

07 JUNE 2021, MONDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



[Shape up or ship out; DENR orders ship owners in Manila Bay to comply with environmental laws](#)

JUN 5, 2021, 7:09 PM

Santiago Celario
Writer

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has ordered all cargo ships operating in Manila Bay to abide by laws that ensure toxic ship waste will not end up in the bay.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), together with the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and Philippine National Police-Maritime Group (PNP-MG), conducted last Friday (June 4) a joint inspection on the environmental compliance of marine vessels at Manila Bay.

Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda led the team in the inspection of marine vessels docked in Navotas fish port and wooden cargo vessels (batil) in Delpan, Port Area, Manila.

"We are strengthening the coordination and cooperation of the (Philippine) Coast Guard, (PNP) Maritime Group, and DENR to fully enforce the laws that will really protect our oceans," Antiporda stressed.

Antiporda, who is also the head of the Manila Bay Anti-Pollution Task Force, visited the shipyards in Navotas fish port where large marine vessels undergoing repair and maintenance are parked.

He said that wastewater coming from the shipyard could include toxic compounds and may cause harmful effects to the ocean particularly the marine organisms.

"There is no clear protection for our oceans from what we have seen in the shipyards that we have visited," Antiporda pointed out. *"When it rains, the rust removed from the vessels will go directly to the ocean, thus contaminates the water."*

The DENR official said they will be calling the attention of marine vessel owners in shipyards in Navotas, including those operating within the Manila Bay region.

"We will summon the respective owners of the shipyard in Navotas area," Antiporda said.

"Of course, within the Manila Bay area where there are established shipyards, we will also get their attention and ask for their support in our campaign to address the pollution in Manila Bay."



He also said that if these owners will not abide by the orders of the DENR, they will be left with no choice but to file charges against them.

Meanwhile, Antiporda also met with the captains of the batils docked at Delpan Port Area in Manila, which transport cargo to and from Palawan, to discuss the crew's wastewater and solid waste management system.

"Despite our campaign to clean our oceans, if the sea vessel operators will not help in this endeavor, we will not be able to clean it up," Antiporda said.

In related development the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau has conducted water sampling in Navotas Fish Port to find out if chemical components, such as lead, iron, and copper are present in the waters near the shipyards.

They also took water samples in Delpan Port to assess the water quality in the area based on its fecal coliform content. (SC)



1,082 Solid Waste Management Plans Approved By NSWMC

by [Village Connect](#) a day ago



The National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) has approved the solid waste management plans (SWMPs) of 22 more local government units (LGUs) last month, bringing the total number of approved plans to 1,082 or 63 percent of its target nationwide.

Of the 22 approved plans, four are in Misamis Oriental; three in Camarines Sur; two each in Misamis Occidental, Ilocos Norte, Benguet, and Lanao del Norte; and one each in Cagayan, Albay, Sorsogon, Leyte, Northern Samar, and Zamboanga del Sur.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary and NSWMC Chair Roy A. Cimatu lauded the "continued upward trend" in the performance of the LGUs to have their plans approved by the Commission.

"Enabling our local executives to strengthen their capacities for effective solid waste management is a priority of the DENR and the NSWMC, especially LGUs facing difficulties with their solid waste management programs," Cimatu said.

"To the provinces whose towns and municipalities are now all with their approved SWMPs, we commend the leadership of your local executives," he added.

Data from the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau showed that 558 SWMPs are currently under evaluation, 332 of which are almost finished pending the submission of additional data mostly involving budgetary requirements and specifics on proper final disposal facilities.

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns and NSWMC Alternate Chair Benny D. Antiporda stressed that the plans are crucial to the efforts of the DENR and the NSWMC incapacitating LGUs to implement their solid waste management programs, particularly those with limited resources.

"As a solution for LGUs that cannot put up their own disposal facilities, the DENR and the NSWMC are looking at the clustering of these LGUs sharing a single sanitary landfill, and the approved plans will serve as a blueprint on how these sanitary landfills will be optimized by these clustered LGUs," Antiporda said.

Antiporda bared the DENR's plan to bring in the private sector through the public-private partnership (PPP) for the establishment of additional 300 sanitary landfills nationwide within the next two years.

"There are only 237 sanitary landfills in operation across the country servicing some 449 LGUs which all have SLF requirements for their cities and municipalities. This number is still regrettably small," he pointed out.



Antiporda reiterated that sanitary landfills remain the primary long-term method of solid waste disposal allowed under Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

"Moving forward with the additional 300 sanitary landfills within the next two years through the PPP scheme is the best option possible to effectively address the country's management of solid waste," he said.

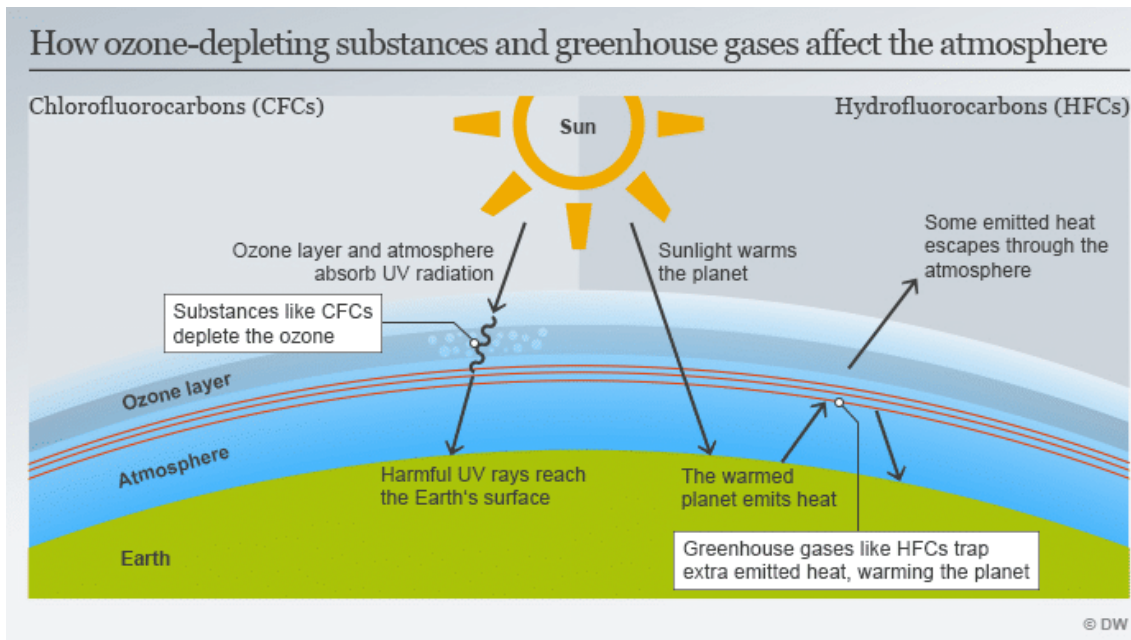


DENR moving toward 'green' cooling systems to protect ozone layer

Published June 6, 2021, 11:25 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is batting for the creation of policies that favor the use of “low carbon, energy efficient” cold chain systems in a bid to totally get rid of hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) use.



