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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Sampulna Signs Suspension Order for MPSA Holders in Masungi

Saturday, June 4, 2022 [Journal Online](#)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna signs the suspension order to three companies issued with Mineral Production Sharing Agreements or MPSA in Masungi Georeserve in Baras town in Rizal province. During the May 25 press conference, Sampulna bared that Rapid City Realty and Development Corporation, Quimson Limestone, Inc., and Quarry Rock Group, Inc. are instructed to suspend all activity within their respective MPSA contract areas. The **DENR** chief also pointed out that while the suspension orders will be issued against the firms, these companies have not been operational since 2004. Sampulna said that the suspension is “to avert further speculation.” He also called on [support groups and environmentalists](#) to help the government in its protection and conservation initiatives.



DENR Chief Visits Boracay Wetland No. 4

Saturday, June 4, 2022 [Journal Online](#)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna (right) discusses with Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group General Manager Martin Despi (2nd from right) the remaining [development work in Boracay](#) Wetland No. 4, one of the nine wetlands in the island that has been recovered as part of the ongoing rehabilitation and the [DENR](#)'s Adopt a Wetland program. The one-hectare lagoon was adopted by Aboitiz Group and named Balabag Wetland Park. It features a promenade and trees and plants endemic to Boracay to revive the island's biodiversity. Also in photo (1st and 2nd from left) are: Aklan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Officer Merlene Aborka and Boracay OIC Community ENR Officer Rhodel Lababit.



DENR calls for sustainable actions in celebration of National Environment Month

By PNA June 5, 2022



AS the planet faces the threat of climate change, species extinction, and pollution that poisons our air, land, and water, the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) (DENR) calls for sustainable actions to combat these emergencies. There is #OnlyOneEarth.

Aksyon Para sa Natatanging Mundo #OnlyOneEarth is the campaign for World Environment Day 2022. It calls for collective, transformative action on a global scale to celebrate, protect and restore our planet. We only have one earth, let's take care of it.

In line with the celebration, a report about the environment was highlighted in the Duterte Legacy Summit 2022 on May 30.

Braving disasters thru climate change resilience

Extreme weather conditions hitting countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world are not solely headline-worthy scenarios with oftentimes horrifying death tolls, these also highlight the need for a quick global response that is best mastered in a whole-of-government approach.

Amid these global pressures to reverse climate situations, the Duterte administration has gained ground in ensuring that landmark programs go beyond its six-year term, to achieve sustainable climate resilience.

At the Duterte Legacy Summit 2022, the DENR highlighted some of the "life-saving" programs.

These programs were proven to mitigate disastrous climate impacts, not to mention the variety of challenges encountered by the Philippines including volcanic eruptions, coronavirus pandemic, and typhoons.

Lifeline in mangroves

Judilyn Arreza, secretary of a people's group [del Carmen Fisherfolk Association](#) from Siargao Islands, said they are reaping the benefits brought by the flourishing mangrove trees on their island.

The administration, through the DENR, has launched the Enhanced [National Greening Program](#) (ENGP), which has secured 387.83 million planted mangrove seedlings in their town from 2017 up to last year.

Arreza said it was only in 2016, through the ENGP, that they have benefitted from such a program since they formed their association in 2011, granting fishers additional income, with tourism also greatly contributing to their financial needs.



"Our community depends on the mangroves, which are very abundant. We have a lot of fish then, and many tourists visit us... We are earning almost P3,600 additional income per month, sometimes, during vacation season, we are earning as much as P1,000 a day," she said in Filipino.

However, nature's wrath did not spare Arreza's community as [Siargao Island](#) became one of the areas devastated by Typhoon "[Odette](#)."

"Typhoon Odette came, we were really afraid that time because the wind was really strong, we thought we're gonna die, all of us, almost all the houses have been destroyed, almost all our source of income vanished," she said.

"Odette" ravaged Visayas and [Mindanao](#) in December last year, killing at least 400 people, and affecting over a million others in the region.

Arreza has been grateful to the well-grown mangrove trees they have which somehow provided an impact buffer, just enough to save their lives.

"If it were not for the mangroves, maybe a lot more would have died, or a greater amount of damage would have been made during the typhoon," she said.

Arreza noted that the DENR has been assisting them to recover through the seedling provision and various training.

Innovative preps

In the same report, DENR Acting Secretary [Jim Sampulna](#) cited numerous actions made by the Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR), to "raise the bar" on the country's environmental approaches.

"LGUs (Local Government Units) were supported with continuous updating of the geohazard maps and in the conduct of risk assessments in their areas to help them plan in disaster and calamities," he said.

This covers various hazards related to flooding, earthquake, and even volcanic risks, among others.

State-of-the-art technologies for monitoring and forecasting were procured and used across agencies for LGUs.

"Emergency operations centers in 17 regional offices and the [National Disaster Risk Reduction Management](#) operation centers were established as command control points for emergency operations and activities," Sampulna added.

Operation Listo and Disaster Preparedness Manual were some of the tools used to engage the local communities in preparation for earthquakes, typhoons, and other forms of destructive weather conditions.

Over P2-billion immediate relief assistance, meanwhile, has been provided to affected families since 2018.

Besides disaster preparations and response, the Duterte administration has also advanced the rehabilitation and preservation of protected areas in the country, such as the Boracay and Manila Bay Rehabilitation.

Sampulna said science-based actions are needed to ensure resilience and sustainability for the country, which the outgoing administration has fostered.

"The Duterte administration shaped the vision and strategy of our country to improve lives, protect the people, and the environment, consistent with the global aspirations for a better, greener, bluer, and healthier post-Covid-19 recovery," he said.

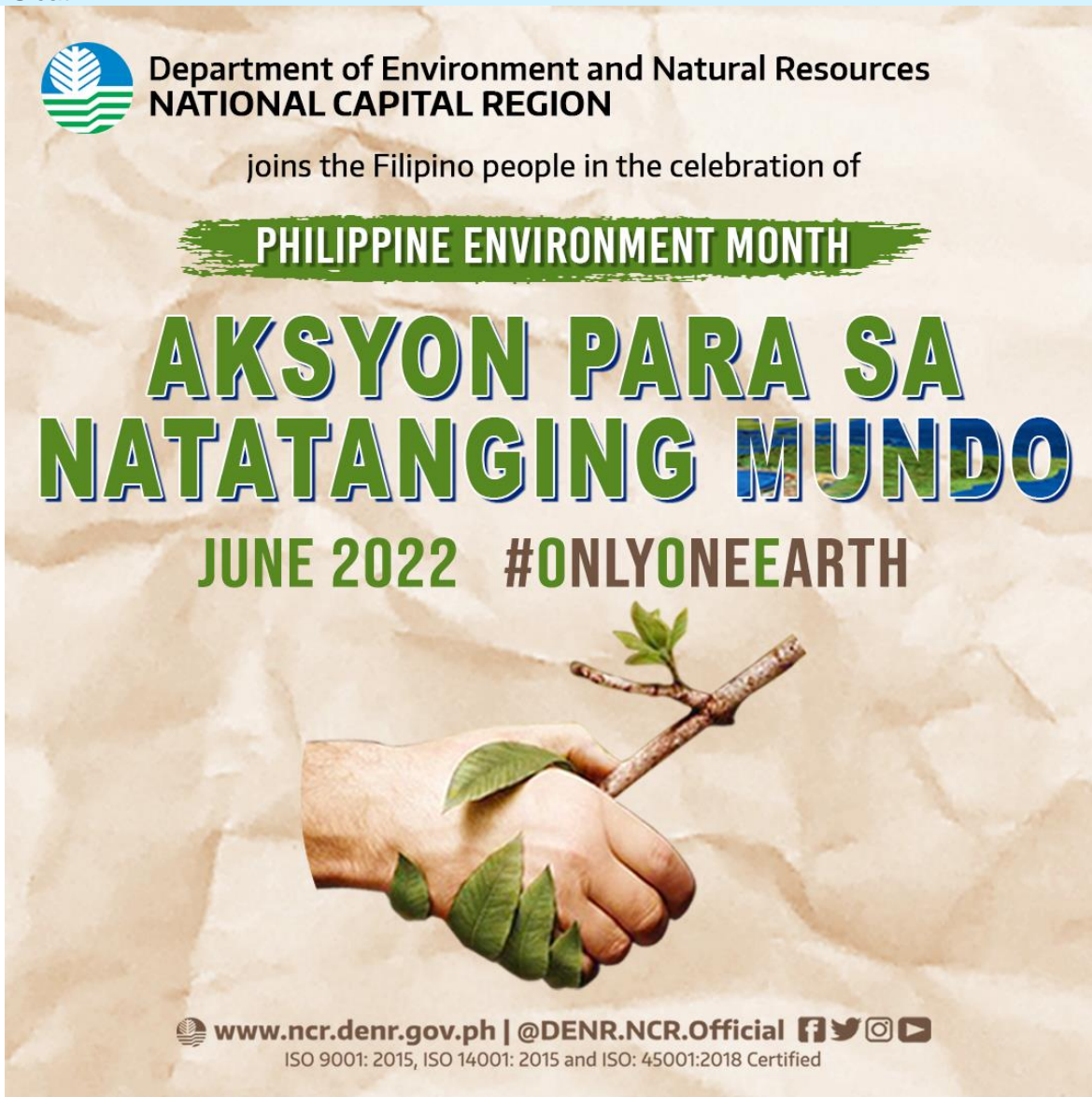
Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/06/05/supplements/denr-calls-for-sustainable-actions-in-celebration-of-national-environment-month/1846159>



DENR-NCR leads PH Environment Month celebration

Published on: June 03, 2022

By Alice Sicat



QUEZON CITY (PIA) – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources - National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) joins the Filipino people in celebrating June as Philippine Environment Month.

As our planet faces the threat of climate change, species extinction, and pollution that poisons our air, land, and water, DENR calls for sustainable actions to combat these emergencies.

With the theme “Aksyon Para sa Natatanging Mundo” and with the campaign hashtag #OnlyOneEarth for World Environment Day 2022, DENR calls for collective, transformative action on a global scale to celebrate, protect and restore "our planet because we only have one earth, and we need to take care of it".

In connection to the celebration, the DENR-NCR will conduct a tree planting activity on 8 June 2022, at Nangka Highschool grounds in Barangay Nangka, Marikina City.

Interested parties may contact Forester Gabriel de Guzman of the Production Forest Management Section at 09675401247 for details.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

SIMULTANEOUS TREE PLANTING ACTIVITY

7:00 AM | 8 JUNE 2022

Nangka High School Grounds
Marikina City

www.ncr.denr.gov.ph | @DENR.NCR.Official    

Proclamation No. 237, s. 1988 declares the month of June of every year as the Philippine Environment Month to encourage people's participation and involvement in pressing environmental issues like climate change; air, water, and land pollution; and habitat destruction among others. (PIA-NCR)



Protected area management is everybody's business

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JUNE 5, 2022



[DENR-SCIS](#)

Mount Arayat, now a protected landscape, is the first national park in the Philippines in 1933. The enactment of the National Parks Act, or Act 3915, on February 1, 1932, established the National Parks System in the Philippines.

Under the law, Mount Arayat became the country's first national park on June 27, 1933.



[DENR-SCIS](#)

The Naga-Kabasalan Protected Landscape that is made of karst.

There are now a total of 246 legislated protected areas in the country under Republic Act 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act, and Republic Act 11038, or the Expanded Nipas (E-Nipas) Act.

Putting the spotlight on protected areas and their importance to human survival, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) launched the Year of Protected Areas (YoPA) campaign as part of the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity last May 22.

With the theme "Protected Areas for a Protected Future," the campaign aims to launch a massive information campaign on the urgent need to conserve protected areas, while also encouraging people to visit these breathtaking eco-tourism destinations.

