet, peatlands can store twice as much carbon as all the world's forests combined.

In the Philippines, the Caimpugan Peatland in Agusan del Sur holds the only recorded remaining intact peat swamp forest – the largest of its kind in the country. PLDT and Smart will deploy Internet of Things (IoT) solutions in the said area to support the biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and carbon sequestration monitoring activities.

Approximately one million pesos worth of drone equipment, mobile phones, radio devices, and personal protective equipment will be deployed to Bantay Danao volunteers, formed in 2016 and deputized by DENR-CARAGA to protect the AMWS in 2017. The digital and communication tools and PPE are expected to upgrade their monitoring and enforcement activities.

The partnership will also deploy a Smart School-in-a-Bag package for learning communities in the area. Designed to facilitate learning in remote areas, each portable digital classroom generally contains a laptop for the teacher, student tablets to access award-winning, interactive mobile applications even if offline, and a Smart LTE pocket WiFi kit which teachers can use to download additional content.



Aside from applying various technologies for peatland assessment, monitoring and enforcement efforts, PLDT and Smart, through the Gabay Kalikasan program, will implement Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) initiatives to increase knowledge and appreciation of the value of these wetlands.

The initiative also intends to support wetland communities in their sustainable and biodiversity-friendly livelihood program by providing capacity-building trainings and market linkage.

The peatlands conservation program is aligned with the commitment of the PLDT group to support the 17 Sustainable Goals of the United Nations, particularly Quality Education (SDG 4) and Climate Action (SDG 13).



Wetlands: Our answers to water insecurity

By Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim-ACB Published on February 2, 2021



Inle Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar serves as a watershed and water source for communities' electricity and domestic use. Photo by Hein Htet, winner in the ASEAN Heritage Parks Category of 2020 Zooming in on Biodiversity photo competition.

LAGUNA, Feb. 2 -- The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity expresses its solidarity with the rest of the world in celebrating World Wetlands Day and highlighting the urgency and need to conserve and protect wetlands ecosystems.

World Wetlands Day, which falls annually on the 2nd of February, marks the date of the adoption of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, a treaty ratified by 170 countries to protect wetlands and promote their wise use.

This year's theme of World Wetlands Day "Water and Wetlands" puts a spotlight on the vital role of wetlands ecosystems in our everyday lives and well-being, particularly in meeting our water needs.

Access to clean water has always been a concern across the globe. The COVID-19 pandemic makes this issue even more timely as clean water is necessary for ensuring proper hygiene, public health, and safety. The most recent report of the World Health Organization released in December 2020 said 1.8 billion people in the world lacked basic water services in health care facilities. The ASEAN region, on the other hand, is keeping up with the global aim of providing access to drinking water to all, with the average reaching 83.8 per cent of the population in 2018, according to the ASEAN Sustainable Development Goals Indicators Baseline Report 2020. It remains concerning, however, that millions of people are still without access to clean and safe water, and the threat of water insecurity still looms. This is worsened by extreme weather conditions brought about by climate change, such as prolonged dry season resulting in drought and water shortage.

The role of wetland ecosystems as natural solutions to the crisis still needs to be widely recognised. In the ASEAN region, inland waters and wetlands occupy close to 2 million square kilometres and comprise 60 per cent and 42 per cent of the world's tropical peatlands and mangrove forests, respectively.

If managed properly, inland wetlands, such as lakes, rivers, swamps, marshes, and peatlands, can serve as natural water reservoirs. Most especially during rainy seasons, these ecosystems recharge groundwater and provide sustainable surface water supply. The water coming from these natural reservoirs serve various purposes at individual and societal levels. Apart from providing fertile soils, wetlands supply water for agricultural activities. These may also be important sources of renewable energy.



For example, inhabitants around Ba Be Lake in Ba Be National Park, an ASEAN Heritage Park (AHP) in Viet Nam, including ethnic groups like Kinh and Hmong, rely on the lake for fishing and farming. In Myanmar, another AHP, Inle Lake Wildlife Sanctuary, which is known for the floating gardens bobbing atop the lake, serves as a watershed and water source for communities' electricity and domestic use.

In the Philippines, Lake Lanao, the second largest lake in the country and one of the 15 ancient lakes in the world, helps generate 70 per cent of the electricity for domestic use in Mindanao. The Philippine government has proclaimed it as a watershed reserve to help ensure its protection and sustainable management.