HCFC is a substance that worsens global warming by eating up the earth's ozone layer.

The vehicle for such goal by the DENR is the Global Partnership for Improving the Food Cold Chain in the Philippines (GPI-FCCP)—a \$27.5-million endeavor.

Through GPI-FCCP, the agency is pushing for refrigeration systems in the food industry that will no longer use ODS-HCFC. ODS stands for “ozone depleting substances.” Stringent policies are important in providing a stable environment for investors in “green” cooling technologies, the DENR said.

Cold chain covers every produce that needs cooling from the “field to the fork”; this involves transport, storage, transformation, and packaging. “Policies will involve national standards for flammable refrigerants and revision of energy efficiency standards,” the DENR said in a statement Sunday, June 6.

Refrigeration technologies have come out as top concern—it is because refrigerants extensively use HCFC that have been found to be ozone-depleting. Aside from HCFCs, ODS includes chlorofluorocarbons, halons, carbontetrachloride, methy chloroform, hydrobromofluorocarbons, methyl bromide, and bromochloromethane.

Private sector engagement will be crucial in the Philippines' effort to obtain knowledge transfer on the most innovative, climate friendly, and energy efficient refrigeration technologies, the DENR pointed out.

The ozone is the earth's protective layer, absorbing ultraviolet (UV) light which in turn reduces human's exposure to harmful UV radiation. Such radiation can lead to skin cancer and cataracts.



DENR said the cold chain project came about as part of the Philippines' compliance to its commitment to the 1987 Montreal Protocol. The protocol is a global agreement to protect the stratospheric ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of ODS.

The global pact compels signatory countries to freeze consumption and production of the HCFCs. It says that developing countries should have ceased HCFC production by 2030.

Major implementers of the GPI-FCCP are the DENR and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNDO). A co-financier is Germany's international cooperation agency GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit).



DENR pushes green cold chain facilities

posted June 06, 2021 at 07:10 pm

by [Manila Standard Business](#)

The government is pushing for policies on the use of “low-carbon, energy-efficient” cold chain system to eliminate the use of hydrochlorofluorocarbons—an ozone depleting substance causing global warming.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is carrying out the \$27.5-million “Global Partnership for Improving the Food Cold Chain in the Philippines” project that involves putting up environment-friendly cold chain facilities.

It said these refrigeration systems for transporting goods for the food industry would no longer use ODS-HCFC.

Stringent policies are important in providing a stable investment environment for investors in “green” cooling technologies, the DENR said.

Cold chain covers every produce that needs cooling from the “field to the fork” including transport, storage, transformation and packaging. Policies will involve national standards for flammable refrigerants and revision of energy efficiency standards.

New 'mistletoe' species found in Davao Oriental's Mt. Hamiguitan

By [ANTONIO L. COLINA IV](#) -JUNE 6, 2021 9:24 PM

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 06 June) — A new species of a flowering plant called 'mistletoe,' was discovered in Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary in Davao Oriental by researchers from the National Museum and Central Mindanao University in Bukidnon.

A statement released by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Davao on Saturday, June 5, World Environment Day, said the new floral species called "Amylothea cleofei Tandang, Galindon, & A.S.Rob." belongs to the family Loranthaceae, collectively called "mistletoe."

It said this new plant species was the first genus of mistletoe recorded in the Philippines and the fifth in the world. The plant, first documented in 2019, is endemic to Mt. Hamiguitan.



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Davao announced on June 5, World Environment Day, that a new floral species called "Amylothea cleofei Tandang, Galindon, & A.S.Rob" belonging to the family Loranthaceae, collectively called "mistletoe," was discovered in Davao Oriental's Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary. Photo courtesy of DENR-Davao

The DENR said the "mistletoe," known for their "exceptional lifestyle as a hemiparasite," propagates through birds that spread their seeds to other host plants.

"When a bird eats the mistletoe fruit and poops (excretes), the sticky seed will attach to the branch and a specialized root-like structure called haustorium will emerge and penetrate to the host tree or shrub to extract water and nutrients for its growth and nourishment," it added.

In a post on social media on Saturday, the National Museum of the Philippines said its researchers, Danilo Tandang and John Michael Galindon of the Botany and National Herbarium Division, discovered the plant species.

Their research on this new plant species was published in an international peer-reviewed journal, Phytotaxa. The co-authors of the paper included Noel E. Lagunday, Fulgent P. Coritico, Victor B. Amoroso and Alastair S. Robinson.

"Although the genus has been previously described from the Philippines, taxonomic revisions have transferred all Amylothea species to its closely allied and more primitive genus, Decaisnina, wholly absenting Amylothea from the Philippines," it said.

It said the researchers believed that there are still several unknown species that have yet to be discovered in the forests.



Mt. Hamiguitan was inscribed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage site on June 23, 2014 and declared as Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) Heritage Park on October 21, 2014.

The Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, declared a protected area under RA 9303, measures 16,923 hectares covering San Isidro Municipality, Governor Generoso, and Mati City.

Recorded species on Mt. Hamiguitan are 963 species of flora and 440 species of fauna, 341 of which are endemic to the Philippines.

The plants include 729 angiosperms, 27 conifers, 164 ferns and allies, 17 mosses, 13 liverworts, and 13 lichens while the known fauna include 15 species of non-flying mammals, 11 species of flying mammals, 108 species of birds, 33 species of reptiles, 18 species of frogs, 142 species of butterflies, 31 species of dragonflies and damselflies, 46 species of spiders, four species of earthworms, 15 species of nematodes, and 17 species of freshwater fish. (Antonio L. Colina IV / MindaNews)



Group underscores 'illegal road clearing' woe on Environment Day



TALISAY. Members of Group of Environmental Socialists (Goes) underscores the issue of alleged illegal road clearing activity in Talisay City in a meeting with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and affected community during the celebration of World Environment Day over the weekend. (Contributed photo)

[ERWIN P. NICAVERA](#)

June 06, 2021

THE Group of Environmental Socialists (Goes) has facilitated a meeting with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and holders of Integrated Social Forestry/Certificate of Stewardship Contract (ISF/CSC) in Sitio Campuestuhan, Barangay Cabatangan, Talisay City over the weekend.

