

06 July 2023 Thursday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Groups back DENR move to review Manila Bay reclamation and quarrying projects

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

GROUPS opposed to the massive land reclamation and seabed quarrying in Manila Bay expressed support behind the move of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to review ongoing development in the area.

This as groups under the Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) underscored the link between seabed quarrying and reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

Sand from various seabed quarrying sites are supplied to the reclamation projects in Manila Bay, the group said.

"In particular, fishermen in Zambales report that the sand from the offshore mining in the area supply sand to Manila Bay," ATM National Coordinator Jaybee Garganera said.

"We are highly critical of reclamation projects precisely because they involve seabed quarrying, and possibly offshore mining, which violate regulatory laws as well as negatively impact communities," Garganera said.

Garganera added that according to fishermen participating in a

focused-group discussion last week in Cavite, seabed quarrying is being done close to the shore.

"This is contrary to the project proponent's assurance that quarrying would be done far from the shore," he said.

Garganera also pointed out that the project proponent, the Philippine Reclamation Authority, held only one consultation, which only a few local leaders were invited.

Garganera said the fishermen from Cavite also reported that quarrying is usually done at night and causes noise pollution, "which scare fishes away and deprive the fishermen of their catch." He added that fishermen have not also received any financial assistance promised to them by mining companies, and "fisherfolk are



Groups back DENR move to review Manila Bay reclamation and quarrying projects

clearly at the losing end of the deal."

Garganera said it is high time that a review of the reclamation projects in Manila Bay is undertaken. "Closely related to this, we likewise call on the DENR to undertake an impact assessment or cost-benefit analysis of seabed quarrying and offshore mining projects."

Last week, small fishermen under the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) called on the DENR to "entirely review and ultimately revoke" all the 22 reclamation projects with environmental permits in Manila Bay on environmental and socioeconomic grounds.

'Long overdue'

THE call was made by Pamalakaya national chairperson Fernando Hicap in response to a recent statement of DENR secretary Maria Antonia "Toni" Yulo-Loyzaga, that the agency is monitoring the compliance and looking into possible violations of reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

"While we welcome this rare initiative from the DENR, this has been actually long overdue, because various reclamation projects have already inflicted irreversible damage to marine ecosystems and the livelihood of coastal people. Abandoned fish ponds in some towns in Cavite could've been converted into productive mangrove areas but were wiped

out for reclamation. While thriving coral reefs in the said province have undoubtedly shrunk due to ongoing dredging and reclamation projects across Manila Bay. These marine resources could've been preserved if the DENR did not take its sweet time to make a stand on reclamation," Hicap said.

He added Loyzaga should work closely with the affected fishing communities and progressive environmental experts in reviewing the reclamation projects for impartiality and should heed the fisherfolk and coastal residents, who constitute the majority of the stakeholders, in regard to the preservation and rehabilitation of coastal communities and marine biodiversity.

"Moreover, the DENR should be reminded of its role in the 2008 Supreme Court mandamus directing various government agencies to clean up and rehabilitate Manila Bay for recreational use and fishery resources development. Allowing or keeping mum on destructive reclamation is a violation of the mandamus," Hicap said.

Pamalakaya said that among the projects that have environmental permits are the 420-hectare Bacoor Reclamation project; the 2,500-hectare Bulacan Aerotropolis project; the 360-hectare reclamation project in Pasay City; the 650-hectare reclamation project in Navotas City; and the 419-hectare Horizon Manila project.



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

EYES WIDE OPEN

IRIS GONZALES

Reclamation: the good, the bad and the ugly

Somewhere in the Netherlands, in that charming Land of Tulips and Windmills, is a place called Beemster Polder, touted as one of the world's earliest large-scale reclamation projects.

Once upon a time, so goes the story, all the land you could see there was just water but in 1612, Netherlands drained Lake Beemster to develop new land and space for citizens.

The result is 7,208 hectares of green farmland.

Included in Unesco's World Heritage list, Beemster Polder is touted as "an exceptional example of reclaimed land," laid out in accordance with "Classical and Renaissance planning principles."

In Rio de Janeiro, the coastline of the famed Copacabana area with its bustling promenade, is the result of land reclamation in the 1970s and in Asia, Singapore's whimsical Changi Airport was built with over 40 million cubic meters of land.

There are many other notable examples of successful reclamation projects across the globe.

But how about here in our country of 7,100 islands and an often flooded capital city?

Actually, parts of Metro Manila were once upon a time bodies of water. There's the Mall of Asia complex, for instance, which has become a favorite leisure destination among families especially on weekends.

Even earlier, way back in the late 19th century, the southern port of Manila was created through reclamation, pushing back Intramuros from the bay. Later on, the water around the Walled City was drained and turned into a golf course by the Americans.

Is this the reason Manila gets flooded in seconds whenever there's a downpour? Maybe, maybe not, who knows for sure?

Today, these reclaimed lands are the giant patches of earth where our homes and offices – including our newspaper's headquarters – now sit.

But in this era of a burning planet, can we afford more reclamation projects? Along the long, snaking Manila Bay coastline alone, there are more than a dozen ongoing projects.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga has the heavy task of finding out the answer.

Her department, she said at a recent briefing in Malacñang, is conducting a "cumulative impact assessment" of all reclamation projects in Manila Bay, with President Marcos giving her latitude to review these developments with a wider lens. This is good news.

At the very least, the agency must make sure proponents are compliant with the numerous environmental requirements.



Manila Waterfront Reclamation Project

Separately, I learned that the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) has recently called the attention of Manila Waterfront Reclamation Project's proponents because of 11 environment-related concerns surrounding this particular project.

Proponents are the City of Manila and Gatchalian's Waterfront Manila Premier Development Inc.