Healthy wetlands also improve water quality by absorbing excess nutrients and filtering out pollutants and other sediments. Singapore, for instance, uses floating islands to improve the quality of their urban catchments by using mostly aquatic plants such as the narrow-leaved cattail (*Typha angustifolia*), umbrella plant (*Cyperus alternifolius*), and aquatic canna (*Canna glauca*).

Now more than ever, we need a whole-of-community and integrated approach in sustainably managing and conserving our remaining wetlands, with recognition of the relationship between water security, public health, and well-being. This approach must take into consideration the rich biodiversity in and around these areas that contribute to the effective functioning of the wetlands. This includes unique vegetation like giant bamboo (*Dendrocalamus asper*), bayog (*Bambusa merilliana*), and kawayan tinik (*Bambusa blumeana*), and rare and endemic freshwater fauna, like the critically endangered Mekong Giant Catfish (*Pangasianodon gigas*) in Mekong River and the critically endangered halfbeak fish (*Tondanichthys kottelati*) in Lake Tondano, which is the largest lake in North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

There are also efforts to recover degraded wetlands, such as the ones in Boracay Island in the Philippines, which are joint activities of the government and the private sector.

At the regional level, the joint efforts of the ACB and the ASEAN Member States to rehabilitate forests and wetlands come at an auspicious time, especially with the start of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration this year. In addition, the ACB continues to support select wetland protected areas in the region in terms of capacity development, livelihood development, and law enforcement through the ASEAN Heritage Parks Programme. Furthermore, the ASEAN Flyway Network (AFN), a virtual network of flyway site managers and other key stakeholders, has concluded its waterbird census and wetland assessments, with results intending to inform conservation actions in the region's inland waters. The presence of a healthy population of waterbirds can be considered an indicator of a well-managed wetland area. The AFN was established to enhance collaboration and strengthen efforts at the regional level to protect wetlands which are important staging grounds of waterbirds migrating along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

Our long-term COVID-19 recovery efforts bring us close to our aim of protecting and conserving wetlands and the variety of species thriving within it. The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan, which was adopted by the ASEAN leaders in November last year, gives the region the leverage to mainstream biodiversity across the water and agriculture sectors. Given that hand-washing is our first line of defense against the spread of viruses, addressing the water issues in the region is pivotal.



We are happy to see important progress in our efforts. But if we continue to take our wetlands for granted and lose crucial biodiversity in the process, it will certainly affect our ability to effectively respond to an impending global water crisis. Amid these difficult times, we need not look elsewhere for solutions; they are right in nature. In celebration of World Wetlands Day, we invite all sectors and members of communities to improve synergies in translating commitments for wetlands conservation to impactful actions on the ground that will benefit the peoples of the ASEAN.

Happy World Wetlands Day!



Green groups laud Sara for 'urgent' action on plastic ban

By Che Palicte February 2, 2021, 6:21 pm



DAVAO CITY – Environmental advocacy group Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) and the Sustainable Davao Movement have expressed gratitude to Mayor Sara Z. Duterte for certifying as urgent the proposed single-use plastic ban ordinance pending before the City Council.

"We intend on writing the City Council to request that the ban of the single-use plastic ordinance be treated as urgent," Duterte said in a radio interview Monday.

The ordinance, authored by Councilor Diosdado Mahipus Jr., is still being deliberated in the environment committee.

In a statement Tuesday, IDIS underscored the importance of Mayor Sara's support to expedite the proposed law's enactment.

"Mayor Sara's statement is highly-appreciated. Plastic pollution is a very serious problem that needs to be addressed. This problem affects the urban area as plastic has since found its way in rural and coastal areas polluting our rivers and seas and endangering wildlife. We are hopeful that this ordinance will be passed this year or, better, it will be passed earlier," lawyer Mark Penalver, IDIS executive director, said.

Jill Banta, the regional coordinator for Mindanao of Break Free From Plastic, said they welcome the mayor's pronouncement, even as the group called on the City Council to pass the ordinance within the year.

