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# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Government now touts Boracay's white sand after backing Manila Bay's

By [Jeline Malasig](#)

- October 5, 2020 - 4:03 PM



Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque conducts Oct. 5, 2020 press briefing in Boracay. (Screenshot from PCOO via Facebook)

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque started sharing pictures of himself in [Boracay last Saturday](#) and on his second day on the island, he urged some Filipinos to visit his “happy place” as it geared for reopening.

“Punta na kayo Boracay! Tara na sa Boracay!” Roque exclaimed in one of the clips taken by [local media](#).

He was seen waving his arms as he encouraged people who are living in modified general community quarantine and GCQ areas to visit the island.

Roque also shared a picture of him in swimming attire as he looked on at the blue waves of the white-sand beach with a smile on his face.

“Ang aking masayang lugar mula noon, hanggang ngayon,” he wrote on Facebook.

Last Friday, Roque [reportedly](#) said that he will hold his regular Palace briefings on Boracay to help attract tourists.

He added that President **Rodrigo Duterte** may also visit the tourist destination “in the near future.”

The spokesperson reasoned that Boracay's opening for tourists will benefit the local economy and Filipinos' psychological well-being after being quarantined for several months.

“Ang muling pagbubukas ng Boracay sa turismo ay magiging mabuti hindi lamang para sa ekonomiya ngunit para din sa kalusugan ng pag-iisip at emosyonal ng mga tao na matagal nang nakakulong sa kanilang mga tahanan at naghahangad na makahanap ng isang maikling pagtakas mula sa kanilang quarantined life,” he said on [Facebook](#).

Boracay opened its doors to local tourists on October 1.

Tourism Secretary **Bernadette Romulo-Puyat** said that the opening builds momentum for domestic tourism nationwide as people in the tourism industry resume their livelihood.



## Government now touts Boracay's white sand after backing Manila Bay's

She also assured the public that there are stringent health and safety measures in place amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

[Philstar.com](#) reported that the measure includes the undergoing of COVID-19 detection test before travel and requiring a negative reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-CPR) result 48 to 72 hours prior to traveling to Boracay.

"Also, travelers will be advised to go on a strict quarantine immediately after a test and until the time of travel to the island," Puyat was quoted as saying.

Airlines are advised to use only one airport for entry of travelers, which is the Godofredo P. Ramos Airport in Caticlan in the municipality of Malay.

Aside from the health protocols, visitors are expected to follow the "Health and Safety Guidelines Governing the Operation of Island and Beach Destinations under the New Normal" or memorandum Circular No. 2020-007 signed by Puyat early this month.

Under these guidelines, lifeguards will be accompanied by beach marshalls or officers tasked to ensure that protocols such as physical distancing are followed in island tourist destinations during prescribed swimming hours.

A COVID-19 laboratory is also operational at the **Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital** in Kalibo, Aklan.

Despite Roque's invite for Filipinos to visit the island, he reminded them that the threat of COVID-19 is still very much present and advised them to take serious precautions even while traveling.

"Sa kagalakan at pag-asang bumisita sa Boracay, huwag nating kalimutan na nasa kalagitnaan pa tayo ng laban sa COVID-19. Ang virus ay nasa paligid pa rin natin at kailangan pa nating maging labis na mag-ingat, at kailangan nating isaalang-alang ang bagay na ito habang pinaplano natin ang mga ruta sa paglalakbay," he [said](#).

### Manila's 'white sands'

Before promoting Boracay, the government enticed the public to visit a "beautified" Manila Bay, which recently saw dolomite dumped at its shores.

"Kung hindi man sila makapunta ng Boracay, Bohol, Palawan, or Cebu, itong mga kababayan sa Maynila, ilalapat natin sa kanila ang white sand dito sa baywalk area," Environment Undersecretary **Benny Antiporda** told [ABS-CBN News](#) in September, defending the project from criticisms.

But the contrast in the messages was spotted by some on social media.



## Government now touts Boracay's white sand after backing Manila Bay's

“What baffles me is, they beautified (a small portion of) Manila Bay so people won't need to go to Boracay, yet now they're encouraging people to actually visit Boracay?” a [Twitter user](#) pointed out with an upside-down smiling emoji in response to Roque's visit.

“Wait. I thought we didn't (need) to go there anymore since we have a white sand beach in Manila Bay now. I'm so confused,” quipped another [online user](#) with a laughing-with-tears emoji.

“Oh ba't nandyan ka sa Boracay? Dun ka sa Manila Bay, sayang 'yung millones na ginastos ta's diyan mo lang papapuntahin,” a Filipino sarcastically [responded](#) to a clip of Roque encouraging the public to visit the tourist destination.

The **Department of Environment and Natural Resources** previously drew flak for placing crushed dolomite rocks along a 500-meter stretch of Manila Bay's shorelines in an attempt to make its sands white amid the pandemic but Roque said the project was proposed two years ago.

He said that it was supposedly part of the overall rehabilitation program for Manila Bay which the Duterte administration started to pursue after cleaning up Boracay that was compared to a [“cesspool.”](#)

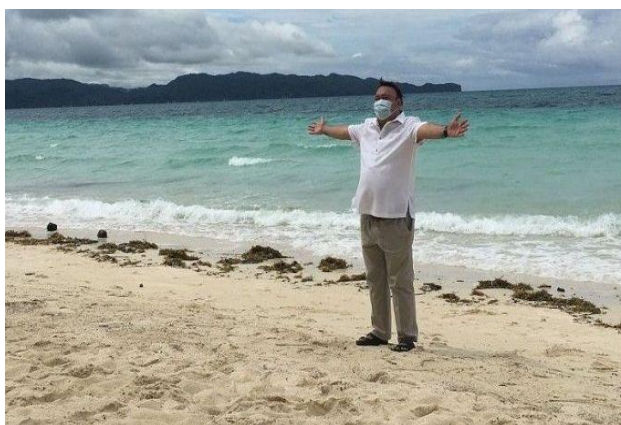
[Marine scientists](#) said the costly initiative would not solve the natural harbor's various environmental problems.

The bay is currently closed for the completion of DENR's project and is [eyed](#) to be reopened after the pandemic.

## Vacation time!: Palasyo hinikayat ang lahat sa 'COVID-free' Boracay

(Philstar.com)

- October 5, 2020 - 5:47pm



Litrato ni presidential Harry Roque sa Boracay, ika-4 ng Oktubre, 2020

News5/Jenny Dongon

MANILA, Philippines — Bilang parte ng pagsusumikap ng gobyerno na buhayin ang ekonomiyang napinsala ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) lockdowns, nag-iba ang tono ng Malacañang at hayagan nang hinihikayat ang mga turistang dagsain ang isla ng Boracay.

Ito ang inihayag ni presidential spokesperson Harry Roque sa kanyang press briefing mula sa mala-paraisong baybaying dagat.

"Panahon na po para tayo ay magbakasyon matapos ang napakatagal na lockdown... [N]aghihintay na po ang pinakamagandang beach sa mundo, ang Boracay," sabi ni Roque, Lunes.

"Pag 'di tayo bumisita sa Boracay, ang mga eroplano ica-cancel [ang] flights... [M]araming negosyo malulugi at baka tuluyan magsara."

Bukas na sa ngayon ang tanyag na white sand beach para sa lahat simula pa noong ika-1 ng Oktubre, ngunit kinakailangan muna ng negatibong RT-PCR swab tests ang mga bibisita rito 48 hanggang 72 oras bago pumunta sa Boracay.

Ilang linggo na nang buksan ito, ngunit para lamang sa mga taga-Western Visayas.

"Bukas na po ang Boracay para sa mga turista... Kinakailangan lang po magrehistro sa webpage ng Aklan... at i-download ang health declaration form," dagdag pa ng tagapagsalita ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Kanya pang pagbabahagi, sa tingin niya'y handa na rin ang islang tumanggap ng mga banyagang bisita. Gayunpaman, hindi alam ng Palasyo kung darating sila.



## Vacation time!: Palasyo hinikayat ang lahat sa 'COVID-free' Boracay

Karamihan kasi sa mga top foreign visitors ay mga Koreano, Tsino at Hapon. Gayunpaman, kailangan pa kasi nilang i-quarantine pag-uwi.

Samantala, agad naman daw ipag-aalam sa mga Aklanon kung makakabisita si Digong sa Boracay sa mga darating na panahon ngayong maaari na itong dayuhin.

Nangyayari ang renewed tourism push na ito ngayong sumampa na sa 324,762 ang COVID-19 cases sa Pilipinas, Lunes. Sa bilang na 'yan, patay na ang 5,840, sabi ng Department of Health (DOH).

### Ligtas sa COVID-19?

Pinahupa naman ni Malay, Aklan Mayor Frolibar Bautista ang pangamba ng marami hinggil sa hawaan ng COVID-19 sa kanilang isla. Aniya, ligtas na ligtas ito lalo na't sumusunod sa health protocols ang mga tao.

"Natatakot ba mga tao dito? Ang nangyari dito... for how many months... COVID-free ang Boracay," saad niya, kahit na may mga bumibisita.

Ganyan din naman ang sinabi ni Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores hinggil sa sitwasyon ng isla, na ngayo'y nag-ooffer ng hanggang 75% discount sa room rates.

"Walang dapat ikabahala ang mga turistang pumunta dito... Ang kailangan lang confidence... The fear of travel is still there... Dapat din tayo mabuhay sa time na ito ng COVID," dagdag ni Miraflores.

"Kung nagkaroon ng symptoms ang turista... we have all the medical facilities, kumpleto ating ospital, kumpleto ang ating COVID response dito sa Boracay."

Noong Huwebes, nasa 35 lang ang turistang bumisita sa isla, bagay na umakyat sa 47 sa ika-2 ng Oktubre. Umakyat pa ito sa 35 noong Sabado.

Inaasahan ng pamahalaang lalawigan na tataas pa ang tourist arrivals sa lugar sa mga susunod na araw.

Nasa 204 establisyamento ang kasalukuyang nag-ooperate sa Boracay. Nakatakda namang mag-operate ang nasa 365 certificates na inisyu naman ng lokal na pamahalaan. — **James Relativo at may mga ulat mula kay The STAR/Alexis Romero**



## Covid-free Boracay promises ‘safe’ tourism amid pandemic

By Azer Parrocha October 5, 2020, 8:31 pm



Famous Boracay Islands white beach (*File photo*)

**MANILA** – Boracay is currently virus-free and local officials are going to make sure it is going to stay that way in order to revive tourism in the world-famous tourism destination, a Palace official said Monday.

In a press briefing from Boracay, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque encouraged local tourists to visit the beach island, adding that the long lockdown has allowed time to put in place stricter health and safety protocols.

*“Panahon na po para tayo naman po ay magbakasyon matapos ang napakatagal na lockdown lalung-lalo na sa Metro Manila. Naghihintay na po ang pinakamagandang beach sa buong mundo – Boracay – open for business (It’s time to go on a vacation after a long lockdown especially in Metro Manila. The most beautiful beach in the world is waiting, it’s open for business),”* Roque said.

Governor Florencio Miraflores, in the same briefing, assured tourists that medical staff are ready to attend to suspected Covid-19 cases, complete medical facilities are available, and a hotline can easily be reached.

*“Safe na safe ang Boracay kasi hanggang ngayon Covid-free pa rin ang island ng Boracay (Boracay is very safe because until now the island remains Covid-free),”* he said.

Over 50 tourists have so far visited the beach island over the weekend, but Miraflores is hoping that this number would improve in the next few weeks and months.

He said several hotels and accommodations are also offering up to 75 percent discounts for rooms so that visitors have enough pocket money to undergo mandatory reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests.

*“Napagkasunduan na para ma-offset iyong RT-PCR test na medyo may kamahalan ay nag-agree ang mga tour operators at saka tourist establishments na magbibigay sila ng as much as 75 percent discount on room rates (We agreed that to offset the price of the RT-PCR test which is a bit expensive, tour operators and tourist establishments agreed to give as much as a 75 percent discount on room rates),”* he said.



## Covid-free Boracay promises ‘safe’ tourism amid pandemic

### Hardest-hit

Since tourism is one of the hardest-hit industries by the outbreak, Roque was “saddened” about several tourism industry workers in Boracay losing their jobs during the pandemic.