The environment group said the activity was in line with the celebration of the World Environment Day themed "Ecosystem Restoration."

Among the issues discussed were the cancellation of CSC of the landholders and approval of the application of a businessman for Special Use Agreement in Protected Areas (Sapa) by the Protected Area Management Board (Pamb) which allegedly resulted in illegal road clearing.

Goes, in a statement, said the Board approved the application without due respect and consideration to the landholders and their areas that are under the ISF Program.

"These are tenured migrants who have complained against the DENR because it has abused their authority by canceling the CSC without legal basis," it said.

The group added that "the community expressed that they have been misinformed and misled which resulted to the cancelation of their tenurial instrument while allowing rich and powerful individuals to own parcels of land inside the Northern Negros Natural Park (NANP) through Sapa."

Goes also claimed that the recipients blamed the barangay captain for allegedly facilitating the selling of land to big-time businesses and for manipulating some community members.



"The barangay captain has been very abusive and lacked respect for the protected area. There was no consultation or any participatory discussion regarding his acts within the multi-use zone (MUZ)," it said.

Citing the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (Enipas) Act or Republic Act 11038, the environment group said there are two ways, according to the DENR, on how the agency will allow tenured migrants and lowlanders to stay inside NNNP.

These are through the approval of the Protected Area Community-Based Resource Management Agreement and Sapa.

Goes is calling out Pamb Resolution 164 Series of 2020 as "highly politicized" by approving the application of a businessman for integrated farming while the "tumandok" were left out.

They are the true farmers and champions of the NNNP who have significantly contributed to the reforestation, restoration and protection of the area, the group said.

It was mentioned during the meeting that the road clearing has no necessary permits and should never be allowed at all. Also, the area approved by the Pamb is owned by the CSC holders, it added.

"Everybody is in a consensus that abusers and violators should be penalized and that the local government of Talisay should exercise their political will and authority to protect its own poor constituents and the forest ecosystem within its jurisdiction," Goes said.

They believed that the Pamb should be guided in their decision-making because they don't know what is happening in the area.

Likewise, it said, Sapa should be abolished to give way to the implementation of community-based and community management livelihood programs to focus on the cultural and economic aspects of upland villages.

"These community-based and community management programs must be led and managed by the community to strategically empower and directly channel the economic benefits to the upland communities," the group stressed.



SANGKATERBANG GAMIT NA FACE MASKS NALAMBAT SA MANILA BAY

6 hours ago jake



(Cyrill Quilo)

CAVITE – Sangkatutak na basura kabilang ang mga gamit na face masks ang nalambat ng mga kawani ng Philippine Coast Guard sa kanilang coastal clean-up sa iba't ibang baybaying bahagi ng Manila Bay.

Sa Maragondon, daan-daang kilo ng non-biodegradable o hindi nabubulok na basura tulad ng medical wastes, plastic bottles at wrapper ng samu't saring pagkain ang tumambad matapos umahon ang mga volunteer na sumisid sa ilalim ng karagatan nitong nakaraang Sabado bilang bahagi ng World Environment Day.

Lubos namang nabahala ang mga environmental activist na nakibahagi sa nasabing coastal clean-up dahil marami anila sa mga basura ang nakolekta sa mga pinamumugaran ng isda at lamang dagat.

Sa kabuuan, mayroon nang 10 tonelada ang nakuha sa sabayang paglilinis ng Manila Bay ng pinagsanib na pwersa ng Coast Guard, Department of Environment and Natural Resources at coastal towns na sakop ng 100-kilometer coastline.

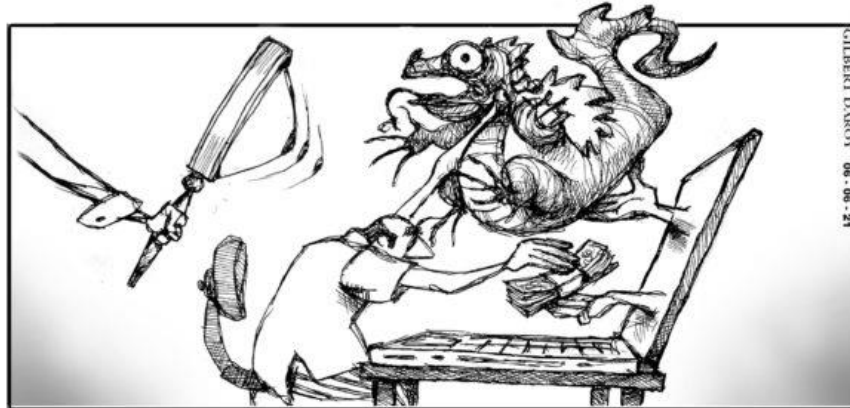
Sa gawing Ternate naman ay nagtanim ang mga environmental volunteer ng hindi bababa sa 1,300 sapling ng bakawan o mangrove sa may 800 metrong bahagi ng Barangay Bucana. Pinipigilan ng mga bakawan ang malubhang epekto ng mga daluyong at pagbaha at sumasala ng mga mapanganib na elemento o latak sa lupa.

Source: http://saksingayon.com/metro/sangkaterbang-gamit-na-face-masks-nalambat-sa-manila-bay/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR0o--AqZzvKsPrIaEIq_yqXFciD8tj0tqDR5Too5_p5ePrr6Yz7sDOcLbw



Curbing wildlife trafficking

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:07 AM June 06, 2021



Editorial cartoon

The coronavirus may have slowed down businesses, including the illegal wildlife trade, but it has not totally stopped smugglers from flouting regulations.

Instead, they have innovated ways to continue conducting their illegal business through the use of modern technology — only highlighting the need to amend and upgrade the country's 20-year-old wildlife conservation and protection law and introduce stiffer penalties.

From April to June last year, despite the ongoing pandemic and government-imposed lockdowns, the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) noted a spike in reports of illegal wildlife trade, which was valued at P50 billion annually before the pandemic.

The reason? Smugglers had moved most of their business transactions online, to social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram.

Among the widely traded animals were monitor lizards (locally known as “bayawak”).

Wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC noted that two-thirds of advertisements on Facebook from 2017 to 2020 for the reptiles came from the Philippines, where it is illegal to collect and trade them for commercial purposes.