"Plastic waste is increasing during the pandemic. Once the SUP (single-use plastic) ban ordinance is passed, the local government unit must ensure that it will create systems that will allow for enthusiastic public participation by supporting community-based plastic-free stores and alternative delivery systems for refill and reuse," Banta said. **(PNA)**



USAID, RMN partner to promote marine conservation in Visayan Sea

February 2, 2021, 8:41 pm



CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP. (L-R) Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Region 6 regional director and lead convenor for Fisheries Management Area 11 Remia Aparri, acting USAID environment office director Paul Seong, USAID Fish Right Program chief of Party Nygiel Armada, RMN executive vice president and COO Erika Sanchez, and RMN chairman and president Eric Canoy formally launch the USAID-RMN partnership on marine conservation. *(Photo by US Embassy in Manila)*

MANILA – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Radio Mindanao Network (RMN) Foundation formalized a media partnership to promote marine conservation in the Philippines.

The partnership will target coastal communities that rely on radio as a source of information and entertainment in the Visayan region, the country's seafood capital and home to more than 140,000 small-scale fishers.

USAID, through its Fish Right project, and RMN will produce and distribute messages on biodiversity conservation and sustainable fisheries management through interviews, radio announcements, and related public affairs programs.

RMN will use its broadcast facilities in the cities of Iloilo, Cebu, Bacolod, and Roxas to better reach fishing communities in the Visayas.

"This partnership with RMN will certainly strengthen our conservation efforts. We hope that our joint advocacy on sustainable fisheries management will give voice to the fisherfolk as conservation champions, thereby increasing their influence in directly managing the Visayan Sea," acting USAID environment office director Paul Seong said in a news release on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, RMN executive vice president Erika Marie Canoy-Sanchez said they appreciate of the partnership with USAID "because RMN is founded on the vision of a radio station benefiting local communities. This partnership makes that happen. It's important for us to really be present on the ground where we are needed the most."

RMN is one of the largest radio networks in the Philippines, with 65 stations and multiple digital platforms nationwide.

During a small forum to formalize the agreement, chairman of the NGOs for Fisheries Reform Marlon Palomo said, "We are very thankful for this opportunity, especially because this pandemic has made it difficult for us to reach some of our partner communities. Through radio, we will not only be able to reach more fisherfolk but also relay the issues confronted by the fisheries sector in the Visayan Sea and other areas."

USAID's Fish Right project is a five-year partnership between the US and Philippine governments to address threats to biodiversity, improve governance of marine areas, and increase fish health and numbers in South Negros, the Calamianes Island Group, and the Visayan Sea.

The increase in fish will benefit more than two million people living in these fishing communities. The Fish Right program is being implemented by the University of Rhode Island in partnership with local universities and non-government organizations. **(PR)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1129375>



News Briefs

USAID conserves marine life

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"This partnership will certainly strengthen our conservation efforts. We hope that our joint advocacy on sustainable fisheries management will give voice to the fisherfolk as conservation champions," acting USAID Environment Office director Paul Seong said.

DT



Offshore magnetite iron mining starts operation this month

By **Malaya Business Insight** -February 3, 2021

Apollo Global Capital Corp. said unit JDVC Resources is set to start the commercial operation by the end of this month its offshore magnetite iron mining in Cagayan, the first in the country.

Apollo said the operation will have minimal impact on the sea environment “as studies by a Singapore-based survey company showed no coral or aquamarine life within the mining area, which is 150 meters below sea level.”

Jun Herrera, JDVC and APL consultant, said the first newly-built deep sea mining vessel has arrived in Cagayan and is presently taking shelter due to strong waves.

“But as soon as the ocean swell subsides, mining operations are expected to commence by mid or end February,” he said.

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

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

Apollo described as baseless a complaint of residents Ballesteros, Cagayan alleging the planned offshore mining operations of JDVC Resources will cause damage to coral beds saying the study cited by the complainants was referring to a different part of the ocean compared to the mining site.

“That’s a different part of the Pacific. It looks at the ocean bed more than 200 meters below sea level, whereas we can only go down to 150 meters with current technology.

Moreover, the Smith study did not look at magnetite iron reserves. From the experience of countries like Indonesia, Japan, and New Zealand, magnetite iron is known to be toxic to corals, fish and other aquamarine life,” the company said.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_business/offshore-magnetite-iron-mining-starts-operation-this-month/



A worker sanitizes the railings the LRT Line-2 Santolan station in Pasig City on January 22, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

DOH logs 1,583 new COVID-19 cases as total hits 528,853

(Philstar.com) - February 2, 2021 - 4:05pm

MANILA, Philippines — Individuals infected with the new coronavirus in the Philippines reached 528,853 with 1,583 more cases reported Tuesday.