“*Medyo nalulungkot ako na ang daming nawalang ng trabaho dito siyempre dahil sa pandemya* (I’m a bit sad that there are many who lost their jobs here of course because of the pandemic),” he said.

Roque said he wanted to lure more visitors in the beach island to help tourism workers and communities whose livelihoods were affected by the pandemic.

“*Kaya kami naririto, ay engganyuhin iyong ating mga kababayan ‘no; dahil kapag hindi po tayo bumisita sa Boracay, ang mga eroplano na walang laman, ikakansela ang mga flights. Kapag nangyari po iyon, magiging mas mahirap nang pumunta sa Boracay at mas maraming mga negosyong malulugi at baka tuluyan nang magsara* (We’re here to entice our citizens to visit because if they don’t visit Boracay, airplanes would not have any passengers and flights would be canceled. If that happens, it will be more difficult to visit Boracay and businesses would go bankrupt and would eventually close),” he said.

Roque, meanwhile, assured tourism industry workers that the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act or Bayanihan 2 and the proposed PHP4.5-trillion national budget for 2021 will also finance soft loans for workers displaced by the pandemic.

“*Mayroon po tayong PHP4 bilyon na nasa loob ng Bayanihan 2 na nakalaan para sa turismo, sa sector ng turismo* (We have PHP4 billion which is part of Bayanihan 2 allocated for the tourism sector),” he said. “*Mayroon pa ring mga bagong mga tulong na nakalagay po or provided doon sa ating 2021 proposed budget* (There are also aid provided in our 2021 proposed budget).”

Currently, travelers visiting Boracay will be subject to the test-before-travel regulation that requires a negative RT-PCR result 48 to 72 hours prior to departure.

Airlines are required to land at the Godofredo R. Ramos Airport in Caticlan, Municipality of Malay, the only airport of entry in moving tourists to the island. (PNA)





# Roque on Boracay opening: 'Panahon na para magbakasyon'

By [Melissa Luz Lopez, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Oct 5, 2020 3:53:10 PM

Updated Oct 5, 2020 7:55:00 PM



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque invites Filipinos to visit Boracay

**Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, October 5)** — Malacañang has dropped its months-old "stay at home" campaign and is now calling on Filipinos to head out and fly to Boracay island.

"*Ang mensahe po ng Presidente, kinakailangang mabuhay po tayo sa kabila ng COVID-19... Panahon na po para tayo ay magbakasyon matapos ng napakatagal na lockdown, lalong-lalo na sa Metro Manila,*" Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said on Monday as he staged his regular press briefing from the white sand shores of the popular tourist spot.

[Translation: The President's message is that we need to live with COVID-19... It's time to take a vacation after the long lockdown, especially in Metro Manila.]

Boracay reopened its doors to all tourists on October 1 but subject to strict guidelines. Negative swab tests are required before visitors are allowed to enter the white sand paradise. This comes weeks after the island started accepting visitors from within the Western Visayas region only.

Roque and his team headed to Malay, Aklan over the weekend, joining a handful of tourists who braved the COVID-19 pandemic after seven months of community quarantine.

"*Ang talagang messaging po natin ngayon doon sa advertisement na pinroduce ng Office of the Press Secretary at suportado po ng IATF, DOH, at Department of Finance: ingat-buhay para sa hanapbuhay... 'Yan din po ang thrust ng second National Action Plan ng national task force on COVID-19,*" the Malacañang official said, even shooting a promotional video featuring himself as he walked around Boracay to shop and eat while showing the safety protocols in place.

[Translation: Our real messaging now as seen in the advertisement produced by the Office of the Press Secretary and supported by the IATF, DOH, and Department of Finance: taking care of yourself while supporting other people's livelihoods... That's also the thrust of the second National Action Plan of the national task force on COVID-19.]

# Roque on Boracay opening: 'Panahon na para magbakasyon'

Aklan Governor Florencio Miraflores said [only about 50 tourists per day](#) have entered the province since last Thursday, as local businesses hope to entice more to revive sales and jobs. He assured that strict health standards are being followed to maintain Boracay's COVID-free status.

Tourists need a negative polymerase chain reaction test result taken within 48 hours of traveling to Boracay to be allowed entry.

Roque said that while Boracay may seem ready to accept foreign tourists, he doubts if they are willing to take the trip now as most countries require residents to undergo two-week quarantine upon returning home. Prior to the pandemic, Korean and Chinese tourists visited the island in droves.

Henry Chusuey, who owns the Henann Resorts chain in the island, said the hassle and cost of swab tests could be stopping travelers from taking a trip to Boracay. Miraflores said local hotels are offering up to 75 percent discount on room rates just to attract customers, with Chusuey revealing that only about 20 of his resort's more than 1,600 rooms are currently occupied.

"If it is easier for the tourists at *hindi masyadong* hassle *ang* requirements, more tourists, I believe, would come and more employment will be given to the workers," Chusuey said, adding that not all of their group's employees have returned to their posts as clients remain scarce.

The Boracay-based businessman also batted for antigen swab testing at the Caticlan airport, which is cheaper and yields faster results than the PCR method to detect COVID-19.

However, Roque said antigen tests are still being studied and the IATF has decided to wait for the findings of the pilot run in Baguio City before approving their widespread use.

"*Hindi naman po kasi natin pupwedeng isakripisyo 'yung kalusugan din ng mga tiga-Boracay* [We cannot also sacrifice the safety of Boracay residents]," Roque said, disclosing that doubts remain on the validity of a negative result from an antigen test and that the PCR test is still the "gold standard" for detecting the coronavirus from throat and nose swab samples.



## Boracay tourist arrivals fewer than 100 a day since Oct. 1 reopening

Published October 5, 2020 9:42pm

Boracay has received fewer than 100 tourists a day since its reopening for residents from areas under general community quarantine (GCQ) on October 1.

In Joseph Morong's report on "24 Oras" on Monday, Aklan Governor Florencio Miraflores said the small number of visitor arrivals is due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19.

"Ang mga tao ngayon ay medyo nahihirapan pang pumunta dito. May kaunting takot pa pero sa tingin namin in the next few weeks or in the next few months, ang mga turista sa Boracay ay babalik," Miraflores said.

Henann resorts chairman Dr. Henry Chusuey said that another factor is the number of requirements for entering the tourist spot.

"If it is easier for the tourists to come, I'm sure ang trabaho ng mga workers natin babalik na. But it has to be easy for the tourists to come here or else, they will not come," he said.

Due to the strict protocols, travel time to the island doubled.

Tourists will have to register at the [www.aklan.gov.ph](http://www.aklan.gov.ph) and fill out a health declaration, which will be sent to [touristboracay@gmail.com](mailto:touristboracay@gmail.com) with negative COVID-19 test result, ID, and confirmed hotel booking.

If approved, a health card and QR code will be forwarded to tourists. The QR code will serve as a pass for transportation.

On Sunday, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque [visited the popular tourist island](#), urging domestic tourists to help in its revival. — **Ma. Angelica Garcia/BM, GMA News**



## Roque sa publiko: Boracay bisitahin!



October 5, 2020 @ 7:28 PM 9 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nanawagan si Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque sa sambayanang Pilipino na bumisita sa Boracay at break muna mula sa quarantine.

Ang pagbisita niya sa Boracay Island ay isang paraan ng publiko para tumulong na pasiglahin ang ekonomiya nito.

Nauna rito, binisita ni Sec. Roque ang nasabing isla nitong nakalipas na weekend.

Ani Sec. Roque, may 55 lamang silang bumisita sa Boracay kahapon, samantalang halos 40 katao ang nagpunta rito ng Biyernes at Sabado.

Kaya niya, hindi maaalis na mangamba ang taga-Boracay na hindi sila maka-survive at magsarang muli ang isla kung hindi magtutuluy-tuloy ang pagbisita ng mga turista na makakapagpasiglang muli sa turismo roon.

“Nanawagan po tayo sa ating mga kababayan na nais magkaroon ng, kumbaga, e, break from quarantine, bukas na po ang Boracay, wala na pong edad na ipinagbabawal dito, ke bata, ke matanda. Ang kinakailangan lang po, magrehistro sa web page ng Aklan government, magkaroon ng PCR test, at napakabilis naman po ng proseso dahil mayroon silang QR code system, ginagamit nalang po ang computer na parang baril, at mabilis po ang pagpasok,” ayon kay Sec. Roque.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni Frolibal Bautista, Alkalde ng Malay Aklan makaraang 52 turista lang ang nairehistro nitong Sabado at 27 pa rito ay galing sa Metro Manila.

Habang naniniwala naman si Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat na mas maraming turista ang dadayo sa Boracay bago mag-undas. Kris Jose



## SUPORTA NI ISKO SA MLA. BAY REHAB KINILALA NG CITY COUNCIL

### [NEWSMETRO](#)

On Oct 3, 2020



ISANG resolusyon ang ipinasa ng Manila City Council, sa pangunguna ni Vice Mayor Honey Lacuna bilang Presiding Officer, na nagpapahayag ng buong suporta sa panig ni Manila Mayor Isko Moreno at sa kanyang pagpapaghayag ng pagkilala sa national government's Manila Bay rehabilitation program and coastal beach nourishment na ginawa sa baywalk shoreline sa Roxas Boulevard.

Ang nasabing resolusyon na ipinasa ng buong city council at principally authored ni Councilor Don Juan 'DJ' Bagatsing (fourth district) at minority leader Philip Lacuna, ay nagsasaad ng: 'this simple yet important measure now serves as the city's official stand on the issue, further reinforcing the mayor's favorable position earlier and is a clear indication of a unified front in Manila concerning the rehab of the bay.'

Ayon kay Bagatsing, "it is quite saddening to note that certain groups and individuals are noisily opposing such, merely to promote a fractured political agenda of divisiveness, hate and polarization by their reckless carping of false facts, fake news and outright lies on the said project."

"Some of the untruths they had unduly claimed in public are: the alleged 389 million cost alone for white sand topping (in reality, only 28 million), the supposedly health hazardness of the sand composed of crushed dolomite (officially debunked by the DOH), the very short or temporary aspect of the white sand shorefront to be wiped out immediately by the next storm (DENR had instituted a mechanism of geotubes to make the sand stay in place, preventing erosion, used in many parts of the world), its mere aesthetical nature and negative ecological impact (dolomite is known to cleanse water bodies, while having a beautiful baywalk coast would contribute greatly to tourism, economy, investments, job creation etc.), and lastly, the propriety of it all during a pandemic (this project began way back early last year, not just during the corona crisis period and is actually at present on its final stages)," dagdag pa ng konsehal.

Sinabi pa ni Bagatsing na layunin ng resolution na wakasan na ang : 'unfoundedly misplaced misgivings' straight and put to rest any doubt regarding the implementation, as well as, completion of this Manila Bay rehabilitative endeavor.'



## SUPORTA NI ISKO SA MLA. BAY REHAB KINILALA NG CITY COUNCIL

“The real glaring truth here is, in any which way one would look at it, this undertaking along Manila Bay’s baywalk shoreline is a truly beneficial improvement, much needed and most welcome for our City, having no downside at all, with only a plethora to gain and definitely will make Manila vibrant again,” dagdag pa nito.

Sa nasabing resolusyon ay napaglaman na matapos ang isang taon at kalahati ng puspusang paglilinis at pag-aalis ng tonetoneadang basura at maduming buhangin at paglalagay ng mga kagamitang pipigil sa pagguho ng lupa sa seafronts/seawalls sa pamamagitan ng mekanismo ng geotubes, ang malawakang rehab ay malapit ng matapos at sumasailalim na ngayon sa tinatawag na beach nourishment, coastal restoration at enhancement process ng Baywalk shore strip o ng paglalagay ng white sand ( gawa sa dinurog na bulk-form dolomite) sa lawak na 120 meters long by 60 meters wide (mula US Embassy side-cove patungong Yacht Club endpoint sa Roxas Boulevard).

Nabatid na noong isang taon, ang pamahalaan, sa tinatayang budget na mahigit na P300 million, ay naglunsad ng malaki at komprehensibong proyekto na i-rehab ang Manila Bay, sa pamamagitan ng DENR at DPWH, kabilang, sa ilalim ng pang-unang hakbang, ay ang paglalagay ng solar-powered sewage treatment plant/facility at ang katabing 1.5 kilometer wastewater interceptor pipeline, ito ay bukod pa sa karagdagang major overhaul/complete repair ng Padre Faura, Remedios, at Estero de San Antonio Abad drainage outfalls/spillways, at iba pa.