The monitor lizards were being traded as exotic pets in the United States and European markets, or sold for their skin to the leather industry, or their meat for human consumption.

TRAFFIC also reported that the Philippine forest turtle, a rare and critically endangered species, was another highly coveted animal in online trading sites in China and in the Philippines.

In 2018, even before the migration of illegal wildlife traders online, tech and social media companies had formed the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online.

Among the more than 30 members are Facebook, Google, and Twitter; these companies share information with wildlife experts, monitor keyword searches, and tap volunteers called “cyber spotters” who report illegal wildlife trading.

As of March 2020, according to the coalition, more than three million listings for endangered species had been taken down from the internet. The illegal traders, however, just move to other platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, or WeChat, which are harder to monitor and where they can make one-on-one deals with clients.



“Online wildlife trafficking has escalated the illegal trade, with millions of online users potentially having direct access to illegal suppliers all over the world with just a few clicks. This makes it more difficult for authorities to detect and to take effective action,” said Asean Centre for Biodiversity executive director Theresa Mundita S. Lim in a news report.

National laws have to keep up with the trend, she urged, noting that existing regulations may limit enforcers from going after illegal traders online. Advocates have also noted that penalties are not harsh enough to deter wildlife smugglers.

Under Republic Act No. 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, penalties depend on the violation committed and the conservation status of the wildlife: six months to one-year imprisonment and/or P50,000 to P100,000 fine for the transport of wildlife; and from two to four years of imprisonment and/or fine of P30,000 to P300,000 for hunting wildlife, and P5,000 to P300,000 for their trading.

The stiffer penalties are reserved for those found guilty of killing critically endangered wildlife: a jail term of six years and one day to 12 years and/or payment of fine ranging from P100,000 to P1 million. First-time violators are granted probation and allowed bail.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu already said last year that there is a need to amend RA 9147 “to include a mandatory minimum jail term of six years for those found guilty of the criminal acts defined under the law. This is to make sure that convicted offenders will be able to serve their sentence and will not be eligible for probation.”

Theresa Tenazas, head of the DENR’s WRD, said the penalties in RA 9147 no longer serve as a deterrent: “The landscape is changing—we live in an online era and we can’t keep up with a 20-year-old law.”

At least two bills seeking to amend RA 9147 have been filed at the Senate, while the House of Representatives committee on appropriations approved last May a consolidated bill that will impose stiffer penalties on violators: a prison term of one month and one day, plus a fine of P20,000 for minor infractions; and imprisonment of 12 years and one day to 20 years, and a fine of P200,000 to P2 million for killing critically endangered wildlife.

The amended law will not end illegal wildlife trade, said lawyer Edward Lorenzo, policy and governance adviser of Conservation International Philippines, but it can help minimize the problem: “What we want is our enforcers to be prepared, so that when the world opens again and the illegal trade comes back, at least they are more ready.”



Whale shark sighted in Bulacan section of Manila Bay

Published June 6, 2021 10:11pm

Fisherfolk in Hagonoy, Bulacan were amazed after a whale shark surfaced near their boat.

According to a report on "24 Oras Weekend" on Sunday, the fishermen said that this was not the first time a whale shark appeared in Manila Bay off Bulacan.

Jhasper Sacro said they estimated the butanding to be over nine feet in length.

A marine biologist said the sighting of a whale shark is a good thing because this means that the waters of Manila Bay are rich and alive.

"Buhay ang Manila Bay so ito ay nakaka-suporta ng iba't ibang biodiversity tulad ng butanding. Isa nga sa pag-aaral ay ito ang spawning areas ng mga importanteng isda tulad ng sardinas," Diovanie de Jesus said.

(Manila Bay is supporting different kinds of marine life such as the whale shark. According to studies, Manila Bay is a spawning area of important fish like sardines.)

De Jesus said the ecosystem in Manila Bay is important, especially for the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Bataan.

To sustain the ecosystem in Manila Bay, de Jesus said water pollution and habitat destruction must be stopped.

Among the activities which destroy the ecosystem in Manila Bay is reclamation, he said.

"Kapag tinambakan natin 'yong dagat, nawawala 'yong mga natural ecosystems tulad ng bakawan o mangroves... Importante na 'wag ituloy 'yong mga ganitong proyekto," de Jesus said.

(When we reclaim land, we lose the natural ecosystems such as mangroves... we must stop these kinds of projects.)

In April, a fresh layer of dolomite sand was [poured on Manila Bay](#).

As part of its Manila Bay rehabilitation program, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources placed tons of crushed dolomite to beautify and rehabilitate a small stretch of the bay's shoreline.

The project received criticisms from various sectors, with some saying the artificial white sand is likely to be washed away in the future. — **Ma. Angelica Garcia/DVM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/790463/whale-shark-sighted-in-bulacan-section-of-manila-bay/story/>



'Maamong' butanding, nakita sa Manila Bay sa bahagi ng Bulacan

Hunyo 6, 2021 11:33pm GMT+08:00

Namangha ang ilang mangingisda sa Hagonoy, Bulacan nang makakita sila ng "maamong" butanding na lumalangoy malapit sa kanilang bangka.

Sa ulat ng GMA News "24 Oras Weekend" nitong Linggo, sinabi ng mga mangingisda na hindi naman ito ang unang pagkakataon na may nakitang butanding sa Manila Bay sa parte ng Bulacan.

Ayon kay Jhasper Sacro, "maamo" ang butanding na lumalapit sa kanilang bangka.

"Maamo po siya. Para po siyang sumusunod sa may bangka po namin habang nakahinto po kami," ani Sacro.

Tinatayang nasa siyam na talampakan ang haba ng dambuhalang isda.

Sinabi ng isang marine biologist na ang pagkakaroon ng butanding sa lugar ay indikasyon na "buhay" ang Manila Bay.

"Buhay ang Manila Bay so ito ay nakakasuporta ng iba't ibang biodiversity tulad ng butanding. Isa nga sa pag-aaral ay ito ang spawning areas ng mga importanteng isda tulad ng sardinas," ani Diovanie de Jesus.

Idinagdag ni De Jesus na mahalaga ang ecosystem ng Manila Bay, lalo na sa lalawigan ng Bulacan, Pampanga, at Bataan.

Para mapanatili ang ecosystem sa Manila Bay, sinabi ni de Jesus na dapat matigil ang polusyon sa tubig at mga reklamasyon.