Latest data from the Department of Health showed that the number of active cases in the country stands at 30,368 or 5.7% of the total.

The DOH also logged 39 additional recoveries, pushing the total number of COVID-19 survivors in the country to 487,611.

The death toll rose to 10,874 after 67 more people succumbed to COVID-19.

What's new today?

The government is expecting to execute [definitive agreements](#) with pharmaceutical companies by mid-February for supplies of COVID-19 vaccine doses, vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. said. He said the government has already signed term sheets with five drugmakers, locking in up to 108 million vaccine doses.

Amnesty International called on the government to develop and implement measures in human rights to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines in the Philippines are “available, accessible and free at point of case, acceptable and of good quality to all people.”

— Gaea Katreena Cabico



China is inciting war; Filipinos must prepare

[GOTCHA](#) - [Jarius Bondoc](#) (The Philippine Star) - February 3, 2021 - 12:00am

China has authorized its coast guard to fire on foreign vessels in waters it illegally claims. A new law directs sea patrols to destroy other countries' structures in islands it encroaches.

"[This] is a verbal threat of war to any country that defies the law," Foreign Sec. Teddy Locsin protests. "While enacting a law is a sovereign prerogative, this one... involved the open South China Sea." Failure to challenge the law "is submission to it," he says.

We Filipinos want peace, so we must prepare for war. Si vis pacem, para bellum, the ancients taught. Conditions for peace are preserved by readiness for war.

How to gear up for war to keep peace? One way is by informing. Let us tell our countrymen and the world what's happening. Beijing fears world opinion. As propaganda it feigns benevolence. It loathes exposure as a duplicitous bully. By spreading the truth we can rouse international awareness. Global isolation will push back Beijing's aggression.

Let's hold talks in schools, workplaces, clubs and churches; among friends, neighbors and relatives. Use social media and chat groups. Discuss the effects of Beijing's hostility on our liberty, our food and other resources, our future. Those of us overseas can brief our foreign bosses, workmates and host-country press and officials. Let all know that:

China's expansive claims trespass the West Philippine Sea. The WPS is our 200-mile exclusive economic zone under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. China has its own 200-mile EEZ. Yet in breach of UNCLOS it overreaches four times beyond its sea limit into ours. That is not benevolence but malevolence.

China's law imperils Filipino fishermen and researchers in our own waters. The China Coast Guard can dismantle buoys in our oilfields in Recto (Reed) Bank. China covets Recto, 145 miles off Palawan within our EEZ yet 800 miles from China. The CCG can seize our Malampaya offshore gas rigs 43 miles off Palawan. Malampaya supplies half of Luzon's electricity. Luzon will plunge into darkness; our industries, homes and hospitals will crumble.

The CCG can board our vessels. Days before the law took effect Feb. 1, seven CCG ships blocked a Filipino fishing boat at a sandbar off Pagasa Island, Kalayaan, Palawan. At Recto in 2019 a Chinese maritime militia steel trawler rammed an anchored Filipino wooden boat, then abandoned the 26 men thrown overboard. In Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal, 123 miles off Zambales, the CCG escorts Hainan poachers. Stolen are sea turtles, fan corals and giant clams propagated by Filipino marine biologists decades ago. The CCG water-cannons and machineguns Filipinos venturing near the traditional fishing grounds. What more now that a law rewards harming of unarmed civilians.

The CCG is militarized. Its white civilian sea craft are adjuncts of grey warships of the People's Liberation Army-Navy. Like the PLA, the CCG reports directly to the Chinese Communist Party-Central Military Commission. President Xi Jinping, as CCP general secretary, chairs the CMC.

With more than 500 gunboats, CCG is the world's largest. Most have deck cannons and machineguns; some have missiles. Two of the ships are gigantic, at 12,000 tons, dwarfing the 8,000-ton destroyers of neighbors. CCG gunboats are stationed at Panganiban (Mischief) Reef, 120 miles off Palawan yet occupied by China. From there they chase away Filipino mineral explorers at Recto Bank.



China's law all the more prevents us from fishing in the WPS. Already 350,000 Filipino families suffer from CCG-backed poaching since 2014. Theft of tuna, mackerel and other high-value fish reach 1.2 billion kilos a year. At least 270 trawlers spotted by satellite haul in 3.24 million kilos a day, says international maritime lawyer Jay Batongbacal, PhD. Short of fish, we import round scad (galunggong) from China likely stolen from us. Sea life is killed by China's concreting of seven reefs into island-fortresses. Total damage including lost minerals: P231.7 billion. That's in the past seven years, says former foreign secretary Albert del Rosario, summing up data from University of the Philippines marine scientists.