Kamakailan lang, walang anu-ano’y napuno ng ingay mula sa public at private sectors ang mainstream at social media at tahasang tinutuligsa at hinahamon ang gobyerno ang ginawang paglalagay ng dolomite dahil aniya, ito ay purong pagpapaganda lang at hindi napapanahon lalo’t may pandemya.

“Amidst the carping cacophony of condemnation and hypocritical rebuke, the unduly mischaracterized project was ably defended, as well as, promoted/endorsed by the DENR, DPWH, DILG, DOT, MMDA, Presidential Spokesperson, some practical Congressmen and most importantly by Mayor Isko Moreno, all of whom highlighted its significant purpose and value for the overall rehabilitative development of Manila Bay and this shall create a positive ripple effect on tourism, ecology, economic opportunities, investment/business activity, job creation, family and individual physical/mental betterment, and many other consequential gains,” saad pa ng resolusyon. (ANDI GARCIA)



## DPS maintains rehab, beautification of Manila Bay

[October 5, 2020](#) 1 min read

Working along the lines of the city's vision for an environment friendly and resilient community that's clean and litter-free, Manila's Department of Public Services (DPS) maintains rehabilitation and beautification efforts of Manila Bay.

Clockwork clean-up drive is being undertaken by the DPS in partnership with the DENR and other government agencies like the MMDA on Manila Bay which recently underwent a rather controversial facelift after the DENR used crushed dolomite rocks.

**JonJon Reyes / Benjamin Cuaresma**



## Why Allow Chinese State Corporations To Be Part Owners Of Vital Phl Infrastructures, Industries?

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto is questioning the Chinese state corporations' significant shares in energy, telecommunications, airports and other industries in the country.

Paolo Romero  
Sunday, October 4, 2020



Photo taken by The Philippine STAR's Miguel de Guzman on Sept. 6, 2020 shows a portion of Manila Bay that was converted into a controversial white beach by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto has raised alarm over the possible threats to national security posed by some China-backed reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

Recto says there are valid security concerns over the projects – the proposed Sangley Point International Airport and several reclamation undertakings in Manila Bay that are near the Philippine Navy's base and headquarters – especially since the contractors include the state-owned China Communications Construction Co. (CCCC).

The CCCC is one of the firms involved in the construction of the militarized artificial islands in the West Philippine Sea, and among those [blacklisted by the United States](#) in August for involvement in the reclamation in the disputed waters, as well as by the World Bank over corruption issues.

Recto noted reports that the reclamation project would block government vessels' access to the Navy headquarters located along Roxas Boulevard in Manila, while the proposed airport seeks to drive out the naval base at Sangley Point.

“They are legitimate concerns. We should not reward Chinese state corporations who are responsible for reclaiming and constructing military facilities in the Spratly islands to do business in the Philippines by reclaiming Manila Bay and creating an airport in Sangley Point, driving away our Philippine Navy from guarding Manila Bay,” Recto said recently. “This is clearly a national security concern.”

Recto warned that CCCC and other Chinese backers would have 40 percent ownership of the proposed airport.





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## Why Allow Chinese State Corporations To Be Part Owners Of Vital Phl Infrastructures, Industries?

“Why should we allow Chinese state corporations to own significant shares in energy, telecommunications and airports, and other industries?” he asked.

China’s State Grid Corp. has a 40 percent stake in the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), a private consortium that has operated the country’s power lines since 2009. Concerns over potential Chinese interference in the Philippine energy system have dogged the arrangement since it was forged a decade ago.

In November last year, lawmakers called for an urgent review of the arrangement after a report claimed that only Chinese engineers had access to key elements of the system, and that power could in theory be deactivated remotely on Beijing's orders. The NGCP has allayed such concerns.

In August, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to approve on third and final reading a measure that would pave the way for a 25-year legislative franchise for a third telecommunications firm owned by Dennis Uy, a close friend of President Duterte.

## On a Philippine island, a tricky balancing act between development and water

by [Francesca Edralin](#) on 5 October 2020

- *Philippine authorities are preparing to lift the protected wilderness area status of the Bantayan island group in the central Philippines.*
- *The status, imposed in 1981, limits the construction of buildings and infrastructure on the main island of Bantayan and 22 nearby islets, and prohibits residents from owning titles to the land.*
- *A long-running campaign by residents and business owners to have the protected status lifted to allow for development has culminated with authorities agreeing to open up the coastal areas for new development while retaining a core protected area inland of 540 hectares (1,334 acres).*
- *While most residents have welcomed the move, some say the area under protection should be expanded to safeguard the island group's sole source of fresh water — the rain-fed aquifer on Bantayan — from contamination, saltwater intrusion, and blockage.*

When rain falls on Bantayan Island, the supply of fresh water rises. If the rains fail, it becomes scarcer. The more than 120,000 residents of Bantayan and 22 nearby islets in Cebu province, in the central Philippines, get all their fresh water from an aquifer that's replenished by rainfall.

Demand for the precious resource in this expanse of clear blue marine waters has surged with the COVID-19 pandemic, as residents look to keep infection at bay through frequent handwashing and cleaning.

“There has been a very significant increase in water consumption during these two months,” says Junald Ango, a community organizer in Bantayan.

But there are concerns that this vital freshwater supply may come under even greater pressure from a move to lift the protected area status of the islands. Such a move would inevitably expand development and construction activities, Ango says, which, if not properly regulated, could cause the collapse of Bantayan's freshwater system.



While Bantayan Island is surrounded by pristine blue marine waters, the only usable water on the island comes from rainfall. Image courtesy of Lindo S. Gigante.

## On a Philippine island, a tricky balancing act between development and water

### Protected status

In 1981, then-President Ferdinand Marcos declared Bantayan Island and its surrounding islets—an area of pristine beaches, mangroves, and coral reefs—a protected wilderness area. The declaration, however, was vague about exactly which of the islands and what areas within them fell under this new designation. So the Ministry of Environment (today the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, or DENR), placed all 23 islands under the Bantayan Island Wilderness Area (BIWA).

“Bantayan has so many islands,” says Gal Castro Meñoria, from the Bantayan chapter of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce. “The government [declared] the whole island of Bantayan Island as a wilderness area, but the bill only says an ‘island of Bantayan’ should become a protected area.”

By 1992, the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) had legally reinforced Bantayan’s classification, meaning that only the passage of another law can lift its protected status.

This status would have impacts for decades to come, Meñoria says, including on the main island, which had already been developing residential and shopping areas in the 1980s. Bantayan had a population of 82,363 in 1980, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority; by 2015, its population had grown to 120,447.



Although classified as a wilderness area by the Philippine government in 1981, Bantayan Island has continued to develop over the past several decades. Image courtesy of Lindo S. Gigante.

Because the islands are formally protected, residents can’t own the land or receive titles for it, Meñoria says. So even as they continued to develop the area, they were not legally recognized landowners under Philippine law. Instead, they’ve had to keep paying rent and other fees, and it’s this restriction that pushed business owners and others to start calling for the lifting of the islands’ protected status in the early 2000s.

“As long as this [region] is a wilderness area, we will never have land titles,” Meñoria says. “We need land titles, or we cannot move ahead [with development].”

The issue became particularly pronounced in 2013, after Typhoon Haiyan hacked through the Philippines, causing severe damage in Bantayan. [Thirty percent](#) of residents lost their homes, and

## On a Philippine island, a tricky balancing act between development and water

90% of the homes left standing had lost their roofs. Bantayan's protected area status hampered reconstruction efforts.

The following year, in 2014, the DENR conducted a series of [surveys](#) on the island to come up with a management plan that would allow it to identify areas where construction of housing and other facilities for Haiyan's survivors could go ahead.

The decades of advocacy finally led to the passage of a House bill in October 2019 to lift the Bantayan island group's protected status, but it still requires Senate approval. This year, the DENR is close to approving the reclassification, which will significantly shrink the area under protection. Those areas will be limited to the 20-meter (66-foot) easement zones on all 23 islands, an elevated zone on the main island spanning 540 hectares (1,334 acres), and 12 full islets. This leaves about 7 percent of the main island protected, though when the easement zone is subtracted (because this is area that would be protected regardless), the true protected area comes out at just 4.7 percent.

While many residents have welcomed this long-anticipated opportunity to finally obtain land titles, others are concerned about its impact on the main island's natural resources, particularly the water supply.

"The most important issue here ... is the sustainability of our water resources," Ango says. "Commercial development will reduce the water absorption capacity of the island. And the sole water supply is already in a precarious condition, if not yet on the verge of crisis."

### Threat of contamination

Under the DENR's proposal, Ango says, it's inevitable that development will sweep through the main island, whose teal waters and fine sand have already attracted a steady flow of tourists.

He says this expansion of the tourism industry will put the island's resources and one-of-a-kind ecosystems at even graver danger, including by blocking rainwater from reaching the aquifer. That's because while the new proposal does retain some protected areas on the island, it doesn't cover the waterways and wetlands that nourish the aquifer.



One of the inland wetlands in Barangay Kangkaibe, Bantayan, that's flooded by rainwater for more than half of the year. Aton Tubig is requesting that these wetlands are included in the revised protected area. Image by courtesy of Junald Ango.



## On a Philippine island, a tricky balancing act between development and water

In fact, Ango says, the DENR's proposal allows development across most of the land that sits above the water table, which poses the additional threat of water contamination.

Contamination of Bantayan's freshwater supply has been an ongoing problem for the past 25 years. In 1996, researchers conducting a water study found that human waste and poultry farms had contaminated several of the island's shallow wells. They also recorded instances of saltwater intrusion, especially in suburban areas, which subsequent studies have since corroborated. These problems will only worsen as development ramps up, the 1996 study said.

"Any damage to our water supply, especially if it's saltwater intrusion, will be irreversible," Ango says.

### 'Not just a business opportunity'

While the COVID-19 pandemic has stalled congressional deliberations on the lifting of Bantayan's protection status, Ango has organized a campaign to educate residents and to prompt the DENR to include the water table under its protection mantle.

He says 540 hectares isn't enough to preserve Bantayan's water supply in the long term. The campaign doesn't fully oppose the lifting of protected status, but instead urges the DENR to increase the size of the protected area to as much as 1,500 to 2,000 hectares (about 3,700 to 5,000 acres) to include all the land that sits above the island's water table.

"What we are proposing will actually not directly affect businesses, because we want to expand the protected area in Bantayan on land that is not infrastructurally feasible to build on," Ango says. "Commercial development will actually become more sustainable if you care for the environment, because it supplies your water needs."

Proponents of the reclassification largely agree. Meñoria, one of the key advocates for lifting the protected status, says he understands the importance of safeguarding the island's water supply.

"If you are for the environment, for sustainability, for longevity — then there is no reason not to support the increasing of the land area [under protection]," he says.

The pandemic pause has given the DENR more time to consider conducting a water study, which Ango says would "more accurately calculate the necessary land area to protect Bantayan's water table."

The delay could also give local authorities time to study programs on proper waste management, a common problem in tourist areas across the Philippines.

"Bantayan is not just a business opportunity," Ango says. "Bantayan is also our home, so let's care for it."

### Citation:

Angus Jr, P. M., & Jaque, D. T. (1970). Bantayan Island water resources study. WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment, 18.



## Calinawan Cave conservation plan under way

Published October 5, 2020, 6:53 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A management plan is under way for the conservation of a cave in Tanay, Rizal which is a favorite television and film location and tourist attraction to prevent further damage on the stalactite and stalagmite formations inside.

In a social media post by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Calinawan Cave's flora and fauna inside and outside the cave have received immense damage, particularly the stalactite and stalagmite formation on its main chamber.



(PENRO RIZAL FACEBOOK / MANILA BULLETIN)

It further cited that continued noise and motion could further create destruction to its natural ecology and lead to transfer of habitats for bats and other life forms inside the cave.

To ensure sustainability and protection against exploitation, the Rizal DENR together with the local government of Tanay and Calinawan Cave stakeholders conducted a three day cave assessment and management planning last Sept. 23 to 25.