The YoPA campaign hopes to generate additional revenues from tourist visits to ensure the continuity of conservation programs.

Enormous potential

Speaking during the launching of the YoPA Campaign, Environment Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna pledged his support to institutionalize and strengthen the campaign to protect and conserve the country's protected areas.



He highlighted the enormous potential of protected areas in terms of providing income and livelihood, as a source of food and life-saving drugs or medicine, and other economic services that contribute to growth and development.

“Several world-renowned tourist destinations that are protected areas attract a number of visitors that bring income to the people’s organizations, Indigenous peoples and other conservation communities in their vicinities, making them major ecotourism assets,” he said.

“The economic value of ecosystem services in the Philippines is estimated at approximately P2.3 trillion annually, or about \$46 billion and protected areas are coming as contributors to this,” he added.

Megadiverse country, biodiversity hot spot

One of the world’s 18 mega-biodiverse countries containing two-thirds of the Earth’s biodiversity, and between 70 percent and 80 percent of the world’s plant and animal species.

The Philippines, ranks fifth in the number of plant species and maintains 5 percent of the world’s flora.

Over half of the country’s 53,000 described species can be found nowhere else in the world.

However, the Philippines is also a biodiversity critical hot spot with at least 700 species being in danger of becoming extinct.

Around 93 percent of the Philippines’ original forest cover has been lost since the 1990s, with 53 percent of its remaining coral reefs in poor condition.

Protected areas: Our lifeline

Protected areas are the lifeline of the people, according to Sampulna.

“Majestic trees and healthy forest, clean waters from rivers and oceans, thick mangrove forests and colorful corals provide us with clean water for drinking, food sustenance, unpolluted air for breathing and protection from climate effects, such as storm surges and landslides,” Sampuna, a forester, pointed out.

However, he explained that despite such benefits, the country’s protected areas remain at risk from major threats, such as intrusive development, pollution, invasive alien species, and interrupted wildlife migration corridor, compounded by the impacts of climate change.

Protected Area Management Program

The acting Environment head said that to address these threats, the DENR through the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), is implementing the Protected Area Development and Management Program.

The program covers the main in-situ measures to conserve biodiversity, pursuant to the Nipas Act, as amended by the E-Nipas Act of 2018.

The program rationalizes the coverage of the Nipas by maintaining and prioritizing those with high biodiversity values, while providing appropriate governance regimes for the protection of key biodiversity areas through the establishment of local conservation areas with concerned local government units and Indigenous communities conservation areas, he said.

Sampulna said a total of 178 people’s organizations are due to be recognized and empowered in the next four years to manage their own biodiversity-friendly enterprises, such as food processing, handicraft, ecotourism and aquaculture.

The DENR, he said, is also working with the international development partners like the United Nations Development Fund and United States Agency for International Development, whose support has been invaluable in ensuring that protected areas are managed sustainably.



“To viably benefit from our protected areas, we all need to work together,” he said.

Joint declaration

During the celebration, the DENR, together with the DOT and DILG signed a joint declaration to support the celebration of the YoPA Campaign.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año and Sampulna led the signing ceremony.

The DENR, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau and the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BioFin) of UNDP Philippines, will lead the campaign implementation with DOT and DILG as partners.

These agencies will work to promote protected areas under the Nipas and coordinate with other agencies at the national and local levels to ensure effective conservation and sustainable management of national parks nationwide.

Financing gap, violence against environment defenders

Sought for comment, Leon Dulce, national coordinator of the environmental group Kalikasan-People’s Network for the Environment remains skeptical.

“Will the YoPA campaign finally result in addressing the 80 percent financing gap of the country’s annual biodiversity protection budget? Will it address the prevalent framework of fortress conservation that displaces indigenous and local communities from environmentally critical areas?” Dulce told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on May 24.

He remains skeptical over the campaign’s effectiveness in addressing the violence faced by environmental defenders protecting the country’s landscapes and seascapes.

“These are crucial, longstanding questions hanging over the Philippines’ conservation landscape. We hope the national government starts taking concrete measures to redress these serious concerns surrounding our protected areas,” he said.

Nevertheless, Dulce urged the signatories to the joint declaration to come up with concrete action plans to address the major concerns around protected areas.

“They should consult Indigenous people, small farmers and other environmental defenders on how protected areas can be integrated in their work in frontline environmental defense. They should invite onsite visits from UN special rapporteurs looking into environmental and human rights concerns to look into these concerns,” he said.

Protected areas: Everyone’s business

Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim, a biodiversity advocate, hailed the initiative and expressed high hopes that it will be sustained in the coming years.

“I congratulate the DENR, the DOT and the DILG for this initiative,” Lim said.

“Protected areas should be everyone’s business, since they provide services that are beneficial to the tourism industry [nature tourism] and to communities and local governments [water, disaster resiliency, local livelihoods, etc], among others,» Lim added.

She explained: «Pressures are also most often driven by activities that are beyond protected areas and may be considered outside the jurisdiction of the DENR. Thus partnerships and cross-sectoral collaboration are important to address threats to biodiversity in protected areas and to manage the the protected areas’ effectively,” Lim told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on May 24.



For her part, Grace Diamante, executive director of the Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc., expressed her support for the campaign.

“We are one with the DENR and UNDP BioFin in effectively managing the protected areas in the Philippines as we celebrate the 90th anniversary of establishing national parks in the country,” Diamante told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on May 24.

She said that to effectively manage a protected area and prevent biodiversity loss, more concerned agencies and individuals who will take action backed by the right information are needed.

She agreed that providing more funding regularly and timely is essential, the same way that policies should be effectively implemented. All these, she said, increase the competencies of protected area management,

“Done right, we can take pride that we have done our responsibility to ensure that future generations will still get to enjoy the richness of Philippines biodiversity,” Diamante pointed out.

Image credits: [DENR-SCIS](#)



Migratory birds in W. Visayas under close watch

By Perla Lena June 4, 2022, 1:17 pm



MONITORING. Personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Capiz during the conduct of the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) in the priority wetlands in the province this year. The department is now closely monitoring areas frequented by migratory birds in Western Visayas amid the avian influenza outbreak in Luzon. *(Photo courtesy of Community Environment and Natural Resources Office -Mambusao)*

ILOILO CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is watching areas in Western Visayas frequented by migratory birds as a precautionary measure amid the avian influenza outbreak in several areas in Luzon.

DENR 6 (Western Visayas) Executive Director Livino B. Duran, in an interview on Saturday, said the region has a lot of migratory birds, some of which no longer leave and become resident birds.

“We wanted to look into this because some of them are being eyed as carrier of a disease. For now, we cannot really conclude that they are the carrier, so dead migratory birds have to be handled very carefully and be brought to a proper authority, which is the Department of Agriculture (DA),” Duran said. The DA, he said, has the equipment to determine if these birds are infected with any disease.

Duran noted that the matter is not just the concern of Western Visayas and this was discussed during their recent Visayas cluster meeting where he was able to visit Olango Island, a wildlife sanctuary in Cebu.

He said Iloilo migratory birds often visit areas from the municipality of Leganes to Dumangas town.

However, the most number of migratory birds can be found at the Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area (NOCWCA), which has a contiguous coastline spanning 52 coastal barangays in the province’s three cities and seven towns.

The NOCWCA serves as a habitat for globally threatened species, extensive mangroves, and mudflats that serve as feeding grounds for thousands of migratory birds.

Its high biodiversity also supports the livelihood of coastal communities and serves as a major food source for Negros Occidental.

“That is the seventh Ramsar site (wetland of international importance) in the Philippines and is a diverse area when we talk about migratory birds,” he added.



Duran said part of their monitoring is the regular bird count. As the birds are tagged, their loop of destinations and origin can be easily identified.

Sometimes, he said, they are captured to place a tag on them so that when they travel to other countries, they could be traced to have visited the Philippines.

“The public is always advised to inform our authorities if there are dead migratory birds for them to be handled properly. The handling of migratory birds is similar to a Covid-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) patient,” Duran said. **(PNA)**



DENR launches pawikan nesting site in celebration of environment month



PAWIKAN NESTING SITE. A sea turtles' (pawikan) nesting site. (DENR)

IAN OCAMPO FLORA

June 04, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) - Community Environment and Natural Resources (CENRO) based here opened yesterday the Philippine Environment Month celebration this June with the launching of pawikan nesting site in Magalawa Island in Palauig town, this province to raise public awareness and community support in the protection and conservation of marine resources.

Ariel Mendoza, head of CENRO Masinloc said that the coastline of the 42-hectare Magalawa Island has been an important nesting ground of marine turtles.

Magalawa Island is located within the more than 7,000-hectare Masinloc and Oyon Bay Protected Seascape and Landscape (MOBPLS).

"We have sighted Olive ridley and Green sea turtles nesting in the white sand of Magalawa since December of last year," said Mendoza.

And more than 400 hatchlings of these species have been released back to the sea of MOBPLS, he added.

In her message during the unveiling of pawikan nesting site billboard, DENR Undersecretary Annaliza Teh explained that climate resilient infrastructure should be an integral part of a marine protected area management plan to achieve environmental sustainability.

"Solar energy panels and rain water harvesting system are some of the important infrastructure that can help in attaining climate resiliency in protected area," she explained.

On the other hand, Felix Mendoza, field site team leader of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes (SIBOL) project pointed out the important support and assistance that they have implemented to better manage the MOBPLS.

"Marine turtle conservation, mangrove and beach forests rehabilitation training course and community managed-savings and credit association are some of the capacity building support of the project to effectively protect the MOBPLS", he said.



MOBPLS is the first and only legislated marine protected area in Zambales and in Central Luzon under Republic Act 11032 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Area System (ENIPAS).

It is home to unique and diverse species including the hybrid mangrove species of *Rhizophora x lamarckii*, and the blue-spotted rabbit fish.

It is also home to important habitat such as the 1,500 ha coral reefs, 109 ha mangrove forests and vast seagrass beds.

This year's environment month theme "Only One Earth", underscores the need to live sustainably in harmony with nature, and the possibilities for shifting to a greener lifestyle through policy and individual choices.



City, DENR to hold cleanup drive today

[Caecent No-ot Magsumbol](#) - The Freeman June 5, 2022 | 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — After the two-day river summit, the Cebu City government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environment Management Bureau -VII will hold a cleanup drive in line with the World Environment Day 2022 today.

The World Environment Day, the biggest international day for the environment, was formed in 1973 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

This year's campaign slogan is "Only One Earth" with the focus on "Living Sustainably in Harmony with Nature."

In Cebu City, today's activity will be led by Vice Mayor Donaldo "Dondon" Hontiveros.

Aside from DENR-EMB-VII, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Department of Public Works and Highways, Office of the City Mayor, Liga ng mga Barangay- Cebu City Chapter and other departments and offices in the Cebu City Government- City Administrator's Office, DGS, CCENRO, DPS, CCDRRMO, HRDO, DEPW and PROBE will also join the event.

The identified areas for the cleanup activity are the Tejero Creek, Mahiga Creek, Bulacao River, Tagunol River, Kinalumsan River in Tres De Abril and the river in F. Pacaña, Tisa.

Hontiveros had encouraged everyone to care for the environment and join the cleanup drive.

Mayor Michael Rama, who is fresh from vacation, is also expected to participate in today's event.

Flood control project

Meanwhile, Councilor Jerry Guardo has disclosed that at least P450 million worth of various flood control projects are being implemented in the city as part of the solution to the flood problem it is currently facing.

Guardo, chairman of the City Council's Committee on Infrastructure, said the projects were funded by the national government and are implemented through the District Office of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in the city.

Consist of dredging and expansion of waterways as well as improvement of existing culverts, these flood control projects are currently being done in the barangays of Tejero, T. Padilla, Day-as, Lorega, Inayawan and Cogon Pardo.