Here are just some of the issues raised by EMB in its notice:

Proponents did not undertake an Information, Education and Communication program to inform stakeholders; did not present a geotechnical analysis prior to project development; did not submit a reforestation program and were already implementing the project without an environmental guarantee fund that would supposedly cover damage "to life and property that may be caused by the project."

The EMB also said the Waterfront Project started in December 2022 even if conditions to proceed have not yet been met at the time.

Sought for comment on these issues, the Gatchalian Group's Atty. Juliet Santos, spokesperson with regards to the reclamation project, told me on Tuesday that they already had a technical conference with the EMB last week where they addressed all the issues and complied with all the requirements.

It was a matter of "updating compliance," she said, adding that monitoring is continuous.

She also clarified that the project has not actually started. Only "pre-mobilization" works were done as authorized by the Philippine Reclamation Authority.

Atty. Santos invited me to their office to see that they have all the documents showing their compliance, enough to fill "two balikbayan boxes," she said.

Moving forward, the DENR must indeed make sure that all these massive reclamation projects are compliant with all the laws and requirements – no ifs, no buts, no sacred cows.

Reclamation isn't necessarily bad; we've seen successful projects across the globe. However, it can be bad and ugly when it causes more harm than good.

Years from now, Metro Manila as we know it will not be the same; large parts will be reclaimed cities because in this epoch of diminishing land, reclamation proponents offer their new developments as a solution.

But as I said, it is also the era of a burning planet. This means that reclaiming land from the ocean has its limit and in our case, numerous reclamation projects may be more than what our waters can take.

Because of a changing climate, sea levels are predicted to rise by as much as six feet by 2100.

The Age of Anthropocene

Storms, tsunamis and climate-related disasters are sure to pound our planet and it's mostly because of man's doing. Welcome to the age of Anthropocene.

Indeed, we have turned military bases into posh enclaves, campuses into malls, sugar lands into solar farms, nature parks into subdivisions and now, our waters into land.

There is that endless appetite to create land, and more land.

But to quote Leo Tolstoy, in his 1886 Russian folktale about a peasant's greed for land and its consequences, I can't help but wonder: "How Much Land Does a Man Need?"

* * *

Email: eyesgonzales@gmail.com. Follow her on Twitter @[eyesgonzales](https://twitter.com/eyesgonzales). Column archives at EyesWideOpen on FB.





TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

NWRB allows use of deep wells

BY FRANCIS EARL CUETO

THE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has allowed Metro Manila water concessionaires to tap deep wells to augment their supply should there be a water shortage because of El Niño.

NWRB Executive Director Sevillano David Jr. said the water level

at Angat Dam has hit 181.22 meters, almost reaching its minimum

operating level of 180 meters.

"We are looking at other sources of water. We are already coordinating with the MWSS to strengthen the operation of water treatment facilities, and we allowed the use of deep wells as an additional source of water if additional water will be needed," David said, referring to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewer-

age System.

If the dam's level dips further, he said the supply for irrigation and the power sector would be cut.

David said they were hopeful that the southwest monsoon would bring rain in the next three months.

"We are pinning our hopes on the statement of the Philip-

pine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration that for the next three months, or in July, August, September, the effects of the southwest monsoon will be felt. We are hoping that the rain can bring up the water level at the water shed," he said.

Earlier, MWSS warned that six to 10 hours of water interruption

daily would be imposed if the water at Angat Dam reached a critical level. Engineer Patrick Dizon, Division Manager of MWSS, said the water interruption would affect 632,000 households.

Angat Dam supplies more than 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs. The lowest recorded drop in the supply of water was at 156 meters in July 2010.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY

BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

INQUIRER

A4
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

RECENT RAINS FAILED TO RAISE VOLUME

ANGAT WATER LEVEL CONTINUES TO DROP AT ONSET OF EL NIÑO

By Meg J. Adonis
@MegINQ

Despite heavy rains over the past few days, the water level at Angat Dam is slowly dropping to minimum operating level, raising concerns over supply especially with the onset of the El Niño phenomenon.

An official of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said the elevation level at the dam located in Norzagaray, Bulacan, was at 181.22 meters on Wednesday.

It has been inching closer to the 180-meter minimum operating level because the recent rainfall did not reach the watershed, according to NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr.

“Once the water level is lower than 180 meters, the priority will be to ensure there is enough water supply in Metro

Manila, rather than for other uses like irrigation and power generation,” David said during a briefing on Wednesday.

The last time Angat water level breached the critical level of 160 meters was in June 2019.

The NWRB drew attention to the situation at Angat a day after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) issued on Tuesday its first El Niño advisory in recent years, warning that the dry spells brought on by the phenomenon may last until early next year.

That same day, the World Meteorological Organization said the El Niño weather pattern emerged in the tropical Pacific for the first time in seven years.

Water coming from Angat—estimated at 4,000 mil-

lion liters per day—flows to the La Mesa and Ipo dams to help deliver supply to Metro Manila and nearby provinces through water concessionaires Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc.

Adjusted allocation

Both Maynilad and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) have been clamoring for additional allocations coming from Angat to ensure adequate supply in Luzon.

On June 28, however, the NWRB announced that it would cut the allocation coming from Angat from 52 cubic meters per second to 50 CMS for the month of July, citing the need to conserve supply in the dam in preparation for El Niño.

The MWSS normally draws only 48 CMS from Angat, but

the dry season has prompted calls for more allocation.

David warned that the declining supply coming from Angat may also affect the operation of hydroelectric power plants.

“Once water level in Angat Dam continues to decline, other dams will have lower capacity to generate power, especially if there is less supply released for irrigation,” he said, adding that the power-hungry Luzon grid would be mainly affected.

Despite these concerns, David assured the public that the NWRB was reviewing preparatory measures with the MWSS in the event of a water supply shortage.