The Regional Cave Assessment Team (RCAT) headed by Reginald Forcadilla conducted cave profiling activities to assess and map the Calinawan Cave in Sitio Rawang, Barangay Tandang Kutyo.

Forcadilla said that based on their initial findings, Calinawan Cave will be classified as Class II, but some chambers will be closed to public for conservation area and safety purposes.

A cave is classified based on the proper use and management under Republic Act (RA) 9072 or the National Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act.

Caves classified under Class II have sensitive geologic values or high-quality ecosystems, as well as portions with hazardous conditions.

These caves may be closed seasonally or permanently, or may be open only to experienced cavers or guided educational tours.



## Calinawan Cave conservation plan under way

A workshop was also facilitated to formulate a five-year management plan to conserve the biodiversity inside and outside the cave, as well as to promote the area as prime eco-tourism destination and develop sustainable behavior and attitude among the communities towards forest protection and biodiversity conservation and development.

Caves are considered unique, natural and non-renewable resources with important scientific, economic, educational, cultural, historical, and aesthetic values. They are home to specialized mineral formations with unique and diverse flora and fauna.

As mandated by law, the DENR is tasked to formulate, develop, and implement a national program for the management, protection, and conservation of caves and cave resources, with the cave coordinating agencies like the National Museum, National Historical Institute, Department of Tourism, and local government units concerned.

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## DENR-9 seizes wild plants sold online in Zambo Norte town

By Teofilo Garcia, Jr. October 5, 2020, 8:32 pm



**WILD PLANT.** The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 9 strengthens surveillance and monitoring against the sale of wild flora as online selling of plants flourished amid the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. DENR-9 personnel seize on Saturday (Oct. 3, 2020) 15 pitcher plants. *(Photo courtesy of DENR-9)*

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – An official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 9 (DENR-9) on Monday said the agency has strengthened surveillance and monitoring against the sale of wild flora in the region.

This came following observations that the online sale of plants or through social media has flourished amid the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic, said Rosevirico Tan, DENR-9 information officer.

Tan said they have noticed some online traders selling wild flora, the collection of which is strictly prohibited, aside from homegrown ornamental plants.

Personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte, have seized 15 pitcher plants (*Nepenthes ventricosa* Blanco) last Saturday in Barangay Malintubonan.

Tan said that a post on social media led to the retrieval of pitcher plants by personnel from the Conservation and Development Section and Monitoring and Enforcement Section of CENRO-Liloy headed by Dionisio Rago.

The pitcher plant is listed as "Category B, Endangered" per DENR Administrative Order No. 2017-11 dated May 2, 2017.

Tan said the collection and trade of pitcher plants are prohibited under Republic Act 9147 otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

An investigation is underway, he said, to ascertain who collected the pitcher plant from the wild as no one claim ownership when the CENRO-Liloy personnel arrived at the display area and retrieved the plants.

Earlier, DENR Regional Director Crisanta Marlen Rodriguez warned the public against the collection of wild flora from the forest, especially those considered as threatened species, without the necessary permit from DENR. *(PNA)*





## NWRB WATER FACTS AT TRIVIA PARA SA MAGULANG AT GURO



October 6, 2020 @ 12:20 AM 5 hours ago

NOONG ika-5 ng Oktubre 2020 , unang Sabado ng buwang ito, ang programang KAPELUSUGAN sa Radio Veritas 846 AM Station/Radio Veritas 846.ph ay nakibahagi sa mahalagang pagdiriwang ng National Teacher's Day, sumasaludo tayong lahat sa ating tinatayang higit-kumulang one point one million teachers sa buong bansa at sa antas ng edukasyon.

Pinahirapan man ng COVID-19 pandemic ang sistema ng edukasyon sa bansa, kakayanin ng mga estudyante at mga magulang, at nating lahat, matuloy lang ang pag-aaral.

Habang ang karamihan ng mga aktibidad, kabilang ang pagbubukas ng klase, ay ginagawa sa bahay, inilalaan ng National Water Resources Board ang ika-limang sesyon ng Virtual Education Campaign para sa mga magulang at guro na ang pangunahing tagapagturo ng pangunahing edukasyon sa hamon ng pandemya na kinahaaharap ng lahat.

Ang pangunahing layunin ng VEC na ito ay matulungan sila sa pagtuturo sa kanilang mga anak o mag-aaral na may edad na 6-10 taong gulang tungkol sa mahahalagang kaalaman na dapat malaman ukol sa tubig at mga bagay-bagay na bilang bahagi ng kanilang paksa sa Agham.

Sa panahon ng session, itutuon ng NWRB na bigyang- pansin ang kahalagahan ng tubig lalo na sa panahon ng pandemikong ito.

Inaanyayahan namin ang lahat na sumali sa family-friendly session sa darating na Oktubre 13, 2020, magsisimula ng 10:00 ng umaga hanggang 12: 00 ng tanghali sa pamamagitan ng Google Meet. Libreng print out na materyales at learning resources suggestions ay ibibigay sa mismong araw.

Hali na Sumali na! 100 mga kalahok ang maaaring tanggapin ng NWRB, FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS! Magkita-kita sa Oktubre 13! Sa mga nais magparehistro, i-click ang link na ito, <https://forms.gle/2aCBm7pT1DjnNc9L8>



## Mediamen sa Nueva Ecija, sumabak sa tree planting sa Sierra Madre

[Christian Ryan Sta. Ana](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - October 5, 2020 - 12:00am

NUEVA ECIJA, Philippines — Kasabay ng ika-65 anibersaryo ng pagkakatatag ng kanilang organisasyon, nagsagawa ng tree planting activity ang mga opisyal at miyembro ng Nueva Ecija Press Club, Inc. (NEPCI) sa paanan ng bundok ng Sierra Madre.

Ayon kay Agapito Linsangan, radio broadcaster ng provincial radio station na DwNE at pangulo ng NEPCI, kaysa mag-party pinili ng kanyang grupo na magtanim ng 380 seedlings ng punong kahoy at fruit-bearing trees sa paanan ng bundok Sierra Madre sa bahagi ng water shed ng Segum creek sa Barangay Bagting sa bayan ng Gabaldon, noong Miyerkules.

Pinangunahan ni Linsangan at mga miyembro ng kanilang media organization ang pagtanim ng mga seedlings ng Narra, Duhat, Marang at iba pang namumungang punongkahoy na ipinagkaloob ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Gabaldon Mayor Jobby Emata na nakiisa sa tree planting at Brgy. Bagting Chairman Lacandoda.

“Walang hanggan ang pasasalamat natin sa NEPCI dahil imbes na magparty-party ay pinili nila ang isang noble cause na makatulong sa inang kalikasan. Kahit na nasa gitna tayo ng COVID-19 pandemic ay nagpadama sila ng pagmamahal sa bayan,” pahayag ni Mayor Emata.

Ang NEPCI ay isa sa pinakamatatandang organisasyon ng mga mamamahayag sa Pilipinas na madalas magsagawa ng tree planting at medical and dental missions tuwing sasapit ang anibersaryo ng pagkakatatag nito.

## MWSS targets approval for two Laguna de Bay water supply projects by year's end

October 5, 2020 | 7:44 pm



PHILSTAR

THE regulatory office of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said it hopes to approve by the end of the year Manila Water Co., Inc.'s East Bay Water Supply Project and AMA Water Corp.'s AMA Bulk Water Supply Project.

In a virtual public consultation Monday, MWSS Chief Regulator Patrick Lester N. Ty said the two proposed water supply projects for Metro Manila can meet the timetable if tariff rate adjustments are acceptable to users.

"If the public understands that they need to have adjustments in tariff rates in order to achieve water security, it is possible that the projects can be approved within the year," Mr. Ty said.

The increase in water rates for the P3-billion AMA Bulk Water Supply Project is estimated to translate to a P1.11 per cubic meter increase, while the P15-billion Manila Water East Bay Water Supply Project will tack on an additional P1.19 per cubic meter to water bills.

According to Mr. Ty, the East Bay Water Supply Project is estimated to add 250 million liters of water per day while the AMA Bulk Water Supply Project will provide 50 million liters daily, both sourced from Laguna de Bay.

He added that the original timeline for the public consultation for both projects early 2020, but had to be put on hold due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

"We were ready to do a public consultation for the two projects last March. As early as then, projections showed that there would be a water supply crunch by 2021 and 2022," Mr. Ty said.

Mr. Ty said that despite tightening supply until a new water source is located, it will not be as bad as the supply shortages that happened in 2019.

"The worst-case scenario is that there will be a water supply interruption, but it would not last up to 24 hours," Mr. Ty said.

"We need to look for alternative water sources and these two projects are some of the... most feasible and cheapest that we can find," he added. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**



## MMDA spends P3 B a year for garbage disposal



(MANILA BULLETIN)

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has recorded a total P3 billion annual expenditure for solid waste management in Metro Manila.

This was bared by Zamboanga del Norte 1st District Rep. Romeo Jalosjos Jr., vice chairperson of the House Committee on Appropriations who defended the proposed budget of MMDA for 2021 before the House plenary.

“Mr. Speaker, ang estimate po natin is P3 billion ang kailangan natin sa solid waste management (Mr. Speaker, our estimate is we need P3 billion for the solid waste management,” he said when asked by Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus “Bong” Suntay on MMDA’s total yearly expense in carrying out its mandate as the lead implementing arm of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Suntay even asked Jalosjos if the MMDA operates any landfill to which the Zamboanga lawmaker replied in the negative.

Jalosjos said it was the MMDA that is paying for the tipping fee, while the hauling fee is being paid by the local government units.

He said only P1.9 billion has been allocated for the solid waste disposal under the proposed General Appropriations Act (GAA) for 2021.

He said such amount “is not enough” to dispose all the solid wastes in the National Capital Region (NCR).

According to Jalosjos, the estimated waste generation in Metro Manila is 60,000 cubic meters per day.

When asked by Caloocan Rep. Erice how much the MMDA is paying for the disposal of waste per cubic meter, Jalosjos said, “more or less P210 per cubic meter.”

“Meaning, kung P210 po, ang binabayad po natin on average of P12.6 million a day? (Meaning, if P210, we pay on the average of P12.6 million a day?,” Erice asked.

Jalosjos then moved to temporarily suspend the deliberations to confer the data with the MMDA.

“I stand corrected, hindi po pala P210, P257 per cubic (meter),” he said.



## CCC on World Habitat Day: Enable sustainable and climate-adaptive systems for housing sector

By Climate Change Commission (CCC) Published on October 5, 2020

MANILA, October 5 -- In observance of the annual World Habitat Day, with this year's theme "Housing For All: A Better Urban Future," the Climate Change Commission (CCC) urged leaders from the public and private sectors to enable sustainable and climate-adaptive systems within the housing sector in order to improve shelter and other human settlement concerns within cities and communities.

Observed every first Monday of October, World Habitat Day focuses on the state of human settlements and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It focuses on improving all levels of partnership between government and relevant stakeholders in successfully implementing policies and methods to ensure adequate and affordable homes for all.

This observance recognizes the role of cities and local governments around the world in eliminating inequalities and poverty levels by providing access to basic amenities like shelter, food, and water for all, especially in this time of pandemic and climate crisis. Even before the pandemic began, however, there was already an estimated 1.8 billion people living in slums and informal settlements, inadequate housing or in homelessness in our cities worldwide, with around three billion people lacking basic handwashing facilities, according to the United Nations.

As cities prioritize COVID-19 response, the threat of typhoons, flooding, extreme heat, and spread of vector-borne diseases due to climate change remains. This risk is particularly worrying for the Philippines where populations and incidence of poverty are high. Adapting to climate change is thus an imperative for cities, home to half of the world's population and where 80% of GDP is produced, according to the Global Commission on Adaptation.

The CCC highlighted ongoing work for the development of science-based climate risk management interventions for five cities under the Building Climate Resilient Urban Plans and Designs (BCRUPD) project with the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, League of Cities of the Philippines, UN Habitat, and other key partner agencies and organizations.

The CCC also committed to foster capacity building and knowledge exchange for green urban development, such as in its existing partnership with the National Housing Authority and the Philippine Green Building Council best practices on sustainable building designs and standards, including renewable energy and energy efficiency, and build a sustainable technical support network for government agencies and relevant stakeholders for low-emission local development strategies.