China's law threatens as well Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. China claims their EEZs and reefs in the South China Sea too. It is taking advantage of ASEAN distraction by the pandemic from Wuhan to escalate hostility. Beijing is ignoring a 2016 international arbitral ruling that outlawed its baseless "nine-dash line".

Inciting violence against any state violates the UN Charter, former Supreme Court justice Antonio Carpio reminds. Only the UN Security Council may authorize armed strikes. China knows that as a UNSC permanent member. Yet like a rogue state China scoffs at UN principles.

In telling our countrymen and the world all this, we can research the studies of Batongbacal, del Rosario, Carpio and other patriots. As well, the reports of various specialists and think tanks overseas. Handy are Carpio's videos, "Ang Laban ni Juan sa West Philippine Sea":

- Episode 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK8sfOHlop8&feature=youtu.be>
- Episode 2: https://youtu.be/xY84laL_u9U

* * *

Paperback copies of "Gotcha: An Exposé on the Philippine Government" can be delivered to you by 8Letters Bookstore and Publishing. To order: [GOTCHA by Jarius Bondoc | Shopee Philippines](#)

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2021/02/03/2074897/china-inciting-war-filipinos-must-prepare>



New guide aims to accelerate forest tenure pathways to gender equality

CIFOR scientists are tapping on the potential for tenure reform to promote gender equality in the global south.



Shanti Tamang works in a field in Besisahar, Pashchimanchal, Nepal. Image: [Mokhamad Edliadi, CIFOR, CC BY-NC-SA](#)

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Feb. 2, 2021

Forest tenure reform in the global south has often failed to be gender-responsive, but there is increasing interest in taking up this challenge to activate effective change.

Now, a new guide created by scientists with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) aims to make the process more accessible, recommending a three-step process, billed as “analyse, strategise, and realise,” to support interventions in local and national contexts.

“Tenure reform can lead to gender equality and women’s empowerment, but to date its potential in this regard hasn’t been realised,” said Anne Larson, team leader of Equal Opportunities, Gender Justice and Tenure at CIFOR and one of the editors of the guide.

“By examining pathways for tackling structural barriers in multiple arenas, which involves learning from failures and how women’s practices are socially embedded and networked, we offer insights into the ways tenure reform can foster gender equality.”

At issue is the generally accepted notion that under the right governance conditions, community forest tenure has the potential to lead to a reduction in deforestation, improve carbon storage and increase livelihood options for Indigenous and local communities in comparison to state-managed forests.

The key is how gender equality is an essential cornerstone of such effective community forest tenure regimes, said the guide’s author Nayna Jhaveri, an independent tenure specialist and a CIFOR consultant.

Because women and men have different knowledge regarding specific trees and forests, which can be complementary, joint contributions are required to effectively sustain collaborative forms of forest management.

Anne Larson, team leader and guide editor, Equal Opportunities, Gender Justice and Tenure, CIFOR

She also added that pressures for gender equality are emerging from various directions.

“To make tenure reforms work for women and men, we need to involve all in processes of implementation, but participation is not enough and does not secure equality or empowerment, said editor Iliana Monterroso, co-coordinator of Gender and Social Inclusion at CIFOR. “We also need to improve capacities of those involved in the process.”



The aim of the “analyse, strategise and realise pathway” developed by Jhaveri is to systematically advance the responsible governance of forest tenure – a broad concept that refers to who has rights to forest lands and who uses, manages and makes decisions about resources – while supporting the interests of women and men of all backgrounds.

Through situational analysis of current gendered forest tenure and responsible governance scenarios, current achievements, emerging needs and future challenges can be understood so that a well-targeted strategic plan of action can be designed and implemented.

A set of sequenced and paced activities, which integrate reflection and learning should be designed to realise the strategy, Jhaveri said.

Men and women experience forests in unique ways often due to traditional gender-defined roles and needs.

Women usually work in an informal and negotiated way to assert their tenure rights, while men generally hold positions of authority and make decisions on access, use and management of resources.

This scenario can leave women at an economic disadvantage because they typically have rights to such forest resources as fodder, fuelwood, medicinal plants and some non-timber forest products (NTFP) of commercial value, whereas men often have rights to forest resources with more cash value, including timber and high-value NTFP.