Guardo said the implementation of these projects is just the first step of the city government's plan to rehabilitate the river systems, an undertaking agreed upon during the first ever river summit held last June 2-3, 2022.

He said the project undertaken in barangays Tejero and T. Padilla has a budget of P100 million while the one in Day-as has a P50 million budget.

The councilor said P100 million each was allotted for the dredging and clearing of the river in barangays Cogon Pardo and Inayawan while the the development of waterways in barangays Lorega and Zapatera has a budget of P100 million.

He said that the implementation of such projects is not easy as there are areas already owned by private persons or companies.

"Ang problema lang kay dunay mga challenges na-encounter namo like for example during pag conduct namo sa parcellary survey, dunay na-found namo nga dunay mga property, private property na ba nga na-title na ang mga yuta nga daplin sa sapa, so mao nay nakakuan



challenge namo kay we still have to negotiate kung dili sila masugot we might have to expropriate man kanang property nila,” said Guardo.

Guardo also announced that for those affected by the flood control project, the city government will provide a P35,000 financial assistance for the partially damaged structures, while for the totally damaged structures, the city will provide a relocation site to them.

“Mao gyud to among guidelines kay kung partially damaged lang ka and then you opted to avail of kanang relocation site doble man kay you can still retain sa ownership sa lote, naa pay portion nga makabalay sila unya og imong offeran og condo seems like unfair ba nga duha ang ilang na-avail bitaw,” said Guardo. — **Mary Ruth R. Malinao, LPM (FREEMAN)**



Maharlika TV

15h · 🌐

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WW2 HERITAGE CANNONS NEW ATTRACTION AT DOLOMITE BEACH

Workers rush to install on Friday, 03 June 2022, the Heritage Cannon, a World War II relic, in the Remedios area of the Dolomite beach as another attraction. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources plans to reopen the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach on June 12, Independence Day.

#BayanBosesMo

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Boracay kabilang sa listahan ng 'Top Destinations for Most Sustainable Stays in 2022'



June 4, 2022 @ 3:45 PM 16 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines- Muling napabilang ang Boracay bilang top destination, sa pagkakataong ito ay para sa sustainability.

Ayon sa ulat, kabilang ang isla sa listahan ng Hospitality.net ng "Top Destinations for Most Sustainable Stays in 2022."

Inilarawan ng artikulo ang Boracay bilang "the stuff Instagram dreams are made of."

Dagdag pa nito, matapos ang anim na buwang pagsasara, tumuon ang isla sa pagsisikap nito na naging dahil upang makapag- "start over" ito mula sa negatibong epekto ng maraming turista.

"Boracay is now responsibly welcoming visitors again, managing volumes with a daily tourist limit. The island has also implemented an array of sustainable eco-tourism practices, including the adoption of electric tricycles, and now relies on solar power as their main energy source, seeking to ensure a long and healthy future," saad dito.

Ipinanukala ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) nitong Abril ang implementasyo ng QR code system uoang maiwasan ang overcrowding sa Boracay.

Ayon sa ahensya, ang pagtatalaga ng carrying capacity ay alinsunod sa kasalukuyang misyon nito na protektahan at pangalagaan ang isla. RNT/SA

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/boracay-kabilang-sa-listahan-ng-top-destinations-for-most-sustainable-stays-in-2022/>



Mining ban not for firms permitted by national gov't, says South Cotabato governor

[John Unson](#) - Philstar.com June 4, 2022 | 4:41pm



Ethnic Blaans and T'bolis from across South Cotabato urged Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Wednesday not to veto the anti-open pit provincial ordinance that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan lifted last month.

Philstar.com / John Unson

KORONADAL CITY, Philippines — The governor of South Cotabato had vetoed last month's lifting by the provincial board of a 12-year ordinance disallowing open-pit mining in the province.

However, Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. told reporters Friday any mining ban in South Cotabato will not affect the planned extraction of copper in Tampakan town by the Sagittarius Mines Incorporated, or SMI.

The national government had long contracted SMI for mineral exploration in Tampakan, some 15 kilometers from this city, the capital of South Cotabato.

“Walang kinalaman ang ordinansa sa operation na meron ang Sagittarius Mines Incorporated sa Tampakan sa dahilang ang ordinansang ito nagre-regulate lamang ng mga minahan na within the authority lamang ng local government units,” Tamayo said in a dialogue with reporters here Friday.

Foreign and Filipino mining experts had said there are at least US\$200 billion worth of copper deposits in hinterlands in Tampakan town that are inside the ancestral domains of ethnic Blaan people.

The Blaans in Tampakan have long permitted the SMI to extract copper in their territories via a written free and prior consent initiated with the help of their tribal councils and the National Commission on Indigenous People.

The South Cotabato Sangguniang Panlalawigan lifted last month a 12-year ban on open-pit mining in the province on the behest of indigenous Blaan and T'boli constituents and big business blocs in Mindanao.

Thousands of tribe members on Wednesday gathered here to express appreciation of the provincial board's having lifted the 12-year controversial open pit mining ban.



Tribal leaders, among them Dalena Samling and Domingo Collado, took turns thanking, during the rally, the provincial legislature for invalidating the ordinance.

They also called on Tamayo, elected to a second term as governor last May 9, not to veto the lifting of the ordinance.

Tamayo on Friday vetoed the amendment to South Cotabato's Environmental Code, but emphasized clearly that the measure is only good for small-scale mining operations and is not applicable to big ventures with permits from the national government.



S. Cotabato people on watch vs prov'l board's possible override of veto over lifting of open-pit mining ban

Published June 4, 2022, 12:17 PM

by [Armando Fenequito, Jr.](#)

DAVAO CITY – The Diocese of Marbel in South Cotabato will remain vigilant until such time when there is no more threat of lifting the open-pit mining ban in the town of Tampakan.

A few days back, South Cotabato Governor Reynaldo Tamayo repudiated a Provincial Board resolution seeking to lift the decade-old ordinance banning open-pit mining in Tampakan.

Marbel Bishop Cerilo Casicas said in a statement that the outgoing Sangguniang Panlalawigan members could still override the governor's veto on the resolution lifting the ban on open-pit mining.

"As we all heave a big sigh of relief, we are fully aware that the battle for environmental protection and against open-pit mining methods in South Cotabato is not over, " the bishop said.

Casicas said the veto truly reflects the sentiment of the general public and at this point of the campaign, they consider this as a victory of righteousness.

"God's hand truly moves in mysterious but wonderful ways," he added.

The diocese, he said, is thankful for Tamayo's decision with the people and for standing with the environment.

"Your veto is a testament of a listening governor. On behalf of the waters, the flora and fauna and the peoples of South Cotabato, we offer our deepest gratitude to you for standing up against all forms of pressure and siding with the people of South Cotabato," the bishop added.

Casicas said they are deeply grateful for every person who joined them in the march, and for every prayer and sacrifice made.

"To all the South Cotabateños, those belonging to neighboring provinces and city, and to all our multisectoral support groups – youth, senior citizens, medical practitioners, health workers, farmers, tricycle drivers, irrigators association, IPs and Muslim brothers and sisters and to the long list of sectors we could not completely mention here," he said.

"We express our gratitude to the countless people who have gone out of their way to show their opposition whether through the social media, signature campaign or participating in the mass mobilizations," Casicas added.

In junking the board resolution, Tamayo said he is hoping that the outgoing members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan will no longer override his decision and let the next council review it.

The governor said he junked the lifting of the ban on open-pit mining for being prejudicial to the public welfare and inimical to the overall interest of the province.

"Time and time again, it is always stressed that the province's holistic development is anchored first and foremost on its people," he said.

Tamayo said he could not see any compelling reason that a decade-old ordinance to ban open-pit mining needed to be amended since this protects the residents and the environment from any destruction.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/06/04/s-cotabato-people-on-watch-vs-provl-boards-possible-override-of-veto-over-lifting-of-open-pit-mining-ban/>



South Cotabato officials urged to support open-pit mine ban

[Angelica Y. Yang](#) - Philstar.com June 4, 2022 | 5:51pm



Undated photo shows a Blaan village in mineral-rich Tampakan town in South Cotabato.

[Philstar.com/John Unson](#)

MANILA, Philippines — Environmental group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) on Saturday called on provincial officials from South Cotabato to uphold the veto on lifting the open-pit mine ban in the area.

Last month, the South Cotabato Sangguniang Panlalawigan, composed of provincial officials, lifted the 12-year ban on open-pit mining in the province at the behest of tribal constituents and business blocs in Mindanao.

Weeks later, Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. vetoed the measure, explaining that he ["could not find any compelling reason to amend" such ordinance.](#)

"Gov. Tamayo's veto of the attempted lifting of the open-pit mine ban is a victory for the thousands who protested on the streets," Kalikasan PNE National Coordinator Leon Dulce said in a statement on Saturday.

"We now urge the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of South Cotabato to respect the people's will by upholding the environment code and taking action against various permits issued to the Tampakan open-pit mine despite its illegal status," he added.

Dulce also urged the South Cotabato officials to scrap the permits issued by the national government to the Tampakan mine, and issue restraining orders on the developments activities of Sagittarius Mines Inc. and other proponents.

Anti-mining group Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) lauded Tamayo's move to veto the lifting of the ban, but said they will continue to monitor the developments "as there is still a chance that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan may override the veto."

"We will take this matter seriously and join the vigilance of local communities in South Cotabato to continue lobbying and putting pressure on the Sanggunian to not override the veto," ATM said in a statement Friday.

The removal of the ban in May cleared away the final regulatory obstacle for the long-delayed Tampakan Project, Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Wilfredo Moncano told Agence France-Presse.

Sagittarius Mines, the developer of the Tampakan project, has said it is "one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world."



Kalikasan PNE's Dulce previously said that the Tampakan project will destroy the Altayan-Taplan River ecosystems in the Quezon mountain range, while several coal mining projects will ravage the Daguma mountain range.

Mining ban limitations

In a dialogue with reporters on Friday, Tamayo said that [any ban in South Cotabato will not affect the planned operations of Sagittarius Mines](#). He explained that the mining ban only regulates mines within the authority of local government units.

Mining experts have said there are at least \$200 billion worth of copper deposits in Tampakan town, which are within the ancestral domains of the ethnic Blaan people.

The Blaans have long allowed Sagittarius to mine copper from their territories after securing a written free and prior consent with the help of their tribal councils and the National Commission on Indigenous People. — With reports from Gaea Katreena Cabico and John Unson



Despite veto, South Cotabato bishop says fight vs open-pit mining not over yet

By **CBCP News** - June 4, 2022 - 1:26 PM



Protesters march the streets of Koronadal City in South Cotabato against the lifting of the province's ban on open-pit mining, June 1, 2022. (Photo courtesy of Clyde Jomoc/Sac-Marbel via CBCP News)

A Catholic bishop in South Cotabato welcomed Friday the governor's decision to veto a measure allowing open-pit mining in the province, but called on the public to remain vigilant.

Bishop Cerilo Casicas of the Marbel diocese said there is reason to celebrate but they aren't letting their guards down.

"We remain vigilant until the present threat to amend the lifting of the open-pit mining ban is completely done," Casicas said in a press conference.

"As we give a big sigh of relief, we are fully aware that the battle for environmental protection and against open-pit mining methods in South Cotabato is not over," he said.

Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. issued the veto on June 3 "for being prejudicial to the public welfare and inimical to the overall interest of all South Cotabateños".

The province's lawmakers on May 16 amended a decade-old ordinance against open-cut mining, paving the way for the \$5.9 billion Tampakan copper-gold project to start.

Tamayo said he could not find any reason why the officials would overturn a measure that protects the people "from the ill effects of the wanton destruction of our God-given resources by the multinational corporations".

The veto also came two days after thousands of people took the streets of the province's capital of Koronadal to protest the move.