"Kapag tinambakan natin 'yong dagat, nawawala 'yong gma natural ecosystems tulad ng bakawan o mangroves... Importante na 'wag ituloy 'yong mga ganitong proyekto," paliwanag ni de Jesus.--**FRJ, GMA News**



Villar: Plastic wastes remain PH's major environmental problem

Published June 6, 2021, 11:00 AM

by [Hannah Torregoza](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar on Sunday, June 6, reiterated her call for the government to come up with a solid waste management strategy to address the overwhelming volume of plastic wastes, which remains a major environmental problem for the Philippines.

“A 2015 University of Georgia study revealed that the Philippines is the world’s third largest source of plastic waste leaking into the ocean, next to China and Indonesia,” said Villar, who chairs the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

“Plastic wastes in the ocean destroy marine life and the oceans’ ecosystem. And so, our plastic waste problem is an environmental issue we need to urgently address if we are to help in ecosystem restoration and in the conservation of our oceans,” Villar stressed.

Villar, who is part of the twin celebration of World Environment Day on June 5 and Oceans Day on June 8, renewed her push for the passage of Senate Bill No. 1331 or the proposed Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) Act which seeks to amend the 20-year old Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

The bill primarily seeks to institutionalize the practice of EPR in waste management and use it as a strategy to reduce the proliferation of single-use plastics that end up in the oceans and pollute the environment.

The measure will to ensure that the responsibility for the entire life of cycle of plastic products rests on the manufacturers.

It also mandates manufacturers to recover plastic wastes from their products as a mechanism towards achieving an efficient solid waste management.

“I hope all sectors of our society will come together to strengthen our collaboration and our collective action towards eliminating our plastic waste problem,” the senator said.

“I am looking forward for our country to achieve success in this within the decade,” the lawmaker added.



Plastic wastes threaten environment, Villar warns

posted June 06, 2021 at 11:30 pm

by [Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

The overwhelming volume of plastic wastes has remained a major environmental problem, Senator Cynthia Villar, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, said on Sunday.

Villar made the call amid the celebration of World Environment Day last June 5 with the theme “Ecosystem Restoration.”

Villar cited the need for all sectors to collaborate their efforts to eliminate the plastics waste problem.

“I am looking forward for our country to achieve success in this (campaign) within the decade,” said Villar who will also join on June 8 the Oceans Day celebration led by Cecille Guidote-Alvarez of the Earthsavers UNESCO DREAM Center/Artist for Peace.

According to Villar, plastic wastes in the ocean destroy marine life and the oceans’ ecosystem. “And so, our plastic waste problem is an environmental issue we need to urgently address if we are to help in ecosystem restoration and in the conservation of our oceans.”

The senator cited a 2015 University of Georgia study showing the Philippines was the world’s third largest source of plastic waste leaking into the ocean, next to China and Indonesia.

Villar said she has embarked on recycling plastic wastes and turned these into school chairs.

The Villar SIPAG distributes the schools chairs to various public schools and farm schools nationwide.

The senator is also strongly pushing for the passage of the bill making permanent the Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) mechanism as part of the country’s solid waste management system and strategy to reduce the proliferation of single-use plastic.

Senate Bill No. 1331 or the Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2021 authored by Villar, seeks to institutionalize the practice of EPR in waste management. It also amends the 20-year-old Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

The measure would ensure that the responsibility for the entire life cycle of plastic products rests on the manufacturers. It mandates manufacturers to recover plastic wastes from their products as a mechanism towards achieving an efficient solid waste management.



Adopting sustainable tourism for the environment

June 5, 2021, 10:57 am



Costales Nature Farm [Photo courtesy of the Department of Tourism]

MANILA – In celebration of World Environment Day 2021 on June 5, the Department of Tourism (DOT) urged hotels and resorts to become DOT-accredited to receive assistance in its rapid adoption of sustainable practices.

"Reviving local economy and creating livelihood is DOT's current priority. However, the pandemic has allowed us to be more persistent in our goal to instill accountability in businesses to become more sustainable," Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo-Puyat said in a press statement released Friday night.

Puyat explained that the perks of being accredited equate to getting assistance from the DOT in many aspects of running a tourism enterprise, but more specifically, access to technical tools and experts that can help an establishment make the transition to going green.

"(The) DOT will continue to focus on marketing sustainability to the public, educating them on how to be sustainable tourists while also encouraging tourists to support accredited businesses that have exemplary green practices," she said.

Setting the foundation



Community-based tourism program at The Sabang Mangrove River, Puerto Princesa, Palawan spearheaded by The Sabang Mangrove Paddle Boat Tour Guide Association Inc. (Photo courtesy of the Department of Tourism)

The Tourism Act of 2009, the Philippines' first and only tourism law, has long served as the top tourism body's bible in coming up with programs that would benefit the industry.

A recent example is DOT's 2019 Save Our Spots (SOS) campaign, which aimed to inspire the public, businesses, and communities to have a long-term view on tourism.



Another is the department's Joint Memorandum Circular on the Rules and Regulations Governing the Conduct of Marine Wildlife Tourism Interaction in the Philippines, together with the departments of environment, agriculture, and interior.

"The DOT has been working on integrating sustainable tourism principles in its projects and policies. We have been teaching our tourists and tourism operators to do the small things we can do to preserve our tourism destinations," Puyat said.

The DOT also conducts community-based training for the tourism workforce, including boatmen, masseuses, and souvenir vendors, to provide them with technical skills and knowledge that will help them do their jobs better.

Food waste management seminars are also offered to accommodation and restaurant owners and culinary training that aim to reintroduce heritage or local dishes to tourists.

Adopting green practices

The number one asset of tourism is the country's natural resources, and tourism establishments have a role in conserving these.

The DOT has revised the accreditation standards for hotels and resorts to incorporate environmental indicators in the star rating system of these types of accommodation establishments, aiming to encourage business owners to be more environment-friendly in their day-to-day operations.

Through technical assistance from the European Union-GRAT, the DOT developed the ANAHAW Philippine Sustainable Tourism Certification awards in 2018 for the same reason, making it the local equivalent of the Asean Green Hotel Awards.