Disparities have an impact on the way forests are managed for community use, affecting the condition of ecosystems, food security, poverty reduction, livelihoods and the potential for income generation.

Yet, despite these commonalities, it is important to keep an open mind, Larson said.

“While we observe some similarities across the tropics in terms of gender roles, not all women are equally vulnerable or dependent on resource use and access,” Monterroso said. “Different sources of intersectional social differentiation based on ethnicity, age, caste, socio-economic condition or ability create obstacles to women in groups or individually.”

The value of community land tenure rights and gender agency through a gender-inclusive approach for climate change mitigation as well as adaptation was recognised in the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN IPCC) report on *Climate Change and Land* in 2019.

“The report is significant because it recognises that women are not a uniform group, and that an intersectional approach is required, valuing research that investigates the climate change-gender nexus so that rights-based interventions can be leveraged to create changes supporting adaptation and mitigation,” Larson said.

Myriad international conventions support women’s human rights, including the 1979 [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#), the 2007 UN [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), the 2012 UN Food and Agriculture Organisation [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security](#) and the 2015 [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

In the sourcebook, the scientists chart a brief history of how the role of women in forests has been perceived and how it has changed over the years since the 1980s.

The earlier approach adopted by practitioners involving a women and development perspective has now been replaced by a gender and development perspective, Jhaveri said.



"This approach means that women are not the sole focus," she added. "Instead, it emphasises the vital importance of understanding existing gendered power relations. It's not simply about how women and men relate, but also includes consideration of what it means to be a woman or a man."

These roles and relationships are defined at the household, community and policy level, which is why change is so difficult, she added, explaining that the guide provides a thorough review, while at the same time demonstrating how mechanisms address challenges at multiple levels.

Foundations for change are created by analysing the gender gaps in specific contexts and the laws influencing actual practices in community-based forest tenure regimes.

While gender mainstreaming has been the basis of much work to build gender equality, Jhaveri proposes a gender-transformative approach that involves carefully crafting the pathways between interventions that promote "reach, benefit and empowerment."

Accelerating forest tenure reform for gender equality and women's empowerment requires a broad vision that sets into motion inclusive as well as women-focused and men-focused change pathways, she said.

Such gender-responsive initiatives are considered more effective for mobilising change for women and men by assessing the role of multiple change agents such as the state, non-governmental organisations, federations, women's organisations and researchers involved in tenure reform.

"It's critical to note that community forest tenure reform is a cyclical process of continuous improvement that builds security across multiple dimensions of tenure regimes," Larson said. "It's not a one-shot deal, rather, coordinated momentum must be established for effective and lasting transformation."

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South France to sizzle due to climate change

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

February 3, 2021

PARIS: That dream house in southern France that so many fantasize about is going to become uncomfortably hot in coming decades, according to new climate change projections Monday by the country's national weather service.

Even if humanity manages to modestly reduce greenhouse gas emissions — which so far has only happened during a raging pandemic or a global recession — France as a whole is on track to heat up nearly three degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by about 2070, Meteo France said in a report.

And if carbon pollution continues unabated, average annual temperatures across the nation will, by century's end, soar 4.5 degrees Celsius (C) beyond that benchmark.

That is verging on an unlivable world, a raft of climate studies have shown. With just over 1 C of warming so far, the planet has seen a sharp crescendo in deadly extreme weather, including heatwaves and megastorms made more destructive by rising seas.

The 2015 Paris climate treaty set a goal of capping global warming at below 2 C, and 1.5 C if possible. Earlier climate models have predicted that France and the Mediterranean basin will be hit especially hard by heatwaves along with declining rainfall, and that reality has begun to bite.

In the summer of 2019, temperatures in picturesque wine country north of the coastal city of Montpellier reached a sizzling 46 C, a national record. Paris was only a few degrees cooler.

This and other heatwaves “were a direct consequence of climate change,” said Meteo France Chief Executive Officer Virginie Schwarz in a statement. “All observations made across the planet confirm an unprecedented acceleration of climate change.”