The bishop then appealed to the legislators "not to override the veto" and not to allow themselves to be carried away by business and political pressures.

At one point of the press conference, the prelate went emotional when asked for his message to the public about what happened in their diocese over the last two weeks.

"I hope people see the hand of God at work," Casicas said as his voice cracked. "I hope we see that this is a blessing, that we are not forsaken."

Source: <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/politics-issues/2022/06/04/218849/despite-veto-south-cotabato-bishop-says-fight-vs-open-pit-mining-not-over-yet/>



Nadokumento noong International Day of Biodiversity ang ilan sa mga halaman at hayop na makikita sa Mount Hamiguitan sa San Isidro, Davao Oriental.

Inakyat ng grupo ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources XI ang nag-iisang UNESCO World Heritage Site sa Mindanao noong Mayo 20 hanggang 22.

Bukod sa gusto nilang masaksihan ang saganang biodiversity ng bundok, nais din nilang suriin ang proteksiyon at pagpapanatili ng kagandahan ng Mt. Hamiguitan.

Kilala ang Mt. Hamiguitan dahil sa bonsai o pygmy forest nito at tirahan din ng Philippine eagle, Philippine cockatoo, at ilan pang endemic species.

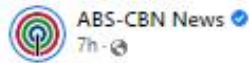
Taong 2014 kinilala bilang World Heritage Site ang Mt. Hamiguitan at nitong Abril 2022 lamang ito binuksan sa trekking at mountaineering matapos payagan ng Protected Area Management Office ng Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary. (📷: DENR Davao) | via Hernel Tocmo

BASAHIIN ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/.../mt-hamiguitan-phs-6th-world...>



👍❤️😱 4.9K

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Isang spinner dolphin ang nailigtas ng mangingisdang si Michael Agarap sa Barangay Aguada Sur, Magallanes, Sorsogon Martes.

Sa tulong ng Municipal Agriculture Office, binigyan ng gabay ang mga mangingisda kung paano ang tamang pangangalaga habang naghihintay ng tiyempo sa pagbitaw sa dolphin. Kalauna'y ligtas na nadala sa laot ang dolphin, na tinatayang may bigat na 40 kilo at wala pang isang taon.

Posible umanong naligaw ang dolphin sa kaniyang ruta at nahiwalay sa kaniyang pod.

Samantala, sa Zambales, isang sugatang brahminy kite ang nasagip sa Bucao River. Ginagamot na ito sa Botolan Wildlife Rescue Center bago pakawalan. Paalala ng mga awtoridad, bawal ang pag-aari, transportasyon, at koleksiyon ng wildlife species nang walang permit.

Masigla naman ang marine life sa dagat ng Barangay Gumasa sa Glan, Sarangani Province matapos mamataan ang pitong dugong malapit sa dalampasigan noong Mayo 27. Nakuhanan ng drone shot ang pitong dugong kabilang na ang tatlong mag-ina. (📷: Merwin Grutas; DENR Region 3; DENR Soccsksargen) | via Aireen Perol; Gracie Rutao; Hernel Tocmo

BASA HIN ang mga kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/patrol/tag/WILDLIFE>



130

5 Comments 7 Shares



Isla Madalag Eco-Haven: Promoting eco-tourism, local products



CARLA N. CANET
June 04, 2022

E.B. MAGALONA Mayor Marvin Malacon and Vice Mayor Eric Matulac along with members of Council led the inauguration of the Isla Madalag Eco-Haven at the town's Barangay Madalag Friday, June 3, 2022.

Malacon said the inauguration is in time with the celebration of Municipal Environmental Month with a theme: "Only One Earth," adding that the new tourist destination in the town and in the 3rd District and this will also serve as a source of livelihood for the people in the area.

he local government has established this to help the locals improve their income, make use of human resources from the host barangay and also promote the local coastal products such as the blue crabs, talaba and other sea foods, he said.

Malacon added that this idea was conceptualized when he and his fellow officials came to this barangay riding their bikes and saw the opportunity to help improve the economic well-being of the people in this barangay.

The local chief executive urged the locals to maintain a good rapport to the locals and guests who will come to Isla Madalag Eco-Haven. Extend to them your good gesture when they come.

"We need each other to support this endeavor (because) Kita nga tumandok (we, the locals) can help each other", he said as he stressed that this will be their legacy.



The Department of Education (DepEd) officials and staff of the town also joined the local officials during the inauguration of the new tourist destination in the town.

Currently, among the eco-tourist attractions in the town is the Tomongtong Eco-Trail in Barangay Tomongtong.



Malvar LGU, ecoloop partner for proper waste disposal

BY BUSINESSMIRROR JUNE 5, 2022



[Malvar LGU](#)

Malvar LGU partners with ecoloop to build a greener, stronger Republic. From left are Malvar MENRO Engr. Wilfredo Santos, ecoloop Director Atty. Angela Edralin-Valencia, Malvar Mayor Roderick Tiongson, and EMB R3 Solid Waste Management Division Mark Talipan.

MALVAR, Batangas—With a population of 65,000, Malvar is a second-class municipality in Batangas that has experienced rapid urbanization over the years.

This resulted in a 25 percent increase in waste generation, which led to challenges in waste collection and disposal, a news release said.

Of its 3,300 hectares land area, the municipality only has less than 1,700 hectares of remaining farmlands left, which were surrounded by three river systems.

This meant that operating a landfill was no longer feasible based on the Land Use Program.

To address this issue, the Malvar LGU, while searching for a sustainable and efficient waste-disposal solution, first approached ecoloop in 2014. ecoloop is the resource recovery and co-processing arm of Republic Cement.

Co-processing helps reduce waste that end up in landfills and bodies of water, providing total and complete disposal with no byproducts.

Moreover, co-processing reduces the consumption of nonrenewable resources of energy, thereby, also lowering carbon footprint in the cement manufacturing process.

Through its Waste-for-Cement program, ecoloop offered the Malvar a way to dispose of residual plastic waste in exchange for cement that they can use for environment or social development projects.

Since partnering with Republic Cement in 2014, the Malvar LGU has been able to divert over 335 truckloads of baled plastic waste away from landfills and waterways.

The success of this partnership highlights the critical role of barangays in ensuring proper segregation of waste at source.



Beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program also provided a significant contribution to proper waste segregation and collection, through its community service component.

Strong LGU support coupled with consistent information, education, and communication campaigns helped ensure successful implementation at the grassroots level.

The LGU also further supported this initiative by hosting contests among participants to raise awareness and encourage residents to participate in proper waste segregation.

Image credits: [Malvar LGU](#)



CLEAN-UP DRIVE VS DENGUE INILUNSA

June 4, 2022 Admin



INILUNSA ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Makati ang sabay-sabay na pagsasagawa ng clean-up drive sa waterways at kalsada sa lungsod upang mapuksa ang mga pinamumugaran ng mga lamok na nagdadala ng nakamamatay na sakit na dengue.

Pinangunahan ng mga tauhan ng barangay, sanitation inspectors, at staff ng Makati Health Department (MHD) ang clean-up drive sa lahat ng 33 barangay sa lungsod.

Ayon sa lokal na pamahalaan, ang buwan ng Hunyo ang idineklarang Dengue Awareness Month dahil ang malimit na pagkalat ng sakit na dengue ay nagaganap sa mga buwan ng Hunyo hanggang Agosto.

Base naman sa huling report na natanggap ng Department of Health (DOH) kamakailan lamang ay nagkaroon ng pagbaba ng bilang ng kaso ng Dengue sa buong bansa mula Enero 1 hanggang Mayo 7.

Sa datos naman na nakalap ng Epidemiology Bureau (EB) ay nakapagtala ng pagbaba sa kaso ng dengue ng anim na porsiyento mula 27,010 kaso nitong nakaraang taon na bumaba ng 25,268 kaso ng taong kasalukuyan sa parehong kapanahunan.

Noon nakaraang taon ay sinabi ng DOH na bumaba rin ng 81 porsiyento ang kaso ng Dengue at nasawi ng taong 2020 kumpara sa taong 2019.

Napag-alaman din na ang pagbaba ng kaso ng dengue sa bansa ay dahil sa implementasyon ng "Guidelines for the Nationwide Implementation of the Enhanced 4S-Strategy against Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika" kung saan ipinatupad ang mga stratehiyang 1) Pagtukoy at pagsira ng mgas pinamumugaran ng lamok; 2) pagprotekta sa sarili (pagsusuot ng pantalon at long-sleeves na t-shirts, at araw-araw na paggamit ng repellent); 3) maagang pagkonsulta sa doktor; at 4) Pagsuporta sa fogging/spraying lamang sa mga lugar na hot spot upang maiwasan ang pagdami ng nakahahawang sakit lalo na sa panahon ng tag-ulan. **MARIVIC FERNANDEZ**



Malaysia's Asia parks congress sets 10-year agenda for protected areas

BY BUSINESSMIRROR JUNE 5, 2022



Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji Haji Noor, chief minister of Sabah, opens the second Asia Parks Congress.

KOTA KINABALU, Malaysia—"Now is the moment to ensure a dignified existence for ourselves and future generations by preserving and protecting the global commons, which include the atmosphere, oceans and ecosystems that support us."

Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji Haji Noor, chief minister of Sabah, emphasised the importance of nature protection during the opening ceremony of the recent Second Asia Parks Congress

The event convened representatives from protected-area authorities, government agencies, nongovernment organizations, academia, youth, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities from all over Asia.

The five-day congress, hosted by Malaysia, was anticipated to set the agenda for Asia's protected and conserved areas for the next 10 years.

The online and on-site discussions were focused on the following thematic areas: nature-based solutions for health and wellbeing; governance of protected and conserved areas; connectivity and transboundary conservation; effective protected and conserved areas; economic and financial sustainability of protected and conserved areas; and urban conservation and a new generation.

Investing in the region's natural capital, including strengthening protected and conserved areas, is poised to provide significant contributions to the pressing challenges today.

During the plenary discussion, Dr Madhu Rao, chairman of the World Commission on Protected Areas, remarked that "protected and conserved areas are the critical piece linking the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change."

The declarations from the congress were set to open opportunities and promising pathways towards recovery and resilience-building.

The Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) led a session that emphasises the diversity of governance mechanisms for protected and conserved areas in the region, as well as lessons from these grounded experiences.

ACB Executive Director Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim highlighted that "the region harbors more than 700,000 and 300,000 square kilometres of terrestrial and marine protected areas, respectively."



She pointed out that these areas are directly linked with the well-being of close to 700 million citizens of the Asean.

Lim added: “As one of the most biodiverse regions in the world, the Asean presents rich perspectives and valuable lessons to the rest of Asia and the world.”

Image credits: [ACB](#)

New global fund invests in nature to shore up climate change fight

The Climate Investment Funds aim to raise at least \$500 million to protect ecosystems in developing countries, partnering with indigenous people and local communities.



A mother and daughter from the Karen Hill tribe in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand. Image: [Justin Vidamo, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

[Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) June 3, 2022

A new international fund backed by wealthy nations aims to invest at least \$500 million in protecting nature in developing countries and giving indigenous people a bigger role in conserving their environment and tackling climate change.

The Climate Investment Funds (CIF), one of the world's largest multilateral climate financing instruments, launched its ["Nature, People, and Climate" \(NPC\) programme](#) on Wednesday at a major UN environment conference in Stockholm.

Backed so far by Italy and Sweden, and with a target of raising \$500 million by November, the NPC will provide finance and expertise to initiatives that conserve wildlife, plants and forests, promote sustainable agriculture and food supplies, and enable people to cope with rising seas and extreme weather.

"Nature-based solutions help reduce emissions, support communities adapting to a changing climate and protect biodiversity," Matilda Ernkrans, Sweden's international development minister, said in a statement.