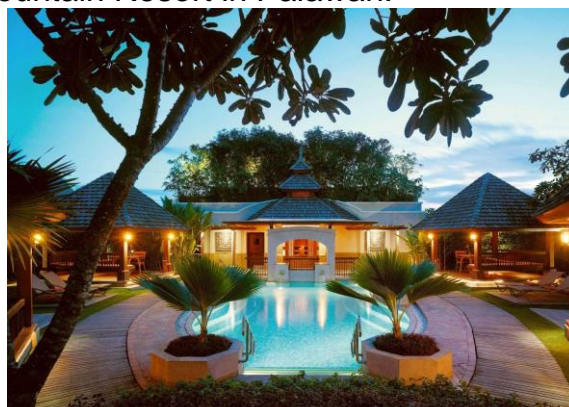
ANAHAW looks into how accommodation establishments manage and reduce their waste, energy consumption, and water consumption.

Corporate social responsibility is also a factor, with establishments that employ locals and purchase local goods fairing higher in the rating system.

The ANAHAW certification will put an enterprise with a competitive advantage because the consciousness of travelers is already very high.

"The ANAHAW certification is one of our ways to ensure we provide excellent service for our tourists without compromising our natural resources and the community. Our tourists are more likely to support tourism operators that care for the environment," Puyat said.

Examples of establishments that have received the ANAHAW certification are Crimson Hotel and Spa Mactan in Cebu, Nurture Wellness Village in Tagaytay, Club Balai Isabel in Batangas, and Daluyon Beach and Mountain Resort in Palawan.



The Spa at Shangri-la Mactan Resort and Spa in Cebu *[Photos courtesy of Shangri-la Mactan Resort and Spa]*



Executing the right campaigns and having compliant establishments can only work if tourists themselves recognize their role in the path to sustainable tourism, she said, noting that the main goal of sustainable tourism is for future generations to experience and enjoy the same, if not better, resources present today.

For more information on how to be a responsible traveler, visit www.philippines.travel/saveourspots or download the Travel Philippines app at app.philippines.travel or the Google Playstore. (PR)



On the roll with the environment

June 7, 2021 13 min read

Best Message.org photo courtesy



THOUGHTS

Armenio Manuel

The world is now on the roll, despite the overwhelming pandemic, with environment authorities saying 2021 and the next years constitute “our moment to reimagine, recreate and restore” a healthy environment.

And the Philippines quickly joined other countries last weekend in celebrating World Environment Day which underscored the essence of nature and the environment.

We have beyond doubt been hobbled by the coronavirus pandemic which has gravely affected human lives and daily activities although there has been a gleam on the lifting plus side: it has improved the air quality and reduced water pollution.

With much of the country under General Community Quarantine, and some areas like Metro Manila and nearby provinces under heightened restrictions, there has been a substantial reduction in carbon emissions which has helped restore the ecological system.

But we agree with experts and health authorities that the disposal of medical waste like disinfectants, masks, gloves and the burden of untreated waste has also increased largely during the pandemic

At the same time, once the situation bounces back to normal, the environment may start suffering again.

And long-term goals and proper implementation of strategies and policies are the need of the hour for global environmental sustainability.



The theme for this year's celebration is 'Ecosystem Restoration' and is celebrated worldwide to generate awareness of the environment and nature.

World Environment Day is celebrated on June 5 every year to remind people about the importance of nature and tell them that nature should not be taken for granted and must be respected for its values.

With the coronavirus outbreak and people being confined indoors, the environment and mother earth seem to have benefitted slightly.

In the absence of human activities amid the coronavirus-induced lockdown, nature is getting time to clean itself and reclaim its space.

World Environment Day is one of the biggest annual events by the United Nations to generate awareness about the significance of nature and greenery.

The United Nations Assembly established World Environment Day in 1972, which was the first day of the Stockholm Conference on the human environment.

In 1974, it was celebrated with the theme "Only One Earth."

Since then, various host countries have been celebrating it, and the idea for rotating the center of these activities started. World Environment Day was first observed in 1974 in the US.

This year, the theme "Ecosystem Restoration" suggests that the main idea behind celebrating World Environment Day is to highlight the importance of the environment.

Pakistan is the global host for the big day. This day will also see the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. In 2020, the theme was "Celebrate Biodiversity."

The slogan "Reimagine, Recreate, Restore" is very apt, as we try to join hands with fellow countrymen – on a greater scale with fellow humankind across the continents – to mark the importance of nature and the environment.

For the present generation, although this has been repeatedly said, restoring, recreating and reimagining our healthy environment defines our moment and we cannot turn back time.

As succinctly suggested, the echoes of this on ring out loud across the continents: we can grow trees, green our cities, rewild our gardens, change our diets and clean up rivers and coasts.

We are the generation that can make peace with nature.

Let's get active, not anxious indeed, and let's be bold, not timid.

(ai/mtvn)

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2021/06/07/on-the-roll-with-the-environment/?fbclid=IwAR0sEOrCJyL_rb7KCUJnxE18Su-6RCIP1nI1EEssvDJ5kwyOizUX-1_K6N0



Editorial: Restoring ecology in the pandemic



GREEN COMMITMENT. Governments should include in pandemic recovery plans and funds for restoring the ecology, a mindset that seems to be strikingly absent in the public discourse on how communities plot post-pandemic futures. (SunStar file)

June 06, 2021

Last June 5, World Environment Day, amongst the stream of images and posts on social media was Nena Jane Achacoso's challenge to other citizens to plant six trees per month, "enough to compensate for the CO2 emissions we produce."

Reflecting on a report uploaded on the Rainforest Action Network's (RAN) website that "approximately 3.5 billion to 7 billion trees" are cut every year, the University of Philippines Cebu alumna and digital content producer said in a June 5 post on Facebook that planting and caring for six trees a month is her personal commitment to "plant the seed for a better tomorrow."

This year's World Environment Day ushers in the United Nations (UN) Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), which seeks to "reimagine, recreate, (and) restore" ecosystems that crucially determine survival and sustainability.

Ecosystem loss does not just mean wrecking disaster on animals but also creating "ideal conditions for pathogens — including coronaviruses — to spread," pointed out the UN.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic also strains the ecology through the drastic increase of plastic pollution with the pandemic-generated production and disposal of personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning and sanitizing agents.

Not only are some types of PPE, like face masks and gloves, intended to be used only once and discarded immediately for safety, local government units (LGUs) should be pushed to provide proper PPE for street cleaners, garbage collectors and other frontliners serving in solid waste management.

In 2000, the Climate Change Commission sounded off LGUs about enforcing the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (ESWM), particularly the mandate that households initiate waste segregation and LGUs collect only segregated waste.

Is there monitoring and enforcement to ensure families separately bag PPE from other household waste? Outside of hospitals, many public areas, especially vaccination centers, do not have receptacles designated for PPE waste.