Both agencies are also discussing how water treatment facilities could be better utilized for additional supply, he said. INQ



Marcos: Crops to bear brunt of El Nino in PH

By Charles Dantes

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. warned crop production will bear the brunt of the El Niño phenomenon that may last until the first half of 2024 as the National Water Resources Board said water and power supply could also be affected, especially in Luzon where the Angat Dam water reserve is nearing critical level.

"The problem with the water, I think, is solvable when it comes to livestock. But we will have difficulty when it comes to crops," Mr. Marcos said in a chance interview during the sidelines of the Livestock Philippines Expo 2023 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City yesterday.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) on Tues-

Next page

Marcos:...

From A1

day said the El Niño phenomenon is now present in the Tropical Pacific, adding that the government must prepare for the expected dry spell "as early as we can."

The state weather bureau earlier warned some 36 provinces may experience a dry spell while at least two provinces may suffer from drought.

On Tuesday, the United Nations warned the world to prepare for the effects of El Nino, saying the weather phenomenon which triggers higher global temperatures is set to persist throughout 2023.

El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as

drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere.

The phenomenon occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes typically last nine to 12 months.

National Water Resources Board executive director Seville David Jr. said water levels in all major dams have been going down, with Angat Dam's reserve nearing the 180 critical level.

"If the Angat Dam water level continues to go down, it could breach the minimum operating level of 180 meters. We are now at 181.22 or about a meter away from critical level," David said in a separate press briefing at the Palace.

"If the water level falls below 180 meters, we will prioritize the water supply of Metro Manila compared to other users that depend on Angat, including irrigation and the power sector. Angat Dam is currently contributing to power generation

going to the Luzon grid," he added.

As this developed, President Marcos on Wednesday announced the completion of the initial phase of the safety and efficacy trials for the African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine which the Bureau of Animal Industry has found to produce sufficient antibodies and safe for use.

He said this development would allow the Philippine Food and Drug Administration to issue a certificate of product registration for the vaccines while the second phase of the trials are underway.

"This gives us great hope as we have been waiting for this for a very long time. However, it is not a reason for complacency as we are being continuously warned by those who have studied the vaccine. The vaccine is 80 percent effective. There is still a 20 percent chance that we need to look out for very carefully," Mr. Marcos said.



NWRB hints at further water allocation cut

The National Water Resources Board needs to reexamine the allocation of 50 cubic meters per second granted to Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water for the whole month of July after state weather experts declared the start of the El Niño weather phenomenon, NWRB executive director Seville David Jr. said yesterday.

"This (cut in water allocation) is one of our possible interventions to address the current water supply. We need to adjust our current water allocation," he said.

David added that the 50-CMS allocation for the two water concessionaires may be decreased further to 48 CMS within this month, adding the NWRB may issue another ruling on or before July 15.

"At present, the current water level of Angat Dam is at 181.2 meters. This is lower compared to its minimum operating level. Once it reaches 180 meters, we will give priority to the water supply for Metro Manila as we need to manage," he said.

On July 1, the NWRB implemented a two-CMS cut in the water allocation for Maynilad and Manila Water.

The 52 CMS allocation ended on June 30 after the NWRB implemented it on April 15.

Angat Dam supplies more than 90 percent of Metro Manila's potable water needs and provides for the irrigation needs of 25,000 hectares of farmlands in Bulacan and Pampanga.

David noted that based on the projection of the state weather experts, "we expect below-normal rains. The effects of these will be the failure of our dams to recover."

- Bella Cariaso



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____



Photo shows Ipo Dam in Norzagaray, Bulacan, which is located 7.5 kilometers downstream from Angat Dam. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration has said the water level of Angat is nearing critical level amid the El Niño phenomenon.

JESSE BUSTOS



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Founded Since 1898

The Manila Times



07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Editorial

PH must solve its deforestation crisis

IN spite of the country's adopting a much more proactive approach to climate change and environmental management with the beginning of the Marcos Jr. administration, it is painfully clear there is a long way to go. In a report released just this week, the Philippines, along with Laos, earned the unfortunate distinction of being one of only two countries in Southeast Asia where deforestation increased last year and is among the top 10 countries in the world with the highest loss of primary forest cover.

The report was published by the nonprofit group Global Forest Watch (GFW), which uses satellite data to measure forest cover and land changes. On a global scale, the rate of deforestation slowed by a small amount overall, but increased by 10 percent in the tropics. The report noted that among Southeast Asian countries, only Laos and the Philippines showed an increase in deforestation, with the two countries losing 31 percent and 25 percent more forest in 2022 than in 2021, respectively.

Deforestation, particularly in the tropics, is a grave concern because forests are the planet's first line of defense against damaging greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The GFW report provided some dimension to the problem by pointing out that the 4.1 million hectares of tropical primary forest lost in 2022 are the equivalent of 2.7 metric gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions, approximately the same amount of GHG emissions produced annually by India, the world's third-largest polluter.

The report did not provide details of the reasons for increasing deforestation in the Philippines, other than to identify "commodity-driven forest loss," meaning primarily mining, forestry and similar activities, and urbanization as the two biggest causes.

The destructive trend in the Philippines stands in stark contrast to Asean neighbors Indonesia and Malaysia, which had the world's highest and fourth-highest reductions in the rate of deforestation, respectively. Indonesia has reduced deforestation by 64 percent, while Malaysia has reduced its rate of deforestation by 57 percent. These outcomes are particularly impressive given that the two countries also rank as the two biggest producers of palm oil, which in turn is one of the single biggest causes of tropical deforestation. In fact, in Indonesia, despite remaining the number one producer of palm oil by a wide margin, the government's regulation of that industry aimed at protecting forests has made mining, not palm oil, the biggest cause of deforestation in that country. And again, deforestation has been sharply reduced in Indonesia, regardless of its cause.