This is more than just about working with them - it's about putting them in positions of being the decision-makers. It's about them being at the table and making decisions and using their knowledge.

Paul Hartman, senior environmental specialist, Climate Investment Funds

Improving conservation and management of natural areas, such as parks, oceans, forests and wildernesses, is seen as crucial to safeguarding the ecosystems on which humans depend and to limiting global warming to internationally agreed targets.

But forests are [still being cut down](#) - often to produce commodities such as palm oil, soy and beef - destroying biodiversity and threatening climate goals, as trees absorb about a third of planet-warming emissions produced worldwide.

The new NPC programme expects to invest in efforts to expand approaches like carbon storage, mangrove restoration and climate resilience in small island developing states, sub-Saharan Africa and forested countries around the globe



They are among the places hit hardest by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and rising food and energy prices fuelled by the Ukraine war, said Paul Hartman, a senior environmental specialist at the CIF.

“Many of these shocks that you see globally to food systems have an impact on countries’ economies but particularly on (the) economies of the farmers and livelihoods of people,” he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Global annual spending to protect and restore nature on land needs to [triple this decade](#) to about \$350 billion by 2030, a UN report said last year.

Boosting finance for developing nations to better protect their nature-rich ecosystems is a longstanding challenge.

Earlier this year, international green groups called on the world’s richest nations to provide [at least \\$60 billion a year](#) to protect and restore biodiversity in developing countries.

The NPC platform aims to invest in nature projects that are part of larger, national investment plans, also involving multilateral development banks, with the aim of raising more finance from the private sector and other sources, said Hartman.

In addition, the NPC aims to partner with indigenous groups and communities living in and around protected areas, who experts say play a vital role in conservation.

“This is more than just about working with them - it’s about putting them in positions of being the decision-makers,” Hartman said.

“It’s not just about involving them, it’s about them being at the table and making decisions and using their knowledge.”

This story was published with permission from [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#), the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, resilience, women’s rights, trafficking and property rights. Visit <http://news.trust.org/climate>.

UNEP at 50: what has the world's 'environmental conscience' achieved?

As the UN Environment Programme reaches its 50th anniversary, we review its successes and shortcomings and how to strengthen its role in an era of deepening environmental crises.



A night view of the flags of the UN's member states at the "Allée des Drapeaux" at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Image: [UN Geneva, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Catherine Early, [China Dialogue](#) June 3, 2022

The 1960s and early 1970s were critical times for the environment in industrialised countries. The public, and some politicians, had woken up to the global threat of oil spills, acid rain and wildlife extinctions, with 20 million people across the US attending the first Earth Day rallies in 1970. Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth were formed, and environmental protection agencies were established in the US, Sweden and Germany.

The UN had taken up the environment as an issue in 1968 with [a report](#) by the UN secretary-general U Thant, which warned: "If current trends continue, life on Earth could be endangered." It called for the UN to hold a Conference on the Human Environment, which took place in Stockholm in June 1972.

This [landmark meeting](#) placed the environment on the global agenda for the first time, with [the Stockholm Declaration](#) marking the start of a dialogue between industrialised and developing countries on the link between economic growth, pollution and human wellbeing.

[The weakness of UNEP is not UNEP. It is the inability of governments to internalise the science really clearly with laser focus to work out what needs to be done and move the dial forward.](#)

[Nick Nuttall, director, We Don't Have Time](#)

It also led directly to the formation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with a remit to monitor the state of the environment, inform policymaking with science, and coordinate responses to the world's environmental challenges. More than 100 countries initially signed up, and membership has since grown to 193.

Global cooperation

The organisation got to work quickly: the first meeting of its governing council in 1973 resulted in the Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (known as MARPOL), which imposed strict rules on industry to prevent spills; and the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which regulated trade in more than 38,000 animals and plants.

A notable early issue taken up by UNEP was damage to the ozone layer – the thin shield that protects humans and the environment from harmful levels of ultraviolet radiation from the sun – caused by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) used in refrigeration and aerosol sprays. Its work led to the Montreal Protocol, which regulates the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances, and is to date the only UN treaty that all 198 UN member states have ratified.

As a result, the ozone layer is projected to recover by mid-century, and some 2 million people each year have been saved from skin cancer, [according to UNEP](#). Tackling the ozone crisis is “perhaps UNEP’s most successful achievement”, according to Maria Ivanova, director of the US-based Center for Governance and Sustainability and author of *The Untold Story of the World’s Leading Environmental Institution: UNEP at Fifty* (2021).

In that book she wrote: “The institution effectively deployed all of its functions – scientific assessment, policy development, and coordination of actions across the UN system and across governments – and its leadership committed fully to addressing this global problem. It developed the capacity – human, institutional, and financial – connected to the relevant constituencies, and gained authority as it delivered a solution.”

UNEP was also responsible, along with the World Meteorological Organisation, for forming the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988 to comprehensively review the science on climate change and make recommendations for a possible future international agreement to tackle the problem.

This had not been specifically requested by governments, according to Nick Nuttall, director of *We Don’t Have Time*, a review platform for climate solutions, and a former spokesperson at UNEP. “UNEP had the courage to say what was needed,” he says. Moments like this show that despite being a small organisation, UNEP has been bold when it needed to be, he adds.

The IPCC’s process was a “whole new way of doing science”, according to Andrew Steer, president and CEO of the Bezos Earth Fund. Through it, working groups of the world’s leading scientists write reports, with politicians allowed to suggest edits for the summary report. Statements on scientific knowledge in the report are given degrees of confidence based on the opinions and research of the scientists.

“It’s a very clever way of saying that this is as close to capturing the state of scientific knowledge as possible, given that we don’t know everything yet,” says Steer. “The IPCC has been very influential.” In 2012, UNEP established the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to coordinate science on biodiversity loss in a similar way.

High-quality science produced by UNEP has been the organisation’s major contribution to the environmental campaign sector, according to Paul Johnston, principal scientist at Greenpeace. “It’s been really hugely successful in informing both the scientific community, but also the wider world, and creating that huge environmental awareness in the public consciousness.”

UNEP’s work has led to 15 multilateral agreements on the environment. As well as [CITES](#), these include the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD), the [Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants](#) and the [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#).

Most recently, governments meeting in early 2022 at the UN Environment Assembly – the successor to UNEP’s Governing Council – agreed to launch negotiations on an international and [legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution](#). UNEP’s executive director, Inger Andersen, called this the most significant environmental multilateral deal since the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2015.

The move was a “major breakthrough”, according to Stephen Stec, senior fellow and lead researcher on environment and democracy at the Central European University. However, such

big developments are “a little bit few and far between”, he notes. “People talking about the atmosphere when this was announced compared it to the Montreal Protocol, which was now many years ago.”

UNEP’s influence

Commentators’ praise of UNEP is tempered by acknowledgements that, despite its achievements, the world’s environment has continued to be degraded at an alarming rate. However, many believe this is more down to the failure of governments to act on UNEP’s scientific findings and advice than a failure of UNEP itself.

Politics is still very “schizophrenic” on environmental issues, Nuttall says, pointing to how governments can simultaneously work on decarbonisation targets and boost fossil fuel production.

“The weakness of UNEP is not UNEP. It is the inability of governments to internalise the science really clearly with laser focus to work out what needs to be done and move the dial forward,” he says.

Ivanova mirrors this view in her book, saying: “With the dichotomy between economic growth and environmental protection deeply lodged in the outlook of individuals and governments worldwide, UNEP has been close to powerless to change behaviour considerably, and its achievements have been hard-won.”

Some believe that UNEP was set up to be weak from the start, in particular with the choice of Kenya for its headquarters. The East African nation had lobbied strongly to host the new organisation on the basis that the developing world needed a stronger voice in UN activities.

At the time, its win had been seen as a major coup, as the first time a developing country would host a UN organisation. However, many believe that the lack of reliable connectivity in terms of communications and infrastructure limited its effectiveness in the early years.

These constraints in turn led to difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, according to Ivanova. As a result “its visibility suffered, and its credibility diminished”, she wrote. Furthermore, the location did not by itself lead to greater input from developing countries, with only 36 per cent having diplomatic missions in Nairobi, even 50 years after UNEP’s creation, she noted.

Nuttall believes that developed countries that did not initially want to see UNEP created would have been “pleased as punch” when it was located on the east coast of Africa. Though Kenya’s communications infrastructure has vastly improved in the past 20 years, “it was really tough at the beginning for UNEP to really have any impact”, he says.

UNEP’s budget has also constrained its effectiveness. The bulk of the organisation’s finance comes from a mixture of contributions by governments based on the size of their economies, known as UNEP’s Environment Fund, and donations for particular projects or “earmarked contributions”.

Over the years, the proportion coming from the Environment Fund has declined. In 1972, the fund was expected to receive US\$100 million a year, and grow over time, according to Ivanova’s book. However, in 2021, it received \$78.5 million, representing 15 per cent of UNEP’s total income, [according to UNEP](#) itself. More than 90 per cent of this came from 15 countries, with the Netherlands, France and Germany the organisation’s top donors.

Though UNEP’s budget has increased overall, the fact that most of it comes from donors that have particular projects in mind – with strings attached – has made it challenging for the organisation to set its own priorities, and increased unpredictability year-to-year, Ivanova says. “This is not an institutional design issue, rather it reflects the changes in global attention to environmental concerns,” she writes.

In its [medium-term strategy](#) to 2025, adopted last year, UNEP acknowledges that securing higher contributions to the Environment Fund, as well as funding that is “only softly earmarked”, will be “indispensable” for UNEP to bring about tangible results on its priorities of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

Future vision

UNEP’s 50th anniversary, which will be marked by a two-day event in Stockholm, Sweden, prompts the question of what its next 50 years could hold.

Stec believes that UNEP could have a role in promoting better global standards on corporate behaviour and accountability in terms of the environment, in the same way as the UN Human Rights Council has on human rights.

The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) could also have a role in holding member states to account for their treatment of the environment, with UNEP acting as a secretariat to gather information and compile reports to refer to UNEA to take action.

Nuttall would like to see member states step up more resources for UNEP to overcome the limitations caused by short-term politics and funding. UNEP undertakes pilot projects, such as on renewable energy generation and ecosystem restoration, and could achieve much more with larger finances, he says. It could also spread its regional presence and strengthen the case made to governments of the links between the environment and economies, he says.

He also believes that the legal structures created through UNEP will be increasingly tested through the courts with the rise in environmental litigation by campaign groups and citizens. “The legal route will be perhaps one of the most effective,” he believes.

Steer says the world is moving into a new period of history where coalitions of governments, businesses, scientists, campaigners and citizens work together to solve problems. For this, he believes more modern governance will be needed.

“It will be interesting to see at the UNEP+50 event whether there’s any appetite for institutional strengthening of UNEP. If you went back to 1972, they were quite ambitious about the role of UNEP, and Maurice Strong, its first executive director, had great expectations,” Steer says. “If he was still alive and could be asked if he felt his dream had been fulfilled, I guess he would say it’s been a mixed story, that they’ve done their best given the resources.”

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Dangerous carbon dioxide levels recorded last month

CO2 is a greenhouse gas that traps heat, gradually causing global warming. It remains in the atmosphere and oceans for thousands of years

Published 24 hours ago on June 4, 2022 07:53 AM By [Agence France-Presse](#)



Photo by Ted ALJIBE / AFP

Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in May were 50 percent higher than during the pre-industrial era, reaching levels not seen on Earth for about four million years, the main US climate agency said on 3 May.

Global warming caused by humans, particularly through the production of electricity using fossil fuels, transport, the production of cement, or even deforestation, is responsible for the new high, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said.

May is usually the month with the highest carbon dioxide levels each year.

In May 2022, the threshold of 420 parts per million (ppm) — a unit of measurement used to quantify pollution in the atmosphere — was crossed.