In this World Habitat Day, let us all support efforts that would enable more sustainable and climate-adaptive cities and communities, to ensure a better life for all in an urbanizing world.  
(CCC)

## Individual action is climate action

Yes, systemic change is our end-goal. But let's not discount the value of individual action in making that possible.



"Mission: Less emission!" Singapore's first climate rally in 2019 saw over 2000 people demanding for more ambitious climate targets from the government. Image: Karen Sim



By [Terese Anne Teoh](#)

Oct. 5, 2020

What is climate action? The answer has taken a sharp turn in the past two years. It has evolved rapidly from a set of eco-friendly, individual-centric behaviours—using less plastic, turning air-conditioners off, taking public transport—to a wider movement that demands for industries to cut down on emissions and decarbonise.

With the general absence of environmental concern among Singaporeans, the environmental movement is now led by activists who conclude that calling out the big polluters is more impactful than advocating for individual actions since households only account for 6 per cent of carbon emissions in Singapore.

The individual only makes a miniscule impact with simple lifestyle changes like opting for one less straw. Claims in advertisements that you can 'save the earth' with small steps are clearly lies—they oversimplify solutions to the planetary breakdown.

Many conclude that this constant oversimplification is the reason why we have failed to alert people to the scale of the environmental crisis we are currently facing, why many Singaporeans continue to enjoy life in excess, or pick convenience over environment. Oversimplification is the reason why we have failed to increase recycling rates, see widespread aversion to fast fashion, or hear consumers demand products that are free from unsustainable palm oil.

"Don't advocate for BYO (bring-your-own) and recycling," you'll see scribbled over social media posts. "They divert our attention from bigger issues like climate change and biodiversity loss."



## Individual action is climate action

“Instead, we should be advocating for legislation changes to our biggest polluters, the industries!” Indeed, a single policy to restrict emissions from industries has greater impact than individuals collectively using less straws.

But on closer scrutiny, stricter legislation is not enough. Lacking two critical components, policies alone will never get us where we need to be. We need more individuals to awaken to the reality of our many crises today, and we need to empower everyone with an earnest desire to change this reality.

Environmental issues are human rights issues

So why do we still fail to see a change in mindset today? There was a fundamental flaw with the previous style of advocacy. There had been little effort to integrate environmental and social issues. When we think about environmental disasters, the overt message on the detrimental impacts on Singapore assumes that citizens of the city-state will not care unless it directly affects them.

So we hear: Climate change is causing sea level rise in Singapore; climate change is causing a few degrees rise in average temperatures in tropical Singapore; single-use plastics are bad because they are overburdening Semakau landfill.

Amid this false dichotomy, most Singaporeans fail to recognise the human rights crisis unfolding behind the scenes.

They fail to see the stark health inequalities that their consumption habits are driving in developing countries, where people live next to pollution-belching industries and ever-expanding oil wells. They fail to see the degree of pollution that their buy-and-throw lifestyle is generating in neighbouring countries.

Due to the lack of connection between environmental and social issues, overconsumption remains a narrow landfill issue, not a human rights issue. Our call to safeguard the climate only grabs the attention of a small group of nature lovers, instead of everyone.

Some have also said that the focus on plastic pollution is distracting the environmental movement from the more significant issue of climate change, as fossil fuels account for 73 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. The truth of the matter is that climate change and plastic pollution are interconnected.

Framing the issue this way ignores the fact that industries are burning fossil fuels to produce plastics in the first place. In Singapore, we ease our worries with the thought that plastic waste is well-managed here, but this neglects the pollutive and hazardous ways that plastic is produced. Globally, over [600 million indigenous and local people](#) are negatively affected by oil wells.



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## Individual action is climate action

The connection between environmental and social issues is an unsettling realisation, so most people brush it aside as just another environmentalist's hysteria or blame it on the incompetence of governments abroad.

“Stop exaggerating the problem and stepping on my rights. This is their problem, I have nothing to do with it,” these are the messages that I receive when I try to explain the importance of changing our current mindsets and lifestyles.

From my personal experience, two years of advocating to my own family has not been enough. Most people are only willing to take action within their comfort zone, and are unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary for moving our societies away from excessive consumption and extraction.

We must keep sharing the uncomfortable facts. It will take a long time for our society to accept that a lifestyle of luxury—buy-and-throwaway, using as much electricity as one likes or driving short distances—are highly unsustainable, even unjust.

Genuine concern and a heightened sensitivity to the impacts of our actions will drive change. With this knowledge, more people will willingly make sacrifices, knowing that their actions count towards the greater good. The change in mindset will naturally lead to the implementation of effective environmental policies.

### Moving beyond carbon emissions

Although climate change is the result of man-made greenhouse gas emissions, measuring successful climate action by this metric alone sends the message that outcomes are what matters most.

Too many today view climate action with a single-minded lens, focusing on cutting emissions as the sole end-goal. Although that is definitely a key component to solving the climate crisis, using emissions levels as a benchmark of successful climate action risks perpetuating the misconception that environmental issues are just standalone problems of nature. The social injustices that are intertwined with environmental problems take a backseat.

Surely, there is another goal that is far more important to work towards. It is the development of a conscious mind, an acute sensitivity towards the well-being of communities impacted by a careless lifestyle, and a recognition that we are all interconnected in this ecosystem. Once more people realise that beneath the environmental damage is a profound human rights crisis, they will be moved to join the climate movement.

In this new reality, empathy flourishes and the true human spirit emerges. Other-centredness becomes our core guiding principle and our lifestyles are transformed. People lead conscious lifestyles to protect the rights of vulnerable communities who they may never meet. Active support for more ambitious environmental policies becomes second nature.





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## Individual action is climate action

Never underestimate individual action

What if encouraging individual action leads to the misconception that it is enough to save the earth and stop climate change? There is no need to worry that one movement will overshadow another. Awakening to our many planetary crises may stem from the smallest actions.

It could start with using less plastic, which may lead to the individual thinking and wanting to know more about the topic. In this process, they inevitably learn about the oil industry, air pollution and health inequalities, and the exploitation of vulnerable communities. Then they may join citizen action groups and find new communities. Finally, the individual decides to take collective action.

Individual action will shape the way we think about our lifestyle, other peoples' lifestyles, world inequality, and climate injustice. And that is when we truly understand that we are in a climate emergency.

All of us live in different kinds of environments, have different personalities and personal histories. Altogether, it shapes our different understandings of environmental damage depending on what strikes our hearts first.

It could be the excessive styrofoam containers, the litter you encounter at a cleanup activity, or coral bleaching. Where you start does not matter, because as the links between environmental and social issues grow stronger, we know we are moving towards the same goal. Any way of pulling anyone into environmentalism needs to be encouraged.

I see danger when climate activists perpetuate the narrative that individual action does not make a difference; that the impact at the individual level is nothing compared to that at the industrial or government level.

Every action at all levels—individual, government, and corporations—significantly matters, and we must not fall into the trap of pouring all our energies into advocating for a single course of action.

For systemic change, let us continue to advocate for individual action alongside government action. Let us urge for BYO, ditching private transport and setting the air-conditioners to deep sleep mode. When they ask why, tell them how oil extraction, vehicular emissions and hydrofluorocarbons are driving inequality, poverty and the climate crisis today.

## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

Joe Brock, Reuters

Posted at Oct 06 2020 02:37 AM



A man sorts through bags of garbage at a disposal facility in Payatas, Quezon City, Philippines, July 21, 2020. *Eloisa Lopez, Reuters/File*

### COVID-19 hit plastic recycling

The coronavirus pandemic has sparked a rush for plastic.

From Wuhan to New York, demand for face shields, gloves, takeaway food containers and bubble wrap for online shopping has surged. Since most of that cannot be recycled, so has the waste.

But there is another consequence. The pandemic has intensified a price war between recycled and new plastic, made by the oil industry. It's a war recyclers worldwide are losing, price data and interviews with more than two dozen businesses across five continents show.

"I really see a lot of people struggling," Steve Wong, CEO of Hong-Kong-based Fukutomi Recycling and chairman of the China Scrap Plastics Association told Reuters in an interview. "They don't see a light at the end of the tunnel."

The reason: Nearly every piece of plastic begins life as a fossil fuel. The economic slowdown has punctured demand for oil. In turn, that has cut the price of new plastic.

Already since 1950, the world has created 6.3 billion tons of plastic waste, 91 percent of which has never been recycled, according to a 2017 study published in the journal *Science*. Most is hard to recycle, and many recyclers have long depended on government support. New plastic, known to the industry as "virgin" material, can be half the price of the most common recycled plastic.

Since COVID-19, even drinks bottles made of recycled plastic – the most commonly recycled plastic item – have become less viable. The recycled plastic to make them is 83 percent to 93 percent more expensive than new bottle-grade plastic, according to market analysts at the Independent Commodity Intelligence Services (ICIS).

The pandemic hit as politicians in many countries promised to wage war on waste from single-use plastics. China, which used to import more than half the world's traded plastic waste, banned imports of most of it in 2018. The European Union plans to ban many single-use plastic items from 2021. The US Senate is considering a ban on single-use plastic and may introduce legal recycling targets.



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

Plastic, most of which does not decompose, is a significant driver of climate change.

The manufacture of four plastic bottles alone releases the equivalent greenhouse gas emissions of driving one mile in a car, according to the World Economic Forum, based on a study by the drinks industry. The United States burns six times more plastic than it recycles, according to research in April 2019 by Jan Dell, a chemical engineer and former vice chair of the US Federal climate committee.

But the coronavirus has accentuated a trend to create more, not less, plastic trash.

The oil and gas industry plans to spend around \$400 billion over the next five years on plants to make raw materials for virgin plastic, according to a study in September by Carbon Tracker, an energy think tank.

This is because, as a growing fleet of electric vehicles and improved engine efficiency reduce fuel demand, the industry hopes rising demand for new plastic can assure future growth in demand for oil and gas. It is counting on soaring use of plastic-based consumer goods by millions of new middle-class consumers in Asia and elsewhere.

"Over the next few decades, population and income growth are expected to create more demand for plastics, which help support safety, convenience and improved living standards," ExxonMobil spokeswoman Sarah Nordin told Reuters.

Most companies say they share concerns about plastic waste and are supporting efforts to reduce it. However, their investments in these efforts are a fraction of those going into making new plastic, Reuters found.

Reuters surveyed 12 of the largest oil and chemicals firms globally – BASF, Chevron, Dow, Exxon, Formosa Plastics, INEOS, LG Chem, LyondellBasell, Mitsubishi Chemical, SABIC, Shell and Sinopec. Only a handful gave details of how much they are investing in waste reduction. Three declined to comment in detail or did not respond.

Most said they channel their efforts through a group called the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, which is also backed by consumer goods companies, and which has pledged \$1.5 billion over the next five years on that effort. Its 47 members, most of whom are in the plastics industry, had combined annual revenue of almost \$2.5 trillion last year, according to a Reuters tally of company results.

In total, commitments by the Alliance and the companies surveyed amounted to less than \$2 billion over five years, or \$400 million a year, the Reuters survey found. That's a fraction of their sales.

Plans to invest so heavily in new plastic are "quite a concerning move," said Lisa Beauvilain, Head of Sustainability at Impax Asset Management, a fund with \$18.5 billion under management.



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

"Countries with often undeveloped waste management and recycling infrastructure will be ill-equipped to handle even larger volumes of plastic waste," she said. "We are literally drowning in plastics."

Since the coronavirus struck, recyclers worldwide told Reuters, their businesses have shrunk, by more than 20 percent in Europe, by 50 percent in parts of Asia and as much as 60 percent for some firms in the United States.

Greg Janson, whose St. Louis, Missouri, recycling company QRS has been in business for 46 years, says his position would have been unimaginable a decade ago: The United States has become one of the cheapest places to make virgin plastic, so more is coming onto the market.

"The pandemic exacerbated this tsunami," he said.

The oil and chemicals companies that Reuters surveyed said plastic can be part of the solution to global challenges related to a growing population. Six said they were also developing new technologies to reuse waste plastic.