The 100-page report looked at how three different carbon pollution scenarios could shape France's climate future: a drastic reduction in carbon pollution coupled with the large-scale removal of carbon dioxide from the air; a reckless ramping up of the fossil fuel use which caused the problem to begin with; and a path somewhere between these increasingly unlikely extremes.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/02/03/news/world/south-france-to-sizzle-due-to-climate-change/836262/>



This September 20, 2020 shows artificial white sand along the shore of Manila Bay in Manila, Philippines. The government's move to pour dolomite sand, supposedly as part of the bay's rehabilitation, had been publicly criticized as detrimental to nature.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

Economic growth has 'devastating cost to nature', review finds

[Patrick Galey](#) (Agence France-Presse) - February 2, 2021 - 1:25pm

PARIS, France — Humanity's unbridled growth in recent decades has come at a "devastating cost to nature," according to a wide-ranging international review on the vital economic role played by our living planet.

The 600-page rundown of scientific material commissioned by the British government highlighted the precarious state of global biodiversity and warned that nothing short of a sea change in how countries power economic growth could prevent catastrophic impacts for nature, and humanity.

The Dasgupta Review— a 2-year collaboration of hundreds of academics from around the world overseen by Partha Dasgupta, professor emeritus of economics at the University of Cambridge— said that all livelihoods depended on the health of the planet.

It showed that while global capital produced per person had doubled in the 3 decades since 1992, the stock of natural capital— that is, the quantifiable benefit an individual derives from services bestowed by nature— had plunged 40%.

"While humanity has prospered immensely in recent decades, the ways in which we have achieved such prosperity means that it has come at a devastating cost to nature," the review said.

It called for a fundamental redressing of humanity's demands and nature's supply, warning that biodiversity is intricately linked with human wellbeing and health. Some species are going extinct up to 1,000 times faster than the historical average, "undermining nature's productivity, resilience and adaptability," the review said.

'Totally dependent'

It warned that catastrophes related to nature loss, including the pandemic which was driven by land-use changes and species exploitation, could prove to be "the tip of the iceberg" if development continued at its current rate. In the Philippines alone, an average of 20 typhoons slam farmlands every year, and in 2020, damage from calamities exacerbated the economic toll from the pandemic.



The Philippines is not alone as it is a member of the Pacific Ring of Fire, where calamities are typical on mostly developing nations lacking resources to respond to disasters.

“We are totally dependent upon the natural world,” renowned naturalist David Attenborough wrote in a foreword to the review.

“It supplies us with every oxygen-laden breath we take and every mouthful of food we eat. But we are currently damaging it so profoundly that many of its natural systems are now on the verge of breakdown,” he added.

The economic benefits of biodiversity had historically been missed from growth models, distorting the value of capital accumulation and leaving crucial conservation programs chronically underfunded, said the review.

With an estimated \$4-6 trillion in funding each year going to unsustainable economic activities such as fossil fuel use and damaging farming techniques, governments “exacerbate the problem by paying people more to exploit nature than to protect it,” it added.

It called for a new way of defining economic wellbeing, one that takes nature’s services into account, to replace the traditional GDP model. But it warned that choosing a more sustainable growth trajectory would require “transformative change, underpinned by levels of ambition, coordination and political will akin to, or even greater than, those of the Marshall Plan.”

Rethinking economics

Such a sustainable future would include a total decarbonization of the global energy system, the review concluded.

More than that, properly managing Earth's precious resources would involve people in richer nations changing consumption and wasteful habits, and better access to finance and education for women.

“Never before has it been so important to consider the economics of nature and the role biodiversity plays in supporting a healthy economy,” said Guy Poppy, professor of Ecology at the University of Southampton, who was not involved in the review.

“Two of the major challenges currently facing humankind— climate change and COVID-19— both illustrate the need to link economics with the environment and to rethink how we will become more prosperous and healthy in the future.”

The review pointed to two key summits in 2021, the COP15 talks on biodiversity and the COP26 meeting on climate change, as opportunities to start to undo the damage humanity has inflicted on its only home.

“We and our descendants deserve nothing less,” it said. — **with Philstar.com**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/02/02/2074811/economic-growth-has-devastating-cost-nature-review-finds>



Could the world's deep seas become China's mining frontier?

Stephen Chen in Beijing, South China Morning Post

Posted at Feb 02 2021 12:24 PM

Chinese researchers say they have identified a number of “strategically important” deep sea mineral deposits as part of a decade-long survey of the world’s sea floors.

The researchers conducted a series of government-funded surveys from 2011 to 2020 and located potentially high-yield deposits of various essential industrial minerals from nickel to rare earths, according to a paper published in the Chinese-language Bulletin of Mineralogy, Petrology and Geochemistry last week.