The lax enforcement of proper disposal of PPE waste puts at risk frontline workers who clean and dispose of garbage, a sector ironically made more vulnerable while maintaining sanitation and preserving public safety.



Many individuals and nongovernment organizations produce reusable masks that generate needed livelihood for many, especially women, displaced by the pandemic while avoiding the single use of disposable masks. Citizens who are not in the medical frontline must patronize these reusable masks to help reduce plastic pollution.

Another change brought about by the pandemic is the surge in online businesses, from food to retail, which generates more plastic packaging.

Companies and consumers should agree about doing away with disposable plastic cutlery and plastic straws for home deliveries of food. Work-from-home arrangements mean access to utensils, plates, napkins and other products that are washed and reused.

While the actions of citizens, groups and sectors contribute incrementally to the global campaign to “reimagine, recreate and restore” ecosystems, governments must lead and steer stakeholders in the planning and allocation of funds to balance economic recovery with ecological restoration.

Philippine leaders should learn from the initiatives made by other nations, such as Pakistan, which hires the unemployed to plant saplings and sustain the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami programme launched in 2018, and Ethiopia, which launched green jobs tapping citizens to plant seedlings in a bid to double its forest cover by 2030.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, political commitment is crucial for channeling civic engagement in surfacing during the Covid-19 pandemic opportunities for restoring ecological systems and providing employment for citizens displaced in the recession.



ROUELLE UMALI/ XINHUA

Wonder becomes rare Bird feeds on a guava fruit at a park in Manila on Saturday when the country marked World Environment Day with the theme of 'Ecosystem Restoration.'



Climate change spurs 'adaptive' migration in PH – IOM report

Published June 6, 2021, 1:37 PM

by [Roy Mabasa](#)

Due to the increasing climate risks, Filipinos rely on voluntary adaptive strategies such as permanent and circular migration as well as involuntary adaptive strategies such as distress migration and systematic relocation, the International Organization for Migration (IOM)-Philippines said in a report launched over the weekend.



International Organization for Migration Philippines Chief of Mission Kristin Dadey (via Twitter/Kristin Dadey)

Entitled “Framing the Human Narrative of Migration in the Context of Climate Change”, the report reviews the existing evidence on migration in the Philippines in the context of the climate emergency and was launched in celebration of World Environment Day on June 4, 2021.

The report also finds that farmers and fisherfolk, women, the elderly and urban poor are the most vulnerable to climate impacts, with women more affected than men, constituting 80 percent of people displaced by climate emergency in the country.

Citing the Global Climate Risk Index 2020, the report noted that while the Philippines is one of the smallest contributors to causes of climate change, “it ranks as the second most affected by climate risks impacts globally”. Aside from experiencing an average of 20 typhoons a year, the country now faces more frequent and extreme weather changes, rising temperature, heavier rainfall and sea level rise.

IOM Philippines Chief of Mission Kristin Dadey cited the importance of understanding the nexus between climate change and migration and exploring both the opportunities and challenges presented by migration as an adaptation strategy.

“The findings of the report will support key stakeholders in continuing to develop policies and programs based on the experience of Filipino people who are clearly confronted by the impact of the climate emergency,” Dadey said.

The IOM official emphasized that such evidence-based programming will ultimately enhance efforts to respond to the immediate needs while ensuring that migration is utilized as a tool towards sustainable adaptation and risk mitigation.

According to the IOM, the report analyzed a total of 35 published papers, with the majority coming from 2011-2020 when some of the most destructive climate-related disasters occurred in the Philippines.



To provide an initial framework for in-depth policy research on climate migration, the team behind the report conducted exploratory interviews and consultations with local governments and vulnerable community members.

Gustavo Gonzalez, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Chair of the UN Network on Migration in the Philippines highlighted the significance, saying that the report “gathers insights from different sectors on the issue of climate change and highlights the human narratives behind the impacts of climate change in the Philippines”.

Similarly, Fr. Jose Ramon Villarin, SJ, a climate scientist and member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize cited the need to prepare for the massive uprooting that the climate emergency threatens to trigger.

“The report recovers for us the human face of the most crucial social and ecological challenge of our time,” Villarin said.

Even the Philippine government’s Climate Change Commission joined in expressing its support to the IOM report, citing its usefulness in informing strategic ways forward to mainstream climate change adaptation and climate resilience initiatives nationwide, especially to the vulnerable communities.

“Through the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, our government, as part of the National Adaptation Plan process, consistent with the National Climate Risk Management Framework, is committed to ensuring that all Filipinos are equipped with the evidence-based and citizen-centric knowledge and capacities to adapt and thrive in this era of climate change,” Jerome Ilagan, the Chief of the Policy Research and Development Division of the CCC.

The report is part of the Climate Change Adaptation and Community Resilience in the Philippines Program, with support and funding from the IOM Development Fund (IDF).

MMDA chief urges proper waste disposal to help avoid floods as rainy season starts

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 06 2021 11:22 AM | Updated as of Jun 06 2021 11:55 AM



Workers from the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Manila's Department of Public Services (DPS), and "River Warriors" from Pasig River Coordinating and Management Office (PRCMO) join forces during an Anti-Dengue, Clearing Operations and Estero Clean-up at the Estero Tripa de Gallina in San Andres Bukid, Manila on June 1, 2021. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA - Residents in the capital region were reminded Sunday to be responsible in disposing of their wastes and to ensure tributaries are not occupied to help avoid flooding as the rainy season in the Philippines has started.

"Disiplina lang... 'Wag tayong magtatapon ng basura sa maling lugar. Sa tamang lugar (lang), kung saan talaga sinasabi ng pamahalaan at sa tamang oras. Napaka-importante nu'n para pag-pick up, wala nang babara pa," Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chairman Benhur Abalos told ABS-CBN's TeleRadyo.

(Just be disciplined... Let's not throw trash anywhere. Place them in designated areas and as scheduled. That's important for the pick-up, so that it won't cause blockage.)

State weather bureau PAGASA on Friday afternoon announced the start of the rainy season in the country, after tropical cyclone Dante dumped heavy rains in parts of the country last week.

In a statement, PAGASA said intermittent rains brought by the southwest monsoon or habagat would still affect the capital region and the Philippines' western part.

Abalos said his agency would coordinate with local government units for the strict imposition of penalties on those caught improperly throwing garbage.

He said they would also review the siltation in each of the tributaries in Metro Manila.

As well, he is proposing a catch net in certain areas so trash will no longer flow into rivers and canals.