Some said other packaging products can cause more emissions than plastics; because plastic is light, it is indispensable for the world's consumers and can help reduce emissions. A few called on governments to improve waste management infrastructure.

"Higher production capacities do not necessarily mean more plastic waste pollution," said a spokesman at BASF SE of Germany, the world's biggest chemicals producer, adding that it has been innovating for many years in packaging materials to reduce the resources required.

The new plastic wave is breaking on shores across the globe.

### MAKE PLASTIC

Richard Pontillas, 33, runs a family-owned "sari-sari" or "sundries" store in Quezon City, the most populous metropolis in the Philippines. The liquid goods he sells used to be packaged in glass. Many customers, in fact, brought in their own bottles to be refilled.

Merchants like him are among key targets for the plastic industry, looking to extend a trend established after 1907, when Belgian-American chemist Leo Baekeland invented Bakelite. Since World War Two, mass-produced plastic has fuelled economic growth and spawned a new era of consumerism and convenience packaging.

"Many years ago ... we relied on goods repackaged in bottles and plastic bags," said Pontillas, whose store sells rice, condiments and sachets of coffee, chocolate drink and seasonings.

Today, thousands of small-scale vendors in the developing world stock daily goods in plastic pouches, or sachets, which hang in strips from the roofs of roadside shacks and cost a few cents a go.

Already, 164 million such sachets are used every day in the Philippines, according to the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, an NGO. That's nearly 60 billion a year.



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

Consumer goods firms including Nestle and P&G say they are working hard to make their packaging either recyclable or reusable. For example, P&G said it has a project in schools in the Manila region which aims to collect one million sachets for "upcycling."

But sachets are very difficult to recycle. They are just one form of pollution that the pandemic is adding to, clogging drains, polluting water, suffocating marine life and attracting rodents and disease-carrying insects.

So are face masks, which are made partly from plastic.

In March, China used 116 million of them – 12 times more than in February, official data show.

Total production of masks in China is expected to exceed 100 billion in 2020, according to a report by Chinese consultancy iiMedia Research. The United States generated an entire year's worth of medical waste in two months at the height of the pandemic, according to another consultancy, Frost & Sullivan.

Even as the waste mounts, much is at stake for the oil industry.

Exxon forecasts that demand for petrochemicals will rise by 4 percent a year over the next few decades, the company said in an investor presentation in March.

And oil's share of energy for transport will fall from more than 90 percent in 2018 to just under 80 percent or as low as 20 percent by 2050, BP Plc said in its annual market report in September.

Oil companies worry that environmental concerns may blunt petrochemical growth.

The UN said last year that 127 countries have adopted bans or other laws to manage plastic bags. BP's chief economist Spencer Dale said in 2018 that global plastic bans could result in 2 million barrels per day of lower oil demand growth by 2040 – around 2 percent of current daily demand. The company declined further comment.

### USE PLASTIC

This year alone, Exxon, Royal Dutch Shell Plc and BASF have announced petrochemical plant investments in China worth a combined \$25 billion, tapping into rising demand for consumer goods in the world's most populous country.

An additional 176 new petrochemical plants are planned in the next five years, of which nearly 80 percent will be in Asia, energy consultancy Wood Mackenzie says.

In the United States since 2010, energy companies have invested more than \$200 billion in 333 plastic and other chemical projects, according to the American Chemistry Council (ACC), an industry body.

Those investments have come as the US industry sought to capitalize on a sudden abundance of cheap natural gas released by the shale revolution.



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

The industry says disposable plastics have saved lives.

"Single-use plastics have been the difference between life and death during this pandemic," Tony Radoszewski, president and CEO of the Plastic Industry Association (PLASTICS), the industry's lobbying group in the United States, told Reuters. Bags for intravenous solutions and ventilators require single-use plastics, he said.

"Hospital gowns, gloves and masks are made from safe, sanitary plastic."

In March, PLASTICS wrote to the US Department of Health and Human Services, calling for a rollback of plastic bag bans on health grounds. It said plastic bags are safer because germs live on reusable bags and other substances.

Researchers led by the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a US government agency, found later that month that the coronavirus was still active on plastic after 72 hours, compared with up to 24 hours on cardboard and copper.

The industry's letter was part of a long-standing campaign for single-use material.

The ACC's managing director for plastics, Keith Christman, said the chemicals lobby is opposed to plastic bans because it believes consumers would switch to using other disposable materials like glass and paper, rather than reusing bags and bottles.

"The challenge comes when you ban plastic but the alternative might not be a reusable product ... so it really wouldn't accomplish much," Christman said.

Plastic makes up 80 percent of marine debris, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, a global alliance backed by governments, NGOs and companies including Shell, which is also a member of the ACC.

Plastic pollution has been shown to be deadly to turtles, whales and baby seals and releases chemicals that we inhale, ingest or touch that cause a wide range of harms including hormonal disruption and cancer, the United Nations says.

### RECYCLE?

Plastic recyclers have faced new problems in the pandemic.

Demand for recycled material from packaging businesses fell by 20 percent to 30 percent in Europe in the second quarter compared with the previous year, ICIS says.

At the same time, people who stayed at home created more recycling waste, said Sandra Castro, CEO of Extruplas, a Portuguese recycling firm which transforms recycled plastics into outdoor furniture.

"There are many recycling companies that may not be able to cope," she said. "We need the industry to be able to provide a solution to the waste we produce."



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

In the United States, QRS's Janson said that for two months after the pandemic lockdowns, his orders were down 60 percent and he dropped his prices by 15 percent .

And the pandemic has added to costs for big consumer companies that use recycled plastic.

The Coca-Cola Co told Reuters in September it missed a target to get recycled plastic into half its UK packaging by early 2020 due to COVID-19 delays. The company said it hopes now to meet that by November.

Coca-Cola, Nestle and PepsiCo have been the world's top three plastic polluters for two years running, according to a yearly brand audit by Break Free From Plastic, an NGO.

These companies have for decades made voluntary goals to increase recycled plastic in their products. They have largely failed to meet them. Coke and Nestle said it can be hard to get the plastic they need from recycled sources.

"We often pay more for recycled plastic than we would if we purchased virgin plastic," a Nestle spokesperson said, adding that investment in recycled material was a company priority.

Asked how much they were investing in recycling and waste cleanup programmes, the three companies named initiatives totalling \$215 million over a seven-year period.

At current investment levels in recycling, brands will not meet their targets, analysts at ICIS and Wood Mackenzie say.

### TOSS

Even if existing recycling pledges are met, the plastic going into the oceans is on course to rise from 11 million tons now to 29 million by 2040, according to a study published in June by Pew Trusts, an independent public interest group.

Cumulatively, this would reach 600 million tons – the weight of 3 million blue whales.

In response to mounting public concerns, the Alliance to End Plastic Waste says it will partner existing small-scale NGOs that clean up waste in developing countries.

One venture, which helps women earn money from selling plastic scrap in Ghana, says it has successfully diverted 35 tons of plastic from becoming litter since March 2017.

That's less than 0.01 percent of the annual plastic waste generated in Ghana, or 2 percent of the plastic waste that the United States exported to Ghana last year, according to World Bank and US trade data.

"We do realize change won't happen overnight," said Alliance president and CEO Jacob Duer. "What is important for us is that our projects are not seen as the end, but the beginning."



## Plastic pandemic: COVID-19 trashed the recycling dream

In the Philippines, Vietnam and India, as much as 80 percent of the recycling industry was not operating during the height of the pandemic. And there was a 50 percent drop in demand for recycled plastic on average across South and Southeast Asia, according to Circulate Capital, a Singapore-based investor in Asian recycling operations.

"The combination of the impact of COVID-19 and low oil prices is like a double whammy" for plastic recycling, said Circulate's CEO, Rob Kaplan.

"We're seeing massive disruption."



## Kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa 324,762 na, nadagdagan ng 2,291

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

- October 5, 2020 - 3:39pm



Nakapila sa platform ang mga komyuter na ito para makapasok sa MRT-3 sa gitna ng COVID-19 pandemic, ika-14 ng Setyembre, 2020

The STAR/Michael Varcas, File

MANILA, Philippines — Sa unang araw ng pagbabalik-eskwela sa basic at secondary education, muli na namang nadagdagan ang bilang ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infections sa bansa, pagbabahagi ng Department of Health (DOH) sa isang pahayag, Lunes.

Nadagdagan pa ng 2,291 ang kumpirmadong nadali ng virus sa Pilipinas, dahilan para umabot na ito sa 324,762 ngayong araw.

'Yan ay matapos umabot sa halos 3.7 milyong katao na ang nasusuri ng mga COVID-19 facilities sa bansa. Gayunpaman, nasa 17 laboratoryo pa rin ang hindi nakakapagsumite ng kani-kanilang resulta sa DOH ngayong araw — dahilan para hindi mai-report ang marami pang kaso.

"26 duplicates were removed from the total case count. Of these, 18 were recovered cases," paliwanag ng DOH sa isang statement.

"Moreover, 25 cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified as deaths after final validation."

Batay sa inilabas na datos na kagawaran, magmula sa sumusunod na lugar ang kalakhan sa mga nasabing kaso:

- National Capital Region (825)
- Batangas (140)
- Laguna (128)
- Rizal (114)
- Cavite (102)



## Kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa 324,762 na, nadagdagan ng 2,291

Sa kabila nito, 45,799 lang ang maituturing na aktibong kaso diyan. Ibig sabihin, hindi pa gumagaling o namamatay sa nasabing sakit ang nabanggit.

Binawian naman na ng buhay ang 64 pang panibagong kaso, bagay na nag-aakyat sa total local COVID-19 casualties sa 5,840.

'Di hamak na mas marami pa rin naman ang nagre-recover mula rito. Umabot na kasi ito sa 273,123, mas marami nang 87 kaysa sa mga gumaling kahapon.

Bagama't dumarami pa rin ang COVID-19 cases sa bansa, ibinahagi ng Malacañang ang plano ng gobyernong itaas sa 70% ang public transportation capacity.

"Pinag-iisipan talaga yan ng [Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases]...Ang tanging paraan para maahon sa kahirapan e ang pagbubukas ng ekonomiya," wika ni Roque kanina.

"It's a matter of time bago natin maibalik sa 70% ang public transportation natin."

Bukod pa ryan, sinabi rin ng DOH na pag-aaralan na ng husto ng IATF kung papayagan na rin ang mga senior citizens at menor de edad na lumabas-labas ng bagay kahit na nasa gitna ng COVID-19 pandemic.

Bawal kasi kahit sa mga modified general community quarantine areas (MGCQ), ang pinakamaluwag sa lahat ng lugar sa Pilipinas, ang paglabas-labas ng mga 21-anyos pababa at 60-anyos pataas dahil sa risk ng nakamamatay na sakit.

"Kailangan lang pong i-weigh natin what would be the advantages and the disadvantages," ani Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire sa mga reporters.

"Pag-uusapan sa IATF and then we will be informing everybody."

Pumalo na sa 34.8 milyon ang tinatamaan ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo, ayon sa huling tala ng [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Nasa 1.03 milyon na ang namamatay sa bilang na 'yan.



## IATF backs further reopening of economy

Published October 5, 2020 1:17pm  
By VIRGIL LOPEZ, GMA News

The Philippines' COVID-19 task force has affirmed its support for the gradual reopening of the economy amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a resolution approved on October 2, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) backed the recommendation of the economic development cluster for a further gradual reopening of the economy “in increments proportional to the healthcare capacity of the country.”

The IATF also moved for the continuous improvement of the hospital care capacity, further reopening of public transportation “in such manner that is safe and sufficient,” and maintaining the current community quarantine classifications with the stricter implementation and observance of the health and safety protocols.

“For this purpose, escalation of community quarantine levels shall be reserved as a last resort to address the rising COVID-19 situation in their jurisdiction,” the IATF said.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by 16.5% in the April to June period, its worst on record.

Two straight quarters of contraction brought the economy to a recession for the first time since 1991.

But the economic managers had said the worst is over in the second quarter since the economy was allowed to reopen after months of strict lockdown to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

The Philippines has so far reported 322,497 COVID-19 cases, including 5,776 deaths and 273,079 recoveries. —KBK, GMA News



## Storm expected to enter PAR today

By [Victor Reyes](#)

-October 6, 2020

A TROPICAL depression earlier spotted in extreme northern Luzon intensified into a storm yesterday and is forecast to enter the Philippine area of responsibility tomorrow, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said.