Apart from the necessity of forest cover to serve as a carbon sink, tropical forests such as those that are evidently rapidly dwindling in the Philippines are increasingly being viewed as a critical economic resource in the still-new but rapidly expanding global carbon credit market. Hectares of forest represent carbon offset credits that can be sold, a native resource that, unlike minerals or petroleum, requires nothing to make it productive other than to be left alone. By allowing deforestation to continue unabated and even accelerate, the Philippines is essentially throwing away hundreds of billions in potential revenues for the country.

It goes without saying that if the government is serious about halting deforestation — and for now, we'll take the responsible officials at their word that they are — then the obvious first step that should be taken is to reach out to Indonesia and Malaysia, two friendly neighbors that have always shown enthusiasm for regional cooperation, and learn their best practices. Even before that step is taken, however, there are some clues as to how our government should approach the problem. Indonesia's success, for example, is attributed to strict enforcement of environmental policies and compulsory plans from deforestation-prone industries — palm oil, mining, pulp and paper, and property development — for sustainability and environmental rehabilitation, which are in turn regularly and closely audited by government regulators.

Continuity of standards and regulations and consistent enforcement have long been shortcomings of Philippine governance, a poor cycle that we hope can be broken by the current administration. Addressing the country's dubious record as one of the world's biggest destroyers of tropical forests would be an excellent area in which to begin that improvement.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



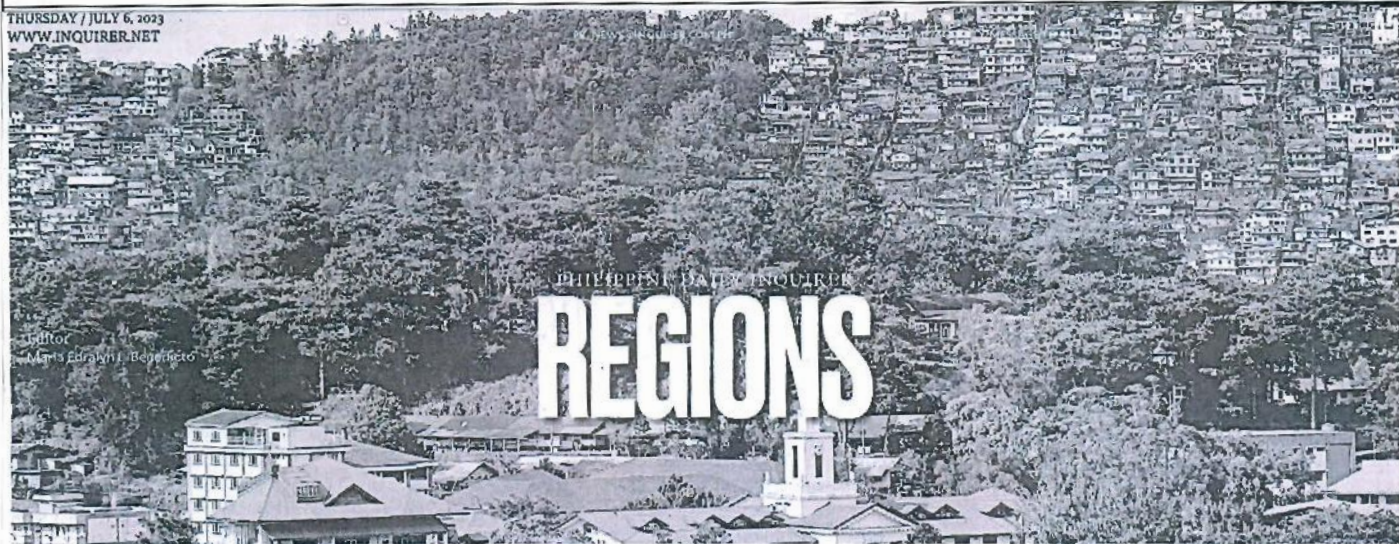
07-06-23

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

THURSDAY / JULY 6, 2023
WWW.INQUIRER.NET



HILL STATION Baguio was built as a hill station for American colonial governors and employees who could not stand the summer heat in Manila in the early 1900s. The city, which is celebrating its 115th charter anniversary in September, has since become a multicultural community and one of the country's top tourist destinations. —NEIL CLARK ONGCHANGCO

Baguio wants 'gross errors' in new city charter fixed

Council protests provision seeking Benguet board's confirmation of local laws; section on territory also questioned

By Vincent Cabreza
@InqNational

BAGUIO CITY—The city council is asking the Senate and the House of Representatives for access to its records so it could determine how "gross errors" ended up in the summer capital's modern charter, which replaced what was essentially its founding constitution.

Reviewing congressional records could help the council "get to the bottom of things" and find the source of these errors, including a provision in Republic Act No. 11689 (the new Baguio City Charter) that requires Baguio, a highly urbanized city, to transmit all its ordinances and resolutions to the provincial board of Benguet for confirmation.

Section 23 of Article 8 of the modern Baguio charter has tasked the council's secretary

with forwarding to the Benguet provincial board copies of duly approved ordinances in the manner provided in Sections 56 and 57 of the Local Government Code of 1991 (RA 7160).

That provision downgrades the city's status to that of a component city, said Vice Mayor Faustino Olowan during the council's regular session this week.

"That new stipulation was not even in the 1909 Charter," he said during discussions about the allegedly flawed RA 11689.

But because this task is part of a law, the Benguet provincial board could now veto Baguio's ordinances, Olowan, the council's presiding officer, pointed out.

Heeding the suggestion of a senator involved in drafting RA 11689, the council has invited members of the Senate and House secretariats to a closed-door meeting of elected officials

and legal experts, to include the charter's chief sponsor, Baguio Rep. Marquez Go.

The group would discuss the needed amendments to the law "before the errors affect the operations of the summer capital," said Olowan.