In May 2021, the rate was 419 ppm, and in 2020, 417 ppm.

The measurements are taken at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii, ideally located high on a volcano, which allows it to escape the possible influence of local pollution.

Before the Industrial Revolution, levels of CO2 held steady at around 280 ppm, a level maintained for approximately 6,000 years of human civilization that preceded industrialization, according to NOAA.

The level now is comparable to what it was between 4.1 and 4.5 million years ago when CO2 levels were near or above 400 ppm, the agency said in a statement.

At that time, sea levels were between five and 25 meters higher than now, high enough to submerge many of today's major cities. Large forests also occupied parts of the Arctic, according to studies.

CO2 is a greenhouse gas that traps heat, gradually causing global warming. It remains in the atmosphere and oceans for thousands of years.

Its warming effect is already causing dramatic consequences, noted NOAA, including the multiplication of heat waves, droughts, fires, or floods.

“Carbon dioxide is at levels our species has never experienced before — this is not new,” said Pieter Tans, a scientist with the Global Monitoring Laboratory.

“We have known about this for half a century, and have failed to do anything meaningful about it. What's it going to take for us to wake up?”

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/06/04/dangerous-carbon-dioxide-levels-recorded-last-month/>



Rare albino Galapagos giant tortoise faces the world

By **Reuters** - June 4, 2022 - 10:10 AM



Thomas Morel of the Tropiquarium holds an albino baby Galapagos tortoise, born on May 1 and the first ever recorded albino birth, in Servion, Switzerland, June 3, 2022. (Reuters/Denis Balibouse)

SERVION, Switzerland — A rare albino Galapagos giant tortoise made its public debut at a Swiss zoo on Friday.

Two of the tortoises were born last month at the Tropiquarium in the western town of Servion as part of a program to preserve the endangered species.

One is black like its parents and the other is albino. Their gender has yet to be determined.

“This is the first time in the world that an albino Galapagos tortoise has been born and kept in captivity. No albino individuals have ever been observed in the wild,” the zoo said in a statement.

The mother, who weighs more than 100 kilograms (220 lb), laid five eggs on Feb. 11 and the albino baby hatched on May 1. The other baby hatched on May 5 after the eggs spent two-and-a-half months in an incubator.

The male weighs around 180 kg. The pair are about 30 years old and have just reached sexual maturity.

The success rate of mating is only around 2%-3% for this species. Baby turtles weigh about 50 grams at birth and fit in the palm of the hand.

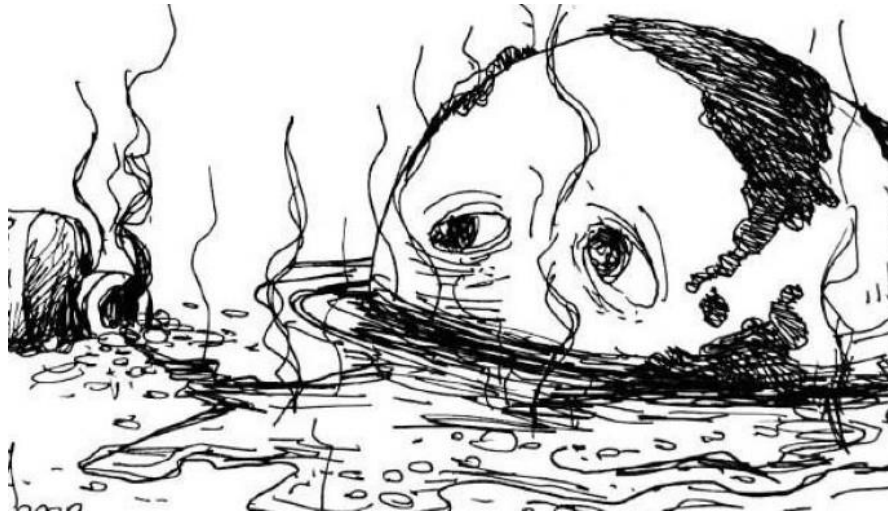
—Reporting by Denis Balibouse, writing by Michael Shields; editing by Barbara Lewis

Source: <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/hobbies-interests/2022/06/04/218845/rare-albino-galapagos-giant-tortoise-faces-the-world/>



EDITORIAL - Pay attention to environment issues too

(The Freeman) - June 5, 2022 - 12:00am



There is so much going on in the world nowadays that some of us may be caught off guard that it is World Environment Day today. People are more likely to be familiar with issues involving local and national politics, gun control, the war in Ukraine, and even showbiz lawsuits and breakups, compared to environmental concerns.

At the surface these issues may seem to have a more immediate impact on some people compared to environmental issues. But we have said this before and we will say it again; we ignore the signs that the earth is in trouble at our own peril.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are now more than 50% higher than in the pre-industrial era, these levels have not been seen on Earth for about four million years.

NOAA blamed the spike in carbon dioxide on global warming caused by human activity, particularly the production of electricity using fossil fuels, transportation, the manufacture of cement, and deforestation.

In May 2022, the threshold of 420 parts per million (ppm), in May 2021 the rate was 419 ppm, and the year before that at 417 ppm.

Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that traps heat, causing and being a cause of global warming. And while plants can actually breathe in carbon dioxide, humans can't.

The only bright spark so far for the environment this year actually stems from an unlikely source; Russia's war against Ukraine. To further strangle Russia's war chest, the European Union is looking to end its dependency on gas, oil, and coal from Russia by 2027.

It is hoped they will be looking to sustainable energy solutions, solutions that don't cause pollution or a rise in carbon dioxide levels.

Again, we ignore environmental issues at our own peril. Will we only take notice after deforestation, pollution, and similar human activities make it too hard for some of us to breathe?

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/opinion/2022/06/05/2186124/editorial-pay-attention-environment-issues-too/amp/>

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DENR to save trees damaged during poll campaign

defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons.

In his order, Sampulna directed Juan Miguel Cuna, DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations-Luzon, Visayas and Environment to implement the operations.

Cuna's office oversees DENR's implementation of its "Oplan Baklas" (OB) in all its 16 regional offices.

Cuna, meanwhile, ordered DENR regional offices through their respective Regional Executive Directors to "conduct an inventory of trees damaged due to the election campaign and conduct possible treatments appropriate to the conditions" of the injured trees.

As of April, some 114,664 pieces of cam-

campaign materials and other paraphernalia had been taken down in DENR's OB, which has been implemented nationwide under a DENR-COMELEC-DILG joint memorandum - to implement the removal or confiscation of campaign materials posted outside of common poster areas designated by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).



SoCot gov vetoes open-pit mining ordinance

KORONADAL CITY – South Cotabato Governor Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. has vetoed the amended Environment Code Ordinance that sought to lift the open-pit mining ban in the province.

In a press briefing on Friday, June 3, Tamayo said he was surprised that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) "quickly" approved the amendments to the ordinance during a session on May 16.

He was out of the country when a majority of the SP members passed the amended ordinance.

"I don't know the reason behind the quick approval; I am returning the ordinance to the SP," Tamayo said.

Since the council is in recess, the governor said the matter would be discussed by the next set of provincial board members.

In his veto, Tamayo invoked Section 55 of the Local Government Code (RA 7160), describing the amendment as "prejudicial to the public welfare and inimical to the overall interest of South Cotabateños."

"I could not find any compelling reason why the SP would amend a decade-old ordinance that ably and

effectively protect the people of South Cotabato from the ill-effects of the wanton destruction of our God-given resources," he said.

"Time and time again, it is always stressed that the province's holistic development is anchored first and foremost on its people," Tamayo said.

The environmental group Interface Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) said the governor's rejection of the Board resolution lifting a ban on open-pit mining was the fruit of their persistent call not to allow environmental destruction.

"Proud to be a part of the thousands of people who went out and braved the scorching heat of the sun to call for the veto of the ordinance amending the environment code of South Cotabato," said lawyer Mark Peñalver, executive director of IDIS, in his social media post.

However, Peñalver said they have to maintain their vigilance since the Provincial Board can still override the governor's veto.

"This is not yet the end. Uphold the ban," said Peñalver.

The Diocese of Marbel in South Cotabato vowed to stay vigilant to

protect the environment.

"Your veto is a testament of a listening governor. On behalf of the waters, the flora and fauna and the peoples of South Cotabato, we offer our deepest gratitude to you for standing up against all forms of pressure and siding with the people of South Cotabato," Marbel Bishop Cerilo Casicas said in a statement.

Tamayo was quick to add though that the environment code has nothing to do with the operation of Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) in Tampakan town.

"The ordinance only regulates mining operations within the authority of the local government unit like small-scale mining," he said.

Ordinance 04 (An Ordinance Providing for the Environment Code of the Province of South Cotabato) was passed in June 9, 2010.

In 2015, the SP filed a resolution affirming the open-pit mining ban in the province.

Pro-mining groups earlier said the open-pit mining ban in South Cotabato hampered the development of the copper and gold mine project in Tampakan, touted as the largest in Southeast Asia.

Anti-mining groups, however, said the project endangered not only the environment but also the lives of residents.

SMI has been pursuing the Tampakan gold project for more than a decade. (PNA and Armando Fenequito Jr.)



NatGeo namangha sa mga coral reef ng 'Pinas

Ang tunay na ganda ng karagatan ay hindi makikita sa ibabaw bagkus sa kailaliman nito.

Kamakailan lang ay nakatanggap ng papuri ang Pilipinas mula sa National Geographic Magazine para sa pagiging da best sa angking ganda ng coral reefs.

Tinampok ng magazine na ito ang makulay na ganda ng underwater biodiversity ng bansa sa issue nila ngayong buwan ng Hunyo 2022, gayunman binigyang-diin nila na nanganganib na ito. Ito ay isinulat ni Kennedy Warne at mga larawan na pitik ng lente ni David Doubilet at Jennifer Hayes.

"Coral reefs in the Philippines are some of the world's most vibrant—but in peril. Much of the archipelago's undersea splendor is protected, but some areas are being stressed by climate change and harmed by destructive

fishing practices," sabi ni Warne.

Dagdag pa rito, ang mga coral reefs ng Pilipinas ay



Lifestyle

itinuturing na pinakamayaman na parte ng Coral Triangle na matatagpuan sa Kanlurang bahagi ng Pacific Ocean. Mayroon itong humigit-kumulang 500 hanggang 600 na uri at 1,800 hanggang 2,000 uri ng mga isda. Ilan sa mga sikat na spot rito ay ang

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park at Apo Island Reef.

Sa kabila nito, sinabini nilang nahaharap ito sa malaking banta ng climate change at samu't saring iligal na pangingsda. Binanggit din ang mga bagyong pumapasok sa bansa at ang patuloy na pagkakaroon ng coral bleaching na kung saan namumuti ang mga coral dahil sa pagtaas ng temperatura sa ilalim ng dagat.