It is expected to exit on the same day, PAGASA also said.

As of 3 p.m yesterday, the tropical storm (international name Chan-hom), was some 1,780 km east of extreme northern Luzon, moving slowly westward and packing maximum sustained winds of 65 kph near the center and with gustiness of up to 80 kph.

It was forecast “to slowly move northwestward until Tuesday before accelerating northwestward on Wednesday towards the northeastern boundary of the Philippine area of responsibility,” PAGASA said.

PAGASA said the tropical storm is not expected to affect the country but sea travel will be “risky” in Batanes, Babuyan Islands, and the northern coast of Ilocos Norte.

PAGASA continues to monitor two low pressure areas. One was some 600 km east of Infanta, Quezon as of 3 p.m. yesterday but is expected to dissipate.

The second one was some 515 km west of Coron, Palawan, also as of 3 p.m yesterday. The LPA is on the way out of the country.

The Visayas and the regions of Bicol, Mimaropa, Zamboanga Peninsula, Bangsamoro, and Soccsksargen will experience cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms due to the LPAs and the southwest monsoon.

Cagayan Valley and Apayao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to the northeasterly surface wind flow.

Metro Manila and the rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms and southwest monsoon.



## Tropical depression to enter PH, 2 LPAs spotted



By [Arlie O. Calalo](#)  
October 5, 2020

TWO low pressure areas (LPAs) inside the Philippine Area of Responsibility are being monitored as a tropical depression hovers over extreme Northern Luzon, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

The first LPA was last spotted 360 kilometers east-northeast of Virac, Catanduanes while the second was 425 km west of Sangley Point, Cavite City, according to weather specialist Aldczar Aurelio.

Aurelio said the tropical cyclone outside PAR was 1,790 km east of extreme Northern Luzon. It will likely enter the country on Wednesday and would be named "Nika."

The tropical depression had maximum sustained winds of 55 km/h near the center and gustiness up to 70 km/h.

It is forecast to intensify into a tropical storm in the next 24 hours and reach typhoon category within the next three days.



## Flood warning issued for Region 4-B, Bicol region



PAGASA logo (MANILA BULLETIN)

Flood advisories were issued for Region 4-B and Bicol on Monday evening as some river systems may overflow and trigger flash floods in low-lying communities in these places.

The general flood advisories issued by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) at 6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 5, will be valid for a 12-hour period.

Two low pressure areas (LPAs), one at 600 kilometers (km) east of Infanta, Quezon, and another one at 515 km west of Coron, Palawan, will bring light to moderate rains and thunderstorms over Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, and Masbate.

“People living near the mountain slopes and in the low-lying areas of the river systems and the local disaster risk reduction and management councils concerned are advised to be alert for possible flash floods,” PAGASA advised.

The southwest monsoon or “habagat” and the LPAs may also bring scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Visayas, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat.

Meanwhile, the northeasterly surface wind flow may bring isolated light rains over Apayao, Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, and Quirino.

Metro Manila and the rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

Due to the possibility of heavy rain showers during severe thunderstorms, PAGASA advised the public to take necessary precautionary measures in case of flooding or landslides.



## Bagyong Nikka binabantayan

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Oct 5, 2020

METRO



Isang bagyo sa labas ng Philippine area of responsibility o PAR ang binabantayan ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Kaugnay nito ay tatlong weather system ang umiiral ngayon na nagdudulot ng pag-uulan sa malaking bahagi ng bansa.

Ayon pa sa Pagasa maliban sa aktibong hanging habagat ay dalawang low pressure areas (LPAs) ang nasa loob ngayon ng PAR.

Ang buntot umano ng LPA na hinahatak pa ng habagat ang siyang naghahatid ng katamtaman hanggang malalakas na pag-uulan sa Visayas, Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) Bicol regions, Quezon, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao at Soccsksargen.

Ang unang LPA ay namataan sa Sangley Point sa Cavite habang ang isa ay nasa Virac Cantanduanes. (Tina Mendoza)

Ayon sa Pagasa, taglay nito ang lakas ng hangin na 55kph at bugso na nasa 70kph.

Hindi gumagalaw ang bagyo pero oras na pumasok ito ng PAR ay tatawagin itong bagyong Nikka.

Sa ngayon ay wala pa itong direktang epekto sa bansa.



## EDITORIAL - More reason to be wary

(The Freeman)

- October 6, 2020 - 12:00am



Aside from the pandemic we now have, we will soon be facing another threat from Mother Nature; more rains brought on by the La Niña phenomenon.

According to the state weather bureau, we can expect La Niña to begin anytime either this month or next month. And when that happens the volume of rain usually brought on by our regular rainy season will be exacerbated by the La Niña.

And if that isn't bad enough, we can expect the La Niña to last until March, the experts say.

The recent rains have already caused landslides and flooding in Cebu City. Just the other day landslides were reported in barangays Babag 2 and Sapangdaku, while a flood was reported in Barangay Pulangbato.

It is disasters like these that sometimes necessitate the evacuation of some families, or even entire communities, that have to be housed in the nearest evacuation center, usually the barangay's gym or public school.

And this is why where should be wary. Families or entire communities living close together are a hotbed for possible coronavirus infection.

If a community transmission can happen in a slum area where houses share a dividing wall, imagine what can happen to a large group of people who have to live under one roof.

We only have to remember what happened last July when thousands of stranded individuals were housed at the Rizal Memorial Baseball Stadium in Manila while waiting for rides or trips to their home provinces.

Many of them got infected there and later brought the dreaded virus home, some to places that otherwise didn't have a single infection until they came. Of course, we aren't blaming the people but the situation they were in.





## EDITORIAL - More reason to be wary

While those stranded people were technically not evacuees, their situation was similar; they were forced to live in close quarters, usually with no one or very few people to enforce quarantine safeguards like wearing masks and physical distancing.

And with the La Niña phenomenon expected to bring even more than the normal amount of rain, which causes floods and landslides, we should expect that families or communities have to be evacuated for their own safety.

Precautions must be taken to ensure such evacuation sites are safe and that they have barrier or facilities that encourage physical distancing, as well as marshals, watchers, minders, or any personnel to enforce quarantine restrictions

We are already dealing with this pandemic crisis. The last thing we want is for one problem to compound the other.



## Magnitude 5.6 quake shakes Occidental Mindoro



By [Arlie O. Calalo](#)  
October 5, 2020

A magnitude 5.6 earthquake rocked Occidental Mindoro early Monday morning, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

It said the quake occurred around 2:16 a.m. at 31 kilometers southeast of Looc.

With a depth at 121 kms, Phivolcs said the quake was tectonic in origin.

Intensity 4 was reported in the towns of Looc, Lubang, Mamburao, Paluan, and Sablayan in Occidental Mindoro and in Tagaytay City.

Meanwhile, Intensity 2 was reported in Makati, Quezon City, Mandaluyong, Malabon, Muntinlupa and Pasig in Metro Manila.

No damage has been reported but aftershocks are expected, Phivolcs said.



## Despite House squabble, Duterte wants 2021 budget passed in December



Published 13 hours ago  
on October 5, 2020 04:13 PM  
By [MJ Blancaflor](#) [@tribunephil](#) [MJB](#)



Amid allegations that the 2021 national budget deliberations are derailed by some lawmakers at the House of Representatives, the Palace reiterated Monday that President Rodrigo Duterte wants the proposed P4.5-trillion appropriations signed in December.

In a press briefing, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque renewed his call to lawmakers not to delay the passage of the national budget which contains funds for the government's pandemic response, saying the Chief Executive does not want a reenacted budget.

"The President does not want a reenacted budget. The budget must be signed by the month of December so it would be effective on 1 January," Roque said.

His remarks came after Negros Oriental 3rd District Rep. Arnulfo Teves said that budget deliberations in the Lower Chamber are being "railroaded" by allies of House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano.

In an interview with ANC, Teves added that supporters of Speaker-in-waiting Lord Allan Velasco are being muted on plenary sessions via teleconferencing app Zoom.

The proposed budget, which carries the theme "Reset, Rebound, and Recover: Investing for Resiliency and Sustainability," was submitted by the Department of Budget and Management to the Congress in August.

However, the leadership dispute between Cayetano and Velasco appears to threaten the passage of the budget bill.

In a Facebook video late Friday, Velasco accused Cayetano of "political maneuverings and theatrics" which, according to him, took the budget deliberations "hostage."



## Despite House squabble, Duterte wants 2021 budget passed in December

Duterte is expected to deliver a public address Monday night which would mark his first public appearance since his meeting with Cayetano and Velasco last week.

The President met with the two lawmakers last Tuesday in a bid to resolve with finality the speakership row as Cayetano's supposed 15 months in power would end this month and Velasco would take over.

Sources said that Duterte supposedly gave his blessing to Velasco to take-over the House's top post on 14 October, but this was disputed by Cayetano and his allies.

Last Wednesday, Cayetano offered to resign – a move rejected by lawmakers who voted 184-1 with nine abstentions.

## MGA GURO, PROBLEMADO PERO MASASAYA SA PAGBUBUKAS NG KLASE



October 5, 2020 @ 4:44 PM 13 hours ago

UMIKOT ang ULTIMATUM sa pagbubukas ng klase sa mga lalawigan at marami itong natagpuan.

Pangunahin dito ang pagiging malikhain ng mga titser upang tugunan ang new normal na sistema ng pag-aaral.

Puno ng problema ang mga titser pero puno pa rin sila ng saya na nagbukas ang pasukan.

Very busy silang lahat.

### BLENDED O FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Sa isang elementary school, idineklara ng principal na puro self-learning module ang sistema dahil bibihira ang mga may kakayahan sa online learning.

Dalawang bata ang mag-share ng isang module.

Sa ibang elementary school, self-learning module rin lahat pero nakayanan ng eskwela na tig-isa ang bawat bata.

Karamihan sa mga elementary school, modular ang pag-aaral.

Sa isang national high school na may 1,800 enrollees, 800 ang pasok sa online learning habang modular learning ang para sa 1,000.

Itong araw na ito ang kuhanan ng mga kopya ng modules sa elementary at high school.

May hanay ng mga elementarya, mga magulang ang kumuha ng mga module habang mga magulang at estudyante sa high school.



## **MGA GURO, PROBLEMADO PERO MASASAYA SA PAGBUBUKAS NG KLASE**

### **MGA PANGUNAHING PROBLEMA**

Halos kumpleto umano ang content o laman ng mga module na galing sa portal ng Department of Education.

Pero sakit ng ulo ng mga titser ang gastos sa pag-imprenta ng mga module.

Gastos umano ng DepEd ang para sa isang linggo pero inobliga umano ang mga titser na mag-imprenta ng para sa isang linggo.

Sa isang elementarya, halos naubos na umano ang kanilang Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses sa pambili ng copying machine at daan-daang ream ng papel

Meron pa naman umanong ilang ream na pwedeng gamitin pero ang mga ink at toner naman ang naubos.

Nagkakahalaga ng P2,000-P4,000 ang ink at toner ng isang copying machine at nagkakarambola sila ngayon kung saan sila kukuha ng pambili rito.

Ganito rin ang nagaganap sa high school, hanggang dalawang linggo lang umano ng module ang naimprenta nila.

Wala na ring papel, ink at toner.

### **IBA PANG PROBLEMA**

May mga local government unit na nangahas na mag-realign ng kanilang mga badyet para sa mga eskwela gaya ng development fund.

Ipinambili nila ang mga pondo sa mga copying machine at ibinigay sa mga eskwela.

May kasamang ink, toner at papel pa.

May mga nagbigay ring pribadong organisasyon o indibidwal.

Pero tulad ng aktwal na nagaganap, tumigil na ang iba sa pag-imprenta dahil sa pagkaubos ng mga ink, toner at papel.

May mga nasira na ring makina kahit bago dahil nasobrahan sa gamit at napakamamahal ang mga piyesa na dapat bilhin, maging ang mga technician na gumagawa sa mga ito.

Ang papel pala, P250 kada ream ang karaniwang presyo sa merkado at ito ang binibili ng mga titser.