Legacy

Supreme Court Justice George Malcolm had been credited with writing the original Baguio charter, which was incorporated into Act No. 1963, when he served as a law clerk for the American colonial government in the early 1900s.

Baguio was designed, built and declared a chartered city in 1909 by the American colonial government. It served as a hill station and summer government site for American officials who needed to escape the heat of Manila during the dry season. The Supreme Court and

the Court of Appeals still hold summer sessions in the city every April.

The majority of the council last year tried but failed to get the bicameral committee version of RA 11689 vetoed by Malacañang due to "objectionable" provisions.

Among the council's primary concerns was the exclusion of the Camp John Hay reservation, which is administered by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, from the Baguio townsite reservation.

According to the council, it may affect Baguio's stake at the former American-run John Hay Air Station due to unfulfilled conditions set by the city when it endorsed the commercialization of 280 hectares of that reservation in 1995.

The council also protested the absence of a defined territorial boundary for Baguio.

In earlier forums, Go said Congress simply defined Baguio as "the present territorial jurisdiction of the city," because of unresolved boundary disputes with neighboring Benguet towns like Tuba.

Many of these errors were discovered by the council when provisions of the draft law was outlined to them in March last year by Secretary Luzverfeda Pascual, presidential adviser on legislative affairs, who had clamored for the new Baguio Charter to undergo a referendum.

Gerrymandering

Olowan said the absence of a fixed boundary and the expansion of the Camp John Hay territory could trigger accusations of gerrymandering, a political term for the manipulation of electoral district boundaries.

Go has yet to issue a statement, but his office informed

the Inquirer on Monday that the lawmaker would wait for the council's written suggestions until July 24.

Go had filed House Bill (HB) No. 7406, which amends four provisions of RA 11689.

For instance, HB 7406 removes the provincial board provision that got Olowan's ire this week.

It also reinstates a 1909 provision that allows Baguio to retain all revenues from the sale of townsites lands. This time, a portion of townsites sales revenues would go to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which validates and approves townsites sales applications alongside the Baguio government.

Go had declined the council's invitations to discuss the charter formally at its sessions, drawing the ire of city legislators. **INQ**



07-06-23
07-06 - 3
DATE

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE

Data show how households dispose of unwanted garbage

BY CAI U. ORDINARIO
@caiordinario

GARBAGE truck collection, burning, and dumping in individual pits are the most common waste disposal mechanisms employed by Filipinos, based on the latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Data showed 50.7 percent or 13.362 million of the 26.4 million households have their kitchen garbage picked up by garbage trucks.

This was followed by the 16.3 percent or 4.3 million of households who burned their kitchen waste and 10.3 percent or 2.72 million who dump their waste into pits.

PSA data showed that kitchen garbage is

disposed by feeding the waste to animals at 8.8 percent in 2020 or 2.33 million, while 8.6 percent or 2.28 million of households practiced composting.

Other households or 4.3 percent or 1.14 million households buried their waste and 1 percent or 260,291 households employed other means of disposal such as being thrown in esteros, vacant lots, and rivers, among others.

The data also showed that among the households who disposed of their kitchen waste through garbage truck collection services, the majority or 87.6 percent were living in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The data also showed nearly 70 percent or 68.8 percent were in Region 4A, while 65.8 percent were located in Region 3.

However, burning of kitchen waste was dominant among households based in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). It was the highest proportion reported by households at 44.8 percent.

The highest number of households who employ dumping of their kitchen waste in individual pits were found in Western Visayas with 308,556 households.

For burning, Calabarzon posted the highest number of households with 467,226 followed by Central Luzon, 464,706; and Western Visayas, 464,521.

For burying, the largest number was in Calabarzon at 171,470 households followed by Central Luzon at 109,313 households and Western Visayas, 104,891 households.

In terms of feeding animals, the most number of them were found in Western Visayas at 288,547 households followed by Eastern Visayas at 268,596 households.



PERSPECTIVE

Empowering Asean MSMEs to embrace circular economy

BY DR. KAO KIM HOURN,
SECRETARY-GENERAL, ASSOCIATION OF
SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)

First of 2 parts

MARK Sultan Gersava was a peace development worker from Mindanao, Philippines, who decided to act on what he saw as a critical challenge: transforming his ordinary products to become environment-friendly to help mitigate the effect of climate change while empowering his local community with sustainable and long-term livelihoods. His enterprise, Bambuhay, produces bamboo straws and toothbrushes to replace plastic-based products.

To date, his ambition has had a real positive impact on 13,910 farmers, providing them with an increased sustainable source of income and bringing 68 families out of poverty. Their work has helped remove around 1,100 tons of plastic from the environment and plant nearly 40,000 trees and bamboo. His products are wholeheartedly welcomed by consumers and recognized by multinational companies; he has supplied bamboo straws for Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf in the Philippines.

As we celebrated the United Nations' MSME Day on June 27 in recognition of the tremendous contributions of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bambuhay's story is a remarkable example of how MSMEs can play a significant role in transforming Asean toward a circular economy and preparing the region for a sustainable future.

Shift toward circular economy

The recovery and rebuilding efforts from Covid-19 ushered in the focus on the circular economy and sustainable development. Restricted mobility due to the pandemic disrupted the traditional business model, prompting every firm to adapt and seek alternative supply networks. The surge in consumers' reliance on online shopping and food delivery has led to an upsurge in packaging waste, thus exacerbating the imminent crisis in waste management around the world. The World Bank estimated that global waste generation will see a 70 percent increase between 2016 and 2050.

The World Economic Forum reported that by 2030, Asean is expected to see 140 million new consumers, representing 16 percent of the global increase. Fortunately, a remarkable change has unfolded in consumer behavior, heralding a careful reevaluation of the consumption patterns that impact their health and the environment. Demand has shifted toward more sustainable products for which consumers are willing to pay premium prices.