A few of the deposits were in the South China Sea, but most were in the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans, far from China.

Nevertheless, the intensity of Chinese prospecting activities in these distant areas “has surpassed that of other countries”, said the researchers led by Shi Xuefa from the First Institute of Oceanography at the Ministry of Natural Resources.

China’s rapid economic development over the last few decades has led to a huge demand for imported resources, such as high-quality iron ore from Australia and Brazil to make steel for infrastructure.

In recent years, China’s attention has turned to untapped resources under the oceans. The amount of rare earths on the sea floor alone is thought to dwarf those on land by 1,000 times, according to one estimate by Japanese researchers at the University of Tokyo.

But much of the sea floor is uncharted and exploiting any reserves requires precise understanding of the location and size of the deposits.

In the paper, Shi and his colleagues said China had filled in some of those gaps.

For example, the survey found reserves of nickel – a metal that could boost the performance of electric car batteries – tended to be found on the sides undersea mountains rather than on the peaks or in basins.

The surveys were allowed under authorisation from the United Nations’ International Seabed Authority based in Jamaica.

The agreements between the UN agency and Beijing give China access to more areas for mineral prospecting than any other country.

The terms allow China to exploit the most valuable deposits in return for doing the surveys.

According to the researchers, China’s future deep sea mining activities would likely be focused in the southern Atlantic Ocean, the northwestern and southwestern Indian Ocean, the central Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea.

In these areas, Chinese research vessels have discovered a large number of previously unknown “chimneys” pumping mineral-rich material to the sea floor from the depths of the Earth. Some deposits contained ores of high enough quality for commercial exploitation for over two decades, according to the study.

But building large mining facilities in these remote, sometimes contentious waters would be a challenge. India has already raised concerns about Chinese activities in the Indian Ocean, including the Chinese military’s considerable naval fleet to protect its commercial liners and other interests in the area.

The United States has also sent spy planes to monitor Chinese research vessels mapping and planting devices in seabeds near Guam.



Beijing has some ambitious projects for deep sea exploration. It has built manned submersibles that can reach some of the world's greatest depths and is developing a deep sea station and unmanned sea floor base operated by robots.

With the help of floating nuclear power stations, the technology is expected to pave way for the commercial exploitation of natural resources from several thousand metres under the ocean.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/02/02/21/could-the-worlds-deep-seas-become-chinas-mining-frontier?fbclid=IwAR1zATFXzZ-JFo_PYallODfXqI_Yo99UPsr6FrJtC-NlzhDuO9mD3VGbtM

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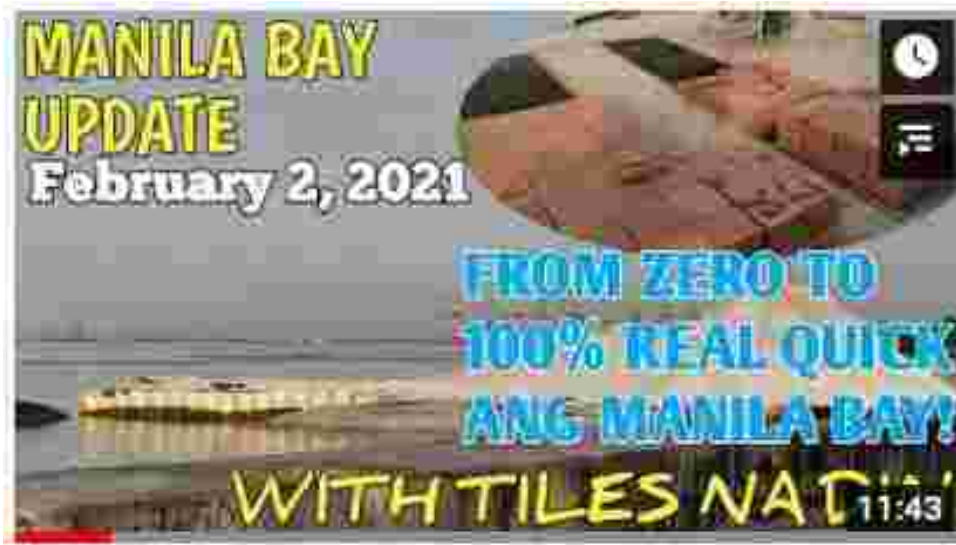
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