Ang mga estudyante na pumili ng online, anak ng tokwa, ngayon nila naranasan na hindi pala ganoong kagaan.

Problema nila ngayon ang pambili ng load at kung may wi-fi man sila, ang buwanang pagbabayad kahit napakahina at napakabagal ang internet.



## **MGA GURO, PROBLEMADO PERO MASASAYA SA PAGBUBUKAS NG KLASSE**

### **MGA LIBRO, KAHIT LUMA AT SIRA PINAMIMIGAY**

May pag-asa ang mga titser na pwedeng tuloy-tuloy ang pag-aaral.

Kung wala na umano talagang maipadala ang DepEd na panggastos ng mga iskul para sa paggawa ng module, doon na sa mga librong luma at bago sila aasa.

Dito na umano hindi gaanong masusunod ang gusto ng mga nasa itaas na updated o napapanahon ang mapag-aaralan ng mga bata.

Biro nga ng ilang titser, may mga aklat na walang pangalan ang mga halal na opisyal ng bansa simula noong 2016, lalo na ang mga halal nitong 2019.

Kaya sa mga balita sa mga radio, telebisyon at internet malalaman ang mga huling balita o leksyon, kung meron ang mga bata ng mga ng gamit o gadget na ito.

Kahit ganito ang kalagayan, positive na positive ang mga titser na may matutunan pa rin ang mga bata.

### **HAGUPIT NG COVID-19 ANG PROBLEMA**

Sa hanay ng mga titser, pinakatatakutan nila ang matamaan o magkasakit ng COVID-19.

Kasi naman, alam nilang gagastos sila nang malaki, daan-daang libo bago sila gumaling o kaya'y mamamatay on duty.

Malinaw sa kanila na frontline sila ngayon pero hindi sila katulad ng health worker na kung magkasakit ng mild, may P100,000 silang bigay ng gobyerno at kung mamatay naman, P1 milyon.

Ang ayuda ng DepEd ang hinahanap nila ukol dito ngunit wala umano ng sinasabing malinaw ang mga ito.

Oo nga naman.

Teka nga pala, ano itong sinasabi rin ng mga titser na dapat disposable umano ang gagamitin ng mga titser sa kanilang trabaho, ayon sa kautusan daw ng DepEd?

Dito na hindi sumang-ayon ang marami dahil napakamahal ang surgical face mask na dati'y P50 ang isang karton ngunit ngayon naglalaro sa P75-P150 ang isang kahon.

Sa parte naman ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, dapat paghandaan na ang tamang pagtatapon ng halos isang milyon araw-araw na face mask galing sa mga eskwelahan.

Sa kabuuan, isang malaking hamon sa lahat ng Filipino kung paano tayo makapagbigay ng ayuda sa mga mag-aaral at titser sa mga panahong ito.



## Global COVID-19 cases surpass 35 million

October 5, 2020, 9:55 pm



ANKARA – The number of total coronavirus cases around the world surpassed 35 million on Monday, less than a week after deaths from coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) passed one million, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

The US leads the world with over 7.4 million cases and almost 210,000 deaths, while India had 6.6 million cases and 102,000 deaths, and Brazil had 4.9 million cases with 146,000 deaths.

China, the birthplace of Covid-19, did not show much change since last week with some 90,000 cases and 4,700 deaths, the data showed. Turkey's overall case tally stood at 324,443 with 8,441 deaths as of Sunday.

With research for a successful vaccine at full pace, there are only 11 at Phase 3 among more than 170 possible candidates tracked by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Apart from Phase 3 efficacy trials, Russia and China have a total of five approved vaccines for early limited use, which did not wait for results of Phase 3.

Russia on August 11 said it registered a Covid-19 vaccine named Sputnik V, and later announced to have orders from 20 countries for one billion doses, with Venezuela receiving the first batch of Sputnik V last Friday.

China's national pharmaceutical firm Sinopharm provided last month thousands of people with two of their experimental vaccines as part of a government program in July. Another Chinese firm, Sinovac Biotech, announced early September that 90 percent of its employees and their families have taken an experimental vaccine.

In the US, however, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is unlikely to approve a vaccine unless it is proven to be safe and effective by its regulatory standards.

"FDA will not authorize or approve a vaccine we won't be confident in giving to our families," Chief Stephen Hahn said on Sept. 23 at a Senate hearing.

The US has implemented Operation Warp Speed in hopes of getting and delivering millions of doses of a vaccine by the end of 2020, as it agreed in July to pay Pfizer and BioNTech USD1.95 billion for 100 million doses of their vaccine if it proves safe and effective. It also announced a USD1.6 billion agreement with Novavax to manufacture and deliver 100 million doses by January 2021.

Turkish doctors on September 28 gave the first shot of a coronavirus vaccine to a health worker, as Istanbul University's Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty has begun the Phase 3 trials.

The WHO does not estimate widespread vaccinations against Covid-19 around the world until mid-2021. (*Anadolu*)



## ‘Tapau’ culture major contributor to country’s plastic waste problems

Published on: Monday, October 05, 2020

By: Malay Mail



*There is no shortage of plastic bags and bottles, cling wrap, food containers, utensils, and plastic straws lining whole lengths of some beaches (Reuters).*

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A recent report by WWF-Malaysia has pinpointed the “bungkus” or “tapau” (takeaway) culture as one of the major contributors to plastic waste in the country.

The “Study on EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) Scheme Assessment for Packaging Waste”, which was released by WWF-Malaysia recently, indicated that various forms of single-use plasticware — from plastic bags to cutlery — that are favoured as containers for takeaway food are the reason why Malaysians use, and subsequently, discard so much plastic.

“With the ease and convenience of buying readily cooked food in Malaysia from hawker stalls and restaurants, many households commonly opt for takeaway food. This culture of purchasing takeaway food results in a high degree of plastic packaging to store and transport the food.

“For example, a simple meal of takeaway noodles with soup would comprise up to six different single-use plastic items i.e. at least three layers of packaging — one plastic packaging for the noodles, one for the soup, and another to hold the two separate packagings that contain the noodles and soup, wooden chopsticks packed in plastic, a plastic spoon and potentially a separate small bag of a chili or sambal.

“This trend has been exacerbated with the introduction of motorbike-based delivery services, that deliver takeaway food not only from the typical fast-food outlets but also from small individual outlets and even hawker stalls,” said the report.

According to the report, Malaysians had on average produced around 34kg of post-consumer plastic waste in 2016, with approximately 22kg per capita consisting of plastic packaging waste.



## ‘Tapau’ culture major contributor to country’s plastic waste problems

The report’s 2016 post-consumer plastic waste per capita estimation was based on population data collected by the Department of Statistics and a survey on Solid Waste Composition, Characteristics & Existing Practices of Solid Waste in Malaysia commissioned by The Department of National Solid Waste Management (JPSPN) in 2013.

The estimation is in tandem with another study conducted by WWF in 2019 that showed Malaysia has the highest annual per capita plastic use, at 16.78kg per person compared to China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

The report also stated that plastic packaging for food in Malaysia is preferable as it is seen as a necessity to prevent edible items from going bad or being eaten by pests, a common problem due to the country’s hot and humid climate.

“Day-to-day grocery products such as flour, sugar or pasta are often packaged in paperboard in colder climates.

However, in tropical climates, these products typically require a different or additional form of packing with plastic. In addition, instant beverages, instant noodles and other snacks are often sold in individual portions which are packaged in multi-layer sachets.

“While the market share of these sachets is much higher in countries with a lower GDP per capita (e.g. Indonesia and the Philippines), these individually packaged portions have become an important part of the food packaging in Malaysia.

“Lastly, expensive and imported products such as fruits or chocolate are often individually packed with additional plastic, while vegetables, leafy greens and meats are individually packaged to prevent them from bunching with other produce. Meat produce, including seafood, are commonly wrapped in multiple layers of plastic, on top of the PP packaging container, to prevent ‘leakage’,” said the report.

In the report, it was stated that Malaysia has the best recycling infrastructure in Asean.

Yet, instead of managing and recycling waste products in the country, the majority of recyclers and aggregators import recyclables to process instead.

It added this factor, as well as the effectiveness of respective local collection and disposal systems, could lead to materials with recycling potential ending up in landfills and dumpsites or littering the environment, eventually making their way into the ocean.

In Malaysia, the informal sector, which comprises a wide variety of participants, ranging from individual material pickers, mobile collectors and tailgate sorting, among others, are the backbone of the recycling industry, said the report.



## **‘Tapau’ culture major contributor to country’s plastic waste problems**

As a means to creating an effective and financially viable waste management system, the report suggested that an EPR scheme is made mandatory and customised to fit the nation’s waste management needs and challenges.

This includes the participation of the informal sector along with other civil societies across the waste management value chain to increase the scheme’s effectiveness. – Malay Mail

“There is nothing unusual about the EPR scheme. Governments of several low and middle-income countries have started to introduce or draft regulations on EPR. Companies and business associations have also launched voluntary commitments and initiatives based on EPR schemes to accelerate the transition to sustainable waste management and circular economy.

“However, an effective EPR scheme must be designed and tailored to the existing waste management system and flow of recyclable materials,” said Dr Adrian Choo, Lead for the Sustainable Markets Programme in WWF-Malaysia, in a press release released in conjunction with the report.

A non-profit Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) should also be put in charge along with control and monitoring by the government for the scheme to work, stated the report.

“Ultimately, we need an EPR legal framework that outlines clear objectives, responsibilities, enforcement mechanisms, and a timeline for implementation. EPR complements other environmental regulations such as shifting to a circular economy, promoting eco-design, and transitioning to a more resource-efficient economy,” said Choo.

Those who are interested in reading the full report can do so at <https://www.wwf.org.my/>.



## Tasmanian Devils reintroduced into Australian wild

Published  
12 hours ago



IMAGE COPYRIGHT BBC SPORT

image caption The Tasmanian devil is classified as endangered

**Tasmanian devils have been reintroduced into the wild in mainland Australia for the first time in 3,000 years.**

Conservation groups released 26 of the mammals into a large sanctuary in Barrington Tops, north of Sydney.

It's thought that packs of dingoes helped eradicate them on the mainland.

There are still some on the island state of Tasmania but their numbers have dwindled over the past two decades.

The Tasmanian devil, classified as endangered, gets its name from its high-pitch squeal and is renowned for fighting over access to animal carcasses, which it grinds with the bone-crushing force of its jaws.

Animal experts say they pose no threat to humans or agriculture.

Conservation group Aussie Ark worked with other animal groups to release the Tasmanian devils into the 1,000-acre fenced sanctuary. The animals have been placed in the sanctuary to help keep their chances of survival high. They have no supplied food, water or shelter.

The first group of 15 were released in March. After the animals showed signs of thriving in their environment, a further 11 were released in September.

Young, healthy Tasmanian devils were selected in the hope they would be ready for breeding season, set to begin in February.

"They're free. They're out there," Tim Faulkner, president of Aussie Ark, told National Geographic. "We've got some basic means of keeping an eye on them. But essentially, now it's [over to the devils to do what they do.](#)"



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## Tasmanian Devils reintroduced into Australian wild

Another 40 are set to be released into the sanctuary over the next two years.

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In detail: Tasmanian devil

- They can live for more than five years in the wild, if they avoid catching cancer
- Males weigh up to 12kg, females up to 8kg
- Hearing is considered to be their strongest sense
- Devils have at least 11 distinct vocal calls
- They were given their name in 1803 when sailors reported "unearthly" calls

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Over time, Aussie Ark hopes to release some Tasmanian devils into unfenced areas.

It's estimated that there are fewer than 25,000 devils in the wild in Tasmania. During the 1990s, there were as many as 150,000 but the animal population was [hit by a deadly mouth cancer](#) that drastically cut numbers.

The Tasmanian devil isn't the first animal to be reintroduced into the wild. In the 1990s, wolves were reintroduced to [Yellowstone National Park](#) in the US after they were hunted to eradication. By 1996, 31 wolves had been introduced to the park. A count in 2019 found there are now 61 wolves in eight packs there.

In the UK, conservationists have taken part in a five-year trial to reintroduce beavers. During the trial, which concluded earlier this year, two families of beavers bred on the River Otter in Devon. The animals, once native to Britain, were hunted to extinction around 400 years ago.

Related Topics