The Covid-19 pandemic also triggered a strong sense of community and a preference to support socially responsible enterprises, evident from intensified collaboration and coordinated efforts to purchase from local businesses. These shifts paved the way for innovations that promote waste reduction, resource conservation, and self-sufficiency through locally sourced and produced goods.

An economic imperative

Deeply rooted as part of local society, MSMEs

are frequently regarded as vital enablers of socioeconomic development. In Asean, MSMEs account for 85 percent of employment and 44.8 percent of the region's GDP. They provide primary sources of income and livelihood for a significant number of individuals and households. Through partnerships with other local businesses, MSMEs are an integral part of the value chain, enabling access to a variety of products for their customers and servicing the local community.

Due to their lean structure and versatile business model, MSMEs have the ability to embrace new developments, such as the circular economy and digital technologies. In the last three years, we have witnessed many businesses, particularly MSMEs, rapidly adopting innovative technologies and practices to remain relevant and competitive. Like Bambuhay, many MSMEs have considerably sharpened their competitiveness by differentiating their offerings and catering to the burgeoning demand of socially conscious consumers. Additionally, in building a circular economy ecosystem, technology adoption also plays a crucial role in enabling better tracking and traceability while supporting innovative business models. These developments resulted in reduced physical resource requirements, decreased commuting-related emissions and a sharing economy enabled through digital platforms. The development illustrates how an MSME sets sail on their journey toward the circular economy.

(To be concluded on Friday, July 7, 2023)



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY
BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS
INQUIRER



07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____



TALK OF THE TOWN

Comments on "Protecting Siargao,"
(Editorial, 6/29/23) via www.inquirer.net:

The funny thing about this article is that they

assert the ECC actually means something. It doesn't. People can get an ECC with the right connections without any physical evaluation.

Joe Whitey

Many Filipinos have been corrupted and no longer good steward of the environment. Short-term profit mentality.

jame madison



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____



People shield themselves from the sun as they visit the dolomite beach along Roxas Boulevard in Manila yesterday. AFP



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

1/2

Preparing for El Niño

With El Niño back once again after seven years, it's time to put more muscle into the El Niño Task Force to carry out the country's Extended Roadmap to Address the Impact of El Niño (E-RAIN) strategy, as well as introduce further improvements to mitigate an foreseen harsher effect on the Philippines.

During the country's last El Niño spell, which lasted 18 months from 2015 to 2016, about five percent of our farmers and 550,000 hectares of farmlands were badly affected by an El Niño-induced drought. Aggregate reports indicated

BIZLINKS



REY GAMBOA

severe effects on a third of the country, where a state of calamity was declared in six cities, 16 provinces, and 65 municipalities.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which monitors weather and climate information across the globe, provides crucial early and reliable warnings of severe weather that are used by decision-makers to be better prepared for climate changes.

For this current El Niño cycle, the WMO is predicting breaking temperature records and more extreme heat in many parts of the world. The warnings by the WMO for countries likely to be most affected by this current El Niño cycle include the need by respective governments to mobilize all preparations to limit the impact on the economies.

Agriculture shock

Numerous studies have shown how El Niño negatively impacts affected countries' gross domestic product (GDP), household incomes, and per capita consumption, and if not managed well, could induce high inflation resulting from raised food prices.

For the Philippines, our agriculture sector will bear one of the biggest shocks that severe droughts can bring. Not many will remember the El Niño of 1997-1998 when the amount of rain in the country fell to half of historical levels, inducing droughts in two-thirds of farmlands. The dryness was so bad that almost 10,000 hectares of natural forests caught fire and were destroyed.

During the last El Niño seven years ago, average rainfall in Luzon decreased by 14 percent, 21 percent in the Visayas, and 35 percent in Mindanao. An estimated \$325 million in crops were damaged, and put in peril the lives of tens of thousands of affected farming families.

While agriculture's contribution to GDP has dropped to barely nine percent over the years, its relevance to the whole economy is still substantial, especially when one takes into consideration downstream agricultural processing, input production, and agriculture-related trading and transporting. More importantly, agriculture employs almost a quarter of the country's workforce.

Anticipating the worse

Having in place an early response system has been recommended to help cushion the impact of income losses. With the help of international aid programs, early interventions to prepare for the worst consist of training the government's national and local agriculture technicians on disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation.

Other major initiatives are cash-for-work, food distribution, public information, water system improvements, and seeds and fertilizer distribution. The distribution of certified seeds for rice, corn, and vegetables in the past have allowed farm families to re-start livelihood opportunities after months of living in uncertain conditions.

During the last El Niño, RAIN was able to successfully stabilize food prices and food supplies nationwide by supporting crop production in unaffected or mildly affected regions. Together with the distribution of food stamps and the removal of rice import quotas, reports showed a substantial reduction in economic losses.

The President had called for the reactivation of the El Niño Task Force two months ago, which should give the team enough lead time to prepare the country for the worst. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) warned that the worst of El Niño would likely be towards the end of the year until the second quarter of 2024.

Room for improvement

Among the areas that the Task Force could improve on are in the faster, more systematic delivery of cash aid. A review of how the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) could quickly make available funds to affected rural and urban



2/2

households is in order, similar to what happened three years ago when the pandemic lockdowns were ordered.

Redirecting allotted funds for other climate-related activities and budgets should likewise be reviewed, which should give the government more flexibility in adjusting aid distribution where and when best needed.

The United Nations has already warned of global supply and price pressures on rice should droughts badly affect major rice-producing countries. Being partially dependent on rice importation, the Philippines is at risk of disruptions that could lead to rising prices.