Nagrekomenda rin ang NeoGeo ng dalawang paraan na maaaring gawin upang masolusyonan ang pagkasira ng mga ito. Una ay ang tuluyang pagpapatigil ng iligal

napamamaraan ng pangingsda; pangalawa ay ang Community Management Model ng Filipino Biologist na si Angel Alcalá na naglalayong protektahan ang mga marine area na ito. **(Moises Caleon)**



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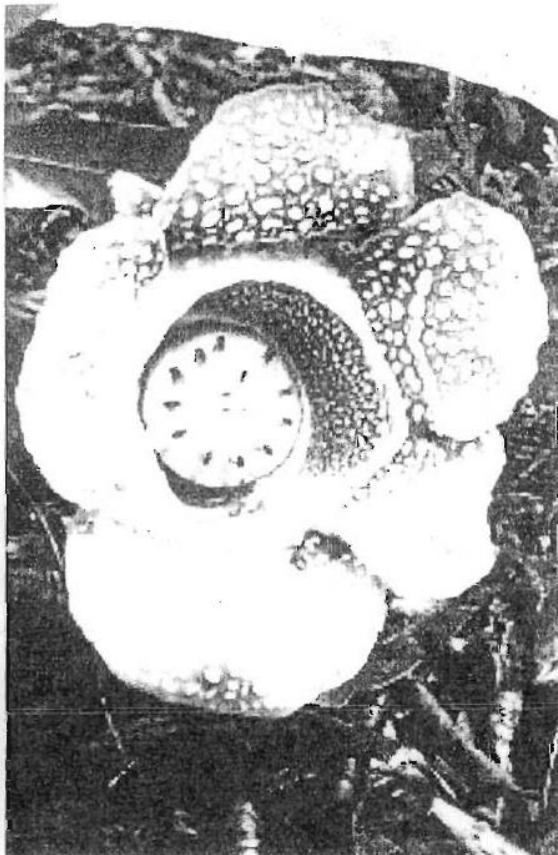
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SIERRA MADRE'S TREASURES

PROTECTED AREA RARITIES On May 19, forest rangers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Rizal chanced upon several parasitic *Rafflesia* flowers and a towering *Almáciga* tree overflowing with its prized resin (now known as Manila copal), as they were patrolling Mt. Irig in the Sierra Madre. Rediscovered in 2003, the Philippine species of *Rafflesia* is categorized as "critically" endangered while the *Almáciga*, which is also native to the country, is listed as vulnerable. The DENR and the Department of Science and Technology are advocating the propagation of the *Almáciga* tree and the sustainable harvest of its resin. —PHOTOS BY MARDIA ADORA FROGOSA / DENR RIZAL



Ilocos Norte sites, renewable energy impress Danish envoy

LAOAG CITY – It was her first time visiting Ilocos Norte and Danish Ambassador to the Philippines Grete Sillasen said the province left a strong impression on her.

Sillasen and the Trade Council headed north on Thursday to visit the on-shore wind farms in the

province.

She met with representatives of the companies operating the three wind farms in Ilocos Norte – the North Luzon Renewables in Pagudpud, EDC Burgos Wind Power Corp. in Burgos, and Northwind Power Development Corp. in Bangui.

On Friday, Sillasen and Governor Matthew Joseph Manotoc met at the Provincial Capitol and discussed possible collaborations on renewable energy, agriculture, fisheries, and the development of smart cities.

In an interview, she said she was impressed by the province's green landscape and

beautiful beaches.

"Unfortunately, I did not come here for the beaches but visited the windmill parks yesterday (Thursday) and met with the mayors," she said, praising Ilocos Norte as a "showcase of renewable energy in the Philippines."

"We went to see how these wind parks are being done with respect to nature, authorities, and to the people and they are expanding as well," she added.

Denmark is one of the countries that have committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050, pass-

ing a law in 2020 that seeks to slash its emissions by 70 percent by 2030

Northwind Power, a Danish power firm, initiated the construction of the first 25-megawatt wind farm in Bangui Bay under a build-own-operate scheme.

The Danish International Development Agency funded the project worth USD37 million through subsidized credits.

Aside from the Northwind project, other renewable energy firms followed suit as wind turbines have mushroomed in adjacent towns Burgos and Pagudpud.

PNA



FRUITFUL MEETING -- Danish Ambassador to the Philippines Grete Sillasen (left) and Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Manotoc meet at the Provincial Capitol in Laoag City on Thursday (June 2, 2022). They talked about possible collaborations on renewable energy, agriculture, fisheries, and the development of smart cities.

Photo courtesy of Embassy of Denmark in the Philippines



Climate change in Southeast Asia: Where are we and what are we bound for?

First of 2 parts

**BY KWAN SOO-CHEN
AND DAVID MCCOY**

KUALA LUMPUR: It is increasingly clear that human health and well-being are being threatened everywhere because of global warming and environmental damage. Extreme weather events, sea level rise, increasing scarcity of freshwater, drought and high temperatures, combined with loss of biodiversity and other aspects of ecological degradation such as soil erosion and coral bleaching are all features of anthropogenic self-harm and an increasingly inhospitable planet for human society.

The 2015 Paris Agreement established a target of limiting global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures. We are now at 1.1 C of warming. A special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) paints a grim picture of what we would face should we reach 1.5 C of warming.

Crucially, failing to limit global warming to 1.5 C could result in the planet being pushed over a number of tipping points that would see accelerated and irreversible warming, with a variety of cascading effects (e. g., loss of the polar ice caps and massive dieback of the Amazonian rainforest) that would see billions of people facing an existential crisis.

Not alarmist or exaggerated

Such concerns are not alarmist or exaggerated. The most recent set of Assessment Reports by the IPCC, released over the past few months, presents clear evidence that we are in trouble. Among other things, it projects that average global surface temperatures will most likely reach 1.5 C above pre-industrial averages before 2040.

The theme of World Environment Day this year — “Only One Earth” — correctly points out that all of humanity shares a common dependency upon a single planet. Perhaps nothing is more emblematic of the need for global solidarity and international cooperation than the planetary crisis we face. However, there are also regional differences in terms of both the impacts that will be experienced and the contributions that can be made to averting the crisis.

So, what can be said about Southeast Asia?

For one, in line with global warming trends and the continued rise in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the region has seen its annual mean temperature increase at a rate of 0.14 C to 0.20 C per decade since the 1960s. It is hotter than it used to be and the region can expect further increases in temperature. Southeast Asia is also expected to see an increased frequency of heatwaves.

The high humidity of the region will compound the high temperatures and increase the



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incidence of heat stroke and heat-related deaths. According to one study, heat-related mortality has already gone up by 61 percent in Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines since the 1990s.

Higher temperatures and heat stress at 3 C warming are expected to reduce agriculture labor capacity by up to 50 percent and reduce agricultural productivity and food production. According to one study, this will lead to a 5 percent increase in crop prices from increased labor cost and production loss.

Malnutrition, rainfall patterns

Rates of malnutrition will likely rise in the region, especially as crop production in other parts of the world come under stress. An example is the drought caused by 2015-2016 El-Niño in Southeast Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa which resulted in 20.5 million people facing acute food insecurity in 2016 and 5.9 million children became underweight. Rising levels of CO2 in the atmosphere will also reduce the nutritional quality of certain crops and increase the likelihood of greater micro-nutrient deficiency.

The higher levels of energy and moisture in the atmosphere, produced by global warming, will translate into changing rainfall patterns. Increased annual average rainfall has already been observed in parts of Malaysia, Vietnam and southern Philippines.

Paradoxically, some parts of the region

would observe a reduction in the number of wet days. According to the IPCC, the Philippines had observed fewer tropical cyclones, but they were more intense and destructive.

Changes to the hydrologic cycle will also impact on the availability of freshwater and undermine water security in the region. This will in turn lead to associated health problems due to lower levels of sanitation and hygiene.

In the Mekong River basin, due to both climate change and unsustainable levels of water consumption, it is projected that groundwater storage will reduce by up to 160 million cubic meters and that this will be accompanied by delta erosion and sea level rise, affecting coastal cities such as Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City.

Three quarters of the cities in Southeast Asia will experience more frequent flooding, potentially affecting tens of millions of people every year by 2030. In 2019, Southeast and East Asia had already recorded the internal displacement of 9.6 million people from cyclones, floods, and typhoons, representing almost 30 percent of all global displacements in that year. **IPS**

To be continued on Monday, June 6, 2022.

Kwan Soo-Chen is a post-doctoral fellow and David McCoy is a research lead at the United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH).



Atmospheric CO2 more than 50% higher than pre-industrial era

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in May were 50 percent higher than during the pre-industrial era, reaching levels not seen on Earth for about four million years, the main US climate agency said on Friday.

Global warming caused by humans, particularly through the production of electricity using fossil fuels, transport, the production of cement, or even deforestation, is responsible for the new high, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said.

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The level now is comparable to what it was between 4.1 and 4.5 million years ago, when CO2 levels were near or above 400 ppm, the agency said in a statement.

At that time, sea levels

were between five and 25 meters higher than now, high enough to submerge many of today's major cities. Large forests also occupied parts of the Arctic, according to studies.

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Its warming effect is already causing dramatic consequences, noted NOAA, including the multiplication of heat waves, droughts, fires or floods.

"Carbon dioxide is at levels our species has never experienced before — this is not new," said Pieter Tans, a scientist with the Global Monitoring Laboratory.

"We have known about this for half a century, and have failed to do anything meaningful about it. What's it going to take for us to wake up?"



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Fossil gas expansion seen to worsen energy security

By DANESSA RIVERA

Southeast Asia is becoming Asia's fossil gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) hub, with the Philippines having one of the largest planned gas power expansion and LNG import terminals.

However, this massive fossil gas expansion is seen as a threat as it will worsen the region's energy security and dependence on imported fuel, based on a new report by think tank Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED).

According to the report, "Financing a Fossil Future: Tracing the Money Pipeline of Fossil Gas in Southeast Asia," the region has 117 gigawatts (GW) of new fossil gas capacity in the pre-construction stage, which is the largest concentration more than else in the world.

The report said Vietnam and Philippines ranked as the top countries in terms of planned gas power expansion of 56.3 GW and 29.9 GW, respectively.

At home, diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp. (SMC) has 14.1 GW of proposed projects, accounting for more than half of the planned gas expansion in the country and making it the leading developer of gas-fired power plants in the region.

CEED said SMC has swiftly added eight fossil gas power plant projects to its pipeline in just one year.

In terms of LNG import terminal development, Thailand and the Philippines have the largest planned projects with import capacity of 40.3 million tons per annum and 36.5 mtpa, respectively.

With a massive pipeline on the way, 123 financial institutions have channeled

\$34.8 billion into the fossil gas industry in the region, the report said.

CEED found that the three biggest financiers of fossil gas across the region include Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Financial at \$13 billion, Mizuho Financial at \$10.9 billion and Singapore's DBS Bank at \$8.2 billion.

The think tank said banks are funding the gas industry despite pledging to decarbonize the global economy after the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Of the total, 30 financiers are signatories of either the Net-Zero Banking Alliance, Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance, or Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative, which form part of the larger Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ), the report said.

And out of the 30 signatories, 15 supported \$1.7 billion in fossil gas financing despite signing the commitment, it said.

"The name 'natural gas' may fool many, but it is still a fossil fuel. More appropriately referred to as fossil gas, it has triggered increased methane emissions over the years. From drilling and extraction of fossil gas from wells, to transportation in pipelines or tankers, up to its combustion – all lead to leaking methane into the atmosphere – the primary component of fossil gas that is 34 times stronger than carbon dioxide at trapping heat over a 100-year period and 86 times stronger over 20 years," CEED said.

Moreover, the gas expansion will worsen Southeast Asia's energy security and dependence on imported fossil fuels.

"Countries without a local supply or with a depleting supply of fossil gas will need to import LNG and build the neces-

sary infrastructure to receive it instead of making room for renewable energy facilities," the think tank said.

In a statement, CEED called on SMC to rethink its energy development plans and opt to advance sustainable energy instead of leading the acceleration of fossil gas in the Philippines, to the detriment of power consumers.

"We are gearing towards a fossil gas lock-in as if we are blind to the lessons that the experience with the Ukraine-Russia crisis offers: that building dependence on gas means exposure to volatile power supply and prices, and vulnerability to geopolitical shocks globally – on top of an already catastrophic climate crisis triggered by fossil fuels," CEED executive director Gerry Arances said.

The think tank also urged banks to adopt a Paris-aligned policy that pursues a 1.5-degree Celsius pathway to reach 45 percent decline global carbon emissions by 2030, and net zero carbon emissions by mid-century.

It also called on banks to withdraw and prohibit financing for fossil gas projects, particularly those that violate human rights, endanger critically important and biologically diverse ecosystems and habitats.