The Task Force, likewise, needs to improve weather forecasting systems and make these accessible to farmers. Having technology play a larger role for our agriculture sector has been a challenge that has been endlessly talked about, but has remained just talk.

Once again, although likely too late, the Philippines needs to improve on its water management system. Not only does this mean better irrigation infrastructure and system for areas that are likely more prone to droughts, but also to stabilize water supplies to urban areas that are most often affected by lowered water levels.

Additionally, a committed and all-encompassing food security program is needed that would put in place sustainable researches on drought- and flood-resistant crop varieties, a network of farmer-friendly grain and food storage systems, and many others.

The latest inflation numbers have just come in, and even if it has dropped to 5.4 percent last month, the average is still high at 7.2 percent. The last thing we need is a new pressure point in the coming months.

Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa and follow us on www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa.

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at reydgamboa@yahoo.com. For a compilation of previous articles, visit www.BizlinksPhilippines.net.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



PAGE



UPPER
LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

UN warns world to prepare for El Niño

GENEVA (AFP) – The United Nations on Tuesday warned the world to prepare for the effects of El Niño, saying the weather phenomenon which triggers higher global temperatures is set to persist throughout 2023.

El Niño is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere. The phenomenon occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes typically last nine to 12 months.

The UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO) declared El Niño was already under way and said there was a 90-percent chance that it would continue during the second half of 2023.

"The onset of El Niño will greatly increase the likelihood of breaking temperature records and triggering more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the ocean," warned WMO secretary-general

Petteri Taalas.

"The declaration of an El Niño by WMO is the signal to governments around the world to mobilize preparations to limit the impacts on our health, our ecosystems and our economies," said Taalas.

"Early warnings and anticipatory action of extreme weather events associated with this major climate phenomenon are vital to save lives and livelihoods."

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which feeds into the WMO, announced on June 8 that El Niño had arrived.

"It is expected to be at least of moderate strength," the WMO said.

It noted that El Niño's warming effect

on global temperatures is usually felt most strongly within a year of its onset – in this case in 2024.

El Niño is the large-scale warming of surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Conditions oscillate between El Niño and its generally cooling opposite La Niña, with neutral conditions in between.

El Niño events are typically associated with increased rainfall in parts of southern South America, the southern United States, the Horn of Africa and central Asia.

It can also cause severe droughts over Australia, Indonesia, parts of southern Asia, Central America and northern South America. The WMO says the last El Niño was in 2015-2016. From 2020 to early 2023, the world was affected by an unusually protracted La Niña, which dragged on for three consecutive years.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Founded Since 1898

The Manila Times



PAGE



07-06-23

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Marcos OKs 20 Ledac priority bills

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has approved 20 bills as part of the priority measures of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) that he wanted to be passed by Congress by December this year, Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said Wednesday.

Marcos approved 18 old priority bills and two new legislations during the second Ledac meeting in Malacañang on Wednesday.

"We agreed on the first 18 priority bills for passage by December 2023," Pangandaman said in a phone interview.

Among these measures are the amendments to the Build-Operate-Transfer Law/Public-Private Partnership Bill, the National Disease Prevention Management Authority, the Internet Transactions Act/E-Commerce Law, the Health Emergency Auxiliary Reinforcement Team Act, formerly the Medical Reserve Corps, the Virology Institute of the Philippines, Mandatory ROTC and NSTP, Revitalizing the Salt Industry, Valuation Reform, E-Government/E-Governance, and the Ease of

Paying Taxes.

Also targeted to be passed late this year are the National Government Rightsizing Program, the Unified System of Separation/Retirement and Pension of MUPs, the LGU Income Classification, the Waste-to-Energy Bill, the New Philippine Passport Act, the Magna Carta for Filipino Seafarers, the National Employment Action Plan, and Amendments to the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act.

Pangandaman said the two new bills are the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas-endorsed Bank Deposit Secrecy and Anti-Financial Account Scamming Act (Afasa) bills.

"It will help in money laundering cases [and] problems with terrorism, and if there are court cases [that] really need evidence or documents that will show that there are

problems or there is an issue with regards to money, [then] the Bangko Sentral can open their account," Pangandaman said, referring to the Bank Deposit Secrecy Bill.

On the other hand, she said the Afasa bill aims to protect consumers from cybercrimes such as phishing and money mules.

Presidential Communications Secretary Cheloy Garafil said that 18 of the 20 bills were part of the 42 priority legislative measures during the first Ledac meeting in October 2022.

"Of the 42 bills, three (RA 11934, or 'An Act Requiring the Registration of Subscriber Identity Module'; RA 11935, or Postponement of Barangay/SK elections'; and RA 11939 or 'Amendment to AFP Fixed Term' have been signed into law, while three (RA HB 6608, or the 'Maharlika Investment Fund Act; HB 7751, or the 'Department of Health Specialty Centers Act'; and HB 6336, or 'New Agrarian Emancipation Act') are for the President's signature," she said.

The other priority measures include the Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act, National Land Use Act, Enabling Law for the Natural Gas Industry, Apprenticeship Law, Philippine

Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System, Government Financial Institutions Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery, Free Legal Assistance for Police and Soldiers, Negros Island Region, Leyte Ecological Industrial Zone, Eastern Visayas Development Authority, Philippine Immigration Bill, Comprehensive Infrastructure Development Master Plan, and Magna Carta for Barangay Health Workers.

"Five bills are in various stages of the legislative process: the Budget Modernization Bill, Amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, the Department of Water Resources, the National Defense Act, and Amendments to the Universal Health Care Act," she added.

Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez said of the remaining 36 priority measures from the first Ledac, they have passed 32 on third and final reading in the House of Representatives.

Pursuant to RA 7640, Ledac serves as a consultative and advisory body to the President on certain programs and policies essential to the realization of the goals of the national economy.



Lava flow from Mayon extends 2.8 kms

By ROMINA CABRERA

Lava flow has reached 2.8 kilometers from the summit crater as Mayon Volcano's high level of unrest continued in the past 24 hours, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

Phivolcs said the very slow effusion of lava continued on the Mi-isi (south) and Bonga (southeastern) gullies of the volcano.

Five dome-collapse pyroclastic density currents (PDCs) that lasted for two to five minutes were observed aside from 232 rockfall events, a volcanic earthquake and repetitive pulse tremor.

Continuous moderate degassing produced steam-laden plumes rising 200 meters from the summit crater.

Sulfur dioxide emissions averaged 1,170 tons per day.

More than a month since increased seismic activity was observed, Mayon remains under Alert Level 3.

Phivolcs stressed the need to evacuate residents within the six-kilometer permanent danger zone due to the danger of PDCs, lava flow, rockfalls and other

volcanic hazards.

As Mayon continues to be restive, the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (APSEMO) gave assurance that there are enough food and other relief items for more than 5,000 families in 25 evacuation centers across the province.

Eugene Escobar, APSEMO assistant head, said supplies that can last for three months are on standby.

6,182 hectares of agri land at risk

Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said 6,182 hectares of agricultural land are at risk from Mayon's explosive eruption.

In a bulletin issued yesterday, the DA said 1,378 hectares of rice fields, 1,125 hectares of cornfields, 626 hectares of vegetable farms and 3,053 hectares of fruit farms may be affected in nine towns and cities in Albay.

The DA said there are also 52,626 animal heads in the affected areas.

Agricultural damage due to Mayon's unrest has not been recorded, but ashfalls were monitored in Guinobatan and Ligao City.

Last month, the DA activated its com-

mand center to monitor the situation:

It has identified 26 animal evacuation centers outside the six-kilometer-radius extended danger zone.

"To date, there are 20 animal pooling sites with 1,120 animals (cattle, carabao, goat, sheep) evacuated from 467 farmers. Evacuation of animals is ongoing," the DA said.

Gov't aid

The DA said it provided P1.25 million worth of drugs, biologics and feeds for the evacuated animals.

It is conducting regular livestock health monitoring and disease surveillance of animals in the centers.

The DA distributed P1.17 million worth of agricultural inputs to evacuees for the establishment of communal gardens at evacuation sites in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment.

Kadiwa centers near evacuation centers were opened in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Trade and Industry, farmers' associations, micro, small and medium enterprises as well as local government units. - With Cet Dematera, Bella Cariaso, Danessa Rivera



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

2
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

07-06-23

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Mayon logs 'repetitive pulse tremor'

By ELLALYN RUIZ

The increase in Mayon's volcanic activity continues, manifested by a "repetitive pulse tremor" that has been occurring since July 3, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said on Wednesday, July 5.

Phivolcs said the pulse tremor that was detected at 3:47 p.m. on July 3 was still ongoing.

"Since 3:47 p.m. (Philippine time) (on July 3), the Mayon Volcano Network began recording

a continuous tremor-like series of weak volcanic earthquakes that steadied and increased in strength (in the morning of July 4) and persists to the present," Phivolcs said in an advisory issued on Tuesday afternoon, July 4.

"This resulted in an abrupt and sustained increase in the level of seismic energy release beginning July 3," it added.

Phivolcs said that the current activity in Mayon could be due to magmatic gas activity within the volcano's edifice.

Mayon's activity was also dominated by five dome-collapse pyroclastic density currents (PDC) lasting two to two-and-a-half minutes, 232 rock-fall events, and one volcanic earthquake, between 5 a.m. on Tuesday and 5 a.m. on Wednesday, July 5.

"In the past 24-hour period, a very slow effusion of lava from the summit crater of Mayon Volcano continued to feed lava flows and collapse debris on the Mi-isi and Bonga gullies," it said.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (EPRMP) of the **PUTATAN WATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION** project of **MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.** located in NIA Road, Brgy. Putatan, Muntinlupa City.

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the **PUTATAN WATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION** to attend the PUBLIC HEARING on:

Date	Time	Venue
July 19, 2023	9:00 AM	McDonald's Putatan Branch, Manila South Road, Brgy. Putatan, Muntinlupa City

The Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with the review of the EPRMP of the aforementioned project by the Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The following are the project details:

Project Name	Putatan Water Treatment Plant Expansion
Project Location	NIA Road, Brgy. Putatan, Muntinlupa City
Project Rationale	The objective of the project is to optimize the operation of the current treatment plants and increase its production capacity from 300,000 cubic meters per day to 340,000 cubic meters per, and provide additional 22,000 cubic meters per day production through a modular treatment plant which will augment the supply deficiency on the southern part of the concession area.
Project Components	Putatan Water Treatment Plant 1 Putatan Water Treatment Plant 2 Ceramic Ultrafiltration Modular Treatment Plant Putatan Pump Station and Reservoir (existing) Intake Structure (existing) Silt Curtain (existing) Replacement of Submarine Outfalls along Laguna Lake Construction of an admin building and chemical storage facility
Proponent	MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in this Public Hearing should preferably confirm their attendance/participation or give their opinion(s) in concise position paper to the EIA Section of this Office through mail or through email at cpd.eia.embncr@gmail.com at least three (3) days before the Public Hearing Schedule. Those who will not able to register or submit their written positions may be given opportunity to share their issues on the day of the hearing itself.

The Project's EPRMP and Executive Summary for the Public are downloadable at our website: ncr.emb.gov.ph. (Kindly access the Notice of Public Hearing link found in our website).

For more details, please contact the EIA Section of Clearance and Permitting Division of this Office at telephone number 8931-1331 local 1111 through the project casehandler Ms. Riza C. Arjona.

(SGD.) **ATTY. MICHAEL DRAKE P. MATIAS**
Regional Director