Banks are also called on to disclose all financial services provided to fossil gas-related operations and companies, as well as adopt full recommendation of the Task Force on Climate-related Disclosures so they can "support shareholders and stakeholders in appropriately assessing and pricing climate-related risks, and to ensure that overall effects of climate change become routinely considered in business and investment decisions."



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PHOTOGRAPH BY JOEY SANCHEZ MENDOZA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephl_joey

More benefits than one Along with clean water to bathe in, people around the rehabilitated Manila Bay near Baseco benefits from fish catch for livelihood and food.



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Key mineral reserves jump to P378 B in 2021

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The value of the country's reserves of four key minerals increased by 32.3 percent last year, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported yesterday.

Data from the PSA's mineral accounts of the Philippines showed that the value of reserves of Class A nickel, copper chromite and gold amounted to P378.04 billion last year, higher than the P285.1 billion registered in 2020.

The PSA classifies Class A mineral resources as those which are commercially recoverable.

Class A nickel reserves were valued at P186.62 billion in 2021, representing an increase of over 50 percent from the P121.6 billion recorded in the year before.

Despite the increase in value, the PSA reported that reserves of Class A nickel resources declined by 4.8 percent to 474.49 million metric tons (MT).

The value of Class A copper reserves also posted a 30.9 percent increase last year to P46.38 billion.

Reserves of Class A copper declined by 1.6 percent to 3.31 million MT in 2021.

Meanwhile, the value of Class A gold reserves increased by 12.7 percent to P143.45 billion.

Class A gold reserves declined by 3.6 percent to 475,137 kilos last year.

The value of Class A chromite reserves rose by 9.6 percent to P1.6 billion.

Class A chromite reserves slightly declined last year to 35.97 million MT from 38.98 million MT.

The mineral accounts of the Philippines aim to provide information on the stocks and changes in stock of the four metallic minerals.

These accounts allow for the monitoring of the sustainability of the extraction of these valuable yet depletable natural assets.

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Govt adds more cities, towns in list of areas under Alert Level 1 until June 15

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Jun 4, 2022 3:11:06 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 4) – Malacañang released on Saturday a revised list of areas under the lowest COVID-19 alert level until June 15, which included more cities and municipalities from several regions.

Acting presidential spokesperson Martin Andanar said the Inter-Agency Task Force on Thursday approved recommendations “to provide clarification” on the alert level status of various areas nationwide.

The new list largely remained the same as the [version issued on May 27](#), although more component cities and towns were included under Alert Level 1.

Based on the changes, the following places are also under the most lenient classification until mid-June:

Cordillera Administrative Region: Benguet - Buguias, Tublay; Ifugao - Kiangan, Lagawe (Capital), Lamut

Region IV-A: Quezon - Atimonan, Candelaria, City of Tayabas, Dolores, Lucban, Mauban, Pagbilao, Plaridel, Polillo, Quezon, Sampaloc, San Antonio, Tiaong

Region IV-B: Occidental Mindoro - Looc, Lubanga; Palawan - Cagayancillo, Culion

Region V: Camarines Norte - Basud, Capalonga, Daet (Capital), San Vicente; Camarines Sur - Bombon, Cabusao, Camaligan, Caramoan, Iriga City, Pamplona, Pili (Capital), Presentacion (Parubcan), San Fernando, Tigaon; Masbate - Balud, City of Masbate (Capital), Mandaon; Sorsogon - Barcelona, Bulusan, Casiguran, City of Sorsogon (Capital), Gubat, Irosin, Juban, Magallanes, Prieto Diaz, Santa Magdalena

Region VI: Antique - Anini-Y, San Jose (Capital), Sebaste, Tobias Fornier (Dao); Negros Occidental - Candoni, City of Victorias, Enrique B. Magalona (Saravia), La Carlota City, Pulpandan, Sagay City, San Enrique

Region VII: Bohol - Batuan, Calape, Corella, Dimiao, Duero, Garcia Hernandez, Jagna, Lila, Loay, Loboc, San Isidro, San Miguel, Sevilla, Sikatuna, Tagbilaran City (Capital); Cebu - Alcoy, Borbon, City of Talisay, Oslob, Pilar, Santander, Tudela; Negros Oriental - Amlan (Ayuquitan), Bacong, Dauin, Dumaguete City (Capital), Valencia (Luzurriaga), Zamboanguita



Region VIII: Leyte - Albueria, City of Baybay, Dulag, Javier (Bugho), La Paz, Matag-Ob, Matalom, Palo, Tunga, Villaba; Northern Samar - Capul, Lapinig, Lavezares, San Antonio, San Jose, Victoria; Samar (Western Samar) - Marabut, Pagsanghan, Paranas (Wright), Tarangnan, Zumarraga

Region IX: Zamboanga Del Norte - Dapitan City, Dipolog City (Capital), Jose Dalman (Ponot), Labason, Piñan (New Piñan), Polanco, Rizal, Salug; Zamboanga Del Sur -Lapuyan, Mahayag, Molave, Ramon Magsaysay (Liargo); Zamboanga Sibugay - Buug, Diplahan, Ipil (Capital), Tungawan

Region X: Lanao Del Norte - Bacolod, Baroy, Lala, Linamon, Tubod (Capital)

Region XI: Davao De Oro - Montevista, Nabunturan (Capital), New Bataan; Davao Del Sur - Padada

Region XII: Cotabato (North Cotabato) - Antipas, Arakan, City of Kidapawan (Capital), President Roxas; South Cotabato - Banga, City of Koronadal (Capital), Polomolok, Santo Niño, Tantangan; Sultan Kudarat - City of Tacurong, Kalamansig, Lebak

CARAGA: Agusan Del Norte - Carmen, Jabonga, Kitcharao, Magallanes, Nasipit; Agusan Del Sur - Bunawan, Loreto, Prosperidad (Capital), San Francisco, Santa Josefa, Sibagat; Dinagat Islands - Cagdianao, Dinagat, Libjo (Albor), Loreto, Tubajon; Surigao Del Norte - General Luna, Mainit, Tagana-An

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao: Maguindanao - South Upi, Upi; Tawi-Tawi - Turtle Islands

Other Alert Level 1 areas

Meanwhile, the Alert Level 1 status of Metro Manila and several other areas as announced last week remains unchanged.

To reiterate, these are:

National Capital Region: Caloocan City, City of Malabon, City of Navotas, City of Valenzuela, City of Pasig, City of Marikina, Taguig City, Quezon City, City of Manila, City of Makati, City of Mandaluyong, City of San Juan, City of Muntinlupa, Parañaque City, City of Las Piñas, Pasay City, and Pateros

Cordillera Administrative Region: Abra, Apayao, Baguio City, Kalinga, Mountain Province

Region I: Dagupan City, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan

Region II: Batanes, Cagayan, City Of Santiago, Isabel, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino

Region III: Angeles City, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Olongapo City, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales

Region IV-A: Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Lucena City, Rizal

Region IV-B: Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, Puerto Princesa City, Romblon

Region V: Albay, Catanduanes, Naga City



Region VI: Aklan, Bacolod City, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, Iloilo City

Region VII: Cebu City, Lapu-Lapu City (Opon), Mandaue City, Siquijor

Region VIII: Biliran, Eastern Samar, Ormoc City, Southern Leyte, Tacloban City

Region IX: Zamboanga City

Region X: Bukidnon, Cagayan De Oro City, Camiguin, Iligan City, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental

Region XI: Davao City, Davao Oriental

CARAGA: Butuan City, Surigao Del Sur

Alert Level 2 areas

Localities with the Alert Level 2 status are likewise the same, "without prejudice to their respective component cities and municipalities" placed under Alert Level 1.

These areas under the second alert level are:

Cordillera Administrative Region: Benguet, Ifugao

Region IV-A: Quezon province

Region IV-B: Occidental Mindoro, Palawan

Region V: Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Masbate, Sorsogon

Region VI: Antique, Negros Occidental

Region VII: Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental

Region VIII: Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar (Western Samar)

Region IX: City of Isabela, Zamboanga Del Norte, Zamboanga Del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay

Region X: Lanao Del Norte

Region XI: Davao De Oro, Davao Del Norte, Davao Del Sur, Davao Occidental

Region XII: Cotabato (North Cotabato), General Santos City (Dadiangas), Sarangani, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat



Local BA.5 transmission confirmed but no community spread

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora [June 4, 2022, 4:54 pm](#)



MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday confirmed the local transmission of the Omicron BA.5 subvariant in the country but clarified no established community spread yet.

In a *Laging Handa* briefing, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said declaring community transmission would mean that health authorities could no longer establish a link between one case to another.

Local transmission, on the other hand, means a detected case got infected by a local source who had no history of travel overseas.

"Sa ngayon we cannot say that there is really community transmission because if we say community transmission, hindi na po natin nakikita 'yong linkage ng isang kaso sa isang kaso pa so ngayon nakikita pa naman natin (At present, we cannot say that there is really a community transmission because if we say we do, that means we cannot establish the linkage anymore, which we can still do," she said.

"So what we have right now is the local transmission of the subvariant but (for) the community transmission we still need to establish that through evidence," she added.

The DOH had detected the BA.5 in two locals from the same household in Central Luzon, one of whom is a 39-year-old female while the other is a 51-year-old male.

Both took only domestic trips, including Bulacan for the elections and Metro Manila for work.

Vergeire said the two manifested cough and cold on May 15, prompting them to get tested that later turned out positive for coronavirus.

They had their isolation from May 16 to 30 and have already recovered.

Meanwhile, one of their two close contacts in the household had tested positive for Covid-19 and is currently undergoing isolation.

Vergeire said initial studies suggest that the BA.5 and BA.4 are "much transmissible" than the BA.2 sublineage, including BA.2.12 and BA.2.12.1.

She, however, noted there is no evidence as of yet that the said subvariant causes a more severe case of Covid-19. **(PNA)**



Duque wants incoming administration to keep face mask mandate

[Angelica Y. Yang](#) - Philstar.com June 4, 2022 | 11:16am



Undated photo shows a boy walks past a mural at SSS Village in Marikina City. The government says wearing face masks will still be required even if the country is placed under Alert Level 1.

Russell Palma

MANILA, Philippines — Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said he wants the incoming administration to retain the face mask mandate, one of the minimum public health protocols that has helped curb the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

"Isa sa ating ipapamana sa susunod na administrasyon, ang iyon nga, 'yung masking compliance ng Pilipino- huwag natin tanggalin ito muna. Premature eh," he said in an interview on Dabol B TV on Saturday.

("One of the things we are turning over to the new administration, the masking compliance of Filipinos- let's not remove it. It's still premature to do so.")

He said the country has experienced numerous superspreader events and surges caused by the entry of COVID-19 variants, but noted that infections were not as high as groups predicted because Filipinos followed minimum public health standards, such as the wearing of masks.

Duque cited a survey by Johns Hopkins University which showed that up to 96% of Filipinos complied with the masking mandate.

"Sa tingin ko, kahit na nagkaroon ng mga tinatawag na superspreader events, okay lang iyon kasi basta nakamask- 'yung itong mandate natin- malaking tulong talaga," he said.

(In my opinion, even if superspreader events took place, we were okay because we were following the mask mandate. It was a big help.)

Duque made these statements less than a month before the outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte steps down from his post. President-elect Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is set to helm the highest post in the country.



A survey by OCTA Research conducted from March 5 to 10 this year showed that three in every ten Filipinos said they do not plan on wearing a face mask once the spread of COVID-19 is controlled. Some 67% respondents said they plan to continue wearing the masks by that time.

The country registered an additional 225 COVID-19 cases on Friday, bringing up the total caseload to 3.69 million since the start of the pandemic. Of the total number, over 2,400 cases remain active while more than 60,400 died because of the virus.

05 JUNE 2022, SUNDAY



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