Garbage is the "number one cause" of flooding in Metro Manila as it blocks drainage, said Abalos. But its 273 waterways should remain clear and uninhabited, and siltation must be addressed, he added.

The MMDA chief said low-lying areas such as Araneta Avenue in Quezon City, Espana in Manila City, Buendia South Superhighway, Manila City Hall, and Maysilo in Mandaluyong City have to be monitored during heavy rains.

The agency is operating and maintaining 67 pumping stations, he said.

Metro Manila covers 16 cities and a municipality, and is home to around 12 million people.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/06/21/mmda-chief-urges-proper-waste-disposal-to-help-avoid-floods-as-rainy-season-starts?fbclid=IwAR1Aa-GfV_ZQ5sUfihR_O2r9BQWC1m3cetOEGlgKNrIPtx4rskVsPIWInnM



Toxics watchdog tracks 15 spray paint products with illegal lead content

(Philstar.com) - June 6, 2021 - 10:53am



Undated photo release shows the 15 more spray paint products with a high lead content of up to 124,000 parts per million discovered by the EcoWaste Coalition being sold.

Release/EcoWaste Coalition

MANILA, Philippines — A toxics watchdog group disclosed Sunday that it found spray paint products being sold despite dangerous lead content, making them illegal to import, distribute and sell under the country's lead paint regulation.

In a statement, the EcoWaste Coalition said that it found 15 more spray paint products with a high lead content of up to 124,000 parts per million. To date, the group has tracked 71 such leaded spray paints being sold in the local market.

The group in its statement said that it would reach out to concerned distributors and retailers, as well as to government regulators, "to bring the illegal sale of lead-containing spray paints to a close."

"The unlawful sale of multi-purpose lead-containing spray paints has to end," said Thony Dizon, chemical safety campaigner at the EcoWaste Coalition.

"As these items are mostly sourced from overseas, we need the customs authorities to step in and stop these non-compliant products from entering and leaving our ports. Enforcement mechanisms to prevent the importation and sale of such paints need to be strengthened to protect public health."

Excess lead in products prohibited in the Philippines

Under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' [Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds](#), any amount exceeding the limit of 90 ppm is against government regulations.

Administrative Order No. 2013-24 of the DENR also phased out lead-containing paints from circulation.

This comes after the coalition had already discovered 15 samples of bright color spray paints representing six brands that screened positive for lead after they were found to contain lead between 3,580 to 124,000 ppm.

EcoWaste Coalition pointed out that the lead products it had tested were "in blatant violation of the CCO" after 14 of the 15 samples were found with dangerously high concentrations of lead above 10,000 ppm, or an average of 622.5 times greater than the stipulated regulatory limit.



The following products topped the list of samples with the highest lead concentrations per brand:

- Best Drive Extreme One Spray Paint (orange red) with 124,000 ppm of lead,
- King Sfon Aerosol Spray (lemon yellow) with 91,000 ppm,
- Koby Spray Paint (deep yellow) with 69,200 ppm,
- Colorz Aerosol Spray Paint (fresh green) with 62,200,
- MKT Spray Paint (art yellow) with 50,700 ppm,
- and Yandy Spray Paint (leaf green) with 32,100 ppm of lead.

Experts warn: Lead can cause 'debilitating' effects on health

"Manufacturers of spray paints being sold in the country must see to it that their products have passed the maximum 90 ppm total lead content limit," Derrick Tan, president, Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, was quoted as saying in the group's statement.

He added that "spray paint importers, distributors and retailers should insist on products with no added lead from their suppliers."

Environmental health scientist Dr. Geminn Louis Apostol, an assistant professor at the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health, also pointed out that while lead exposure "can cause debilitating and lingering health effects in all people," it is much more "harmful to young children whose brains and bodies are still developing."

"Exposure to lead early in life can cause developmental delay, reduced intelligence, shortened attention span, learning difficulties, poor school performance, and behavioral problems," he said.

The EcoWaste Coalition monitors compliance to the Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds banning lead in the manufacture of all paints and conducts test-buys targeted at spray paints being sold at motorcycle and bicycle supplies stores in Caloocan, Metro Manila, and online.

07 JUNE 2021, MONDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



PH Covid-19 recovered cases reach 1,188,243

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor June 6, 2021, 5:17 pm



File photo

MANILA – The nation's total number of recovered coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases has reached 1,188,243 after 7,372 more recoveries were reported on Sunday.

In its latest case bulletin, the Department of Health (DOH) noted that recoveries account for 93.6 percent of the total case Covid-19 count which has reached 1,269,478 since the start of the pandemic last year.

The agency also reported 7,228 new cases, bringing the total number of active cases to 59,337. About 93.5 percent of these active cases are mild, 2.4 percent are asymptomatic, 1.3 percent are critical, 1.7 percent are severe, and 1.15 percent are moderate.

Some 166 new deaths were also reported, pushing the country's total number of Covid-19 fatalities to 21,898.

According to DOH data on June 4, about 13.2 percent of 43,442 who were tested turned out positive for Covid-19.

"Some 10 duplicates were removed from the total case count, and of these, six were recovered cases and one is death. Moreover, 10 cases that were previously tagged as recovered were reclassified as deaths after final validation," the DOH said.

All laboratories were operational on June 4 while three laboratories were not able to submit their data to the COVID-19 Document Repository System (CDRS).

The DOH noted the three non-reporting laboratories contribute, on average, 0.68 percent of samples tested, and 1.27 percent of positive individuals based on data in the last 14 days.

To date, 58 percent of 1,900 intensive care unit beds, 48 percent of 13,600 isolation beds, 49 percent of 6,000 ward beds, and 38 percent of 2,000 ventilators are utilized by patients with Covid-19 nationwide.

Meanwhile, 51 percent of 700 intensive care unit beds, 40 percent of 3,800 isolation beds, 36 percent of 2,200 ward beds, and 34 percent of 800 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are in use in the National Capital Region. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1142766>



Members of the Hijos del Nazareno and the Manila Police Department set up a new entrance along Carriedo Street for a more organized influx of devotees as they strictly enforce proper social distancing and other health protocols for devotees wanting to hear mass inside the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila during the first Friday mass of the month on June 4, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

Philippines sees 7,228 more COVID-19 cases

(Philstar.com) - June 6, 2021 - 4:01pm

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health on Sunday reported 7,228 new coronavirus cases, pushing the country's total count to 1,269,478.

Today's development saw active cases up by 3,574 from June 5's 55,790. DOH said three laboratories did not turn in screening results.

- Active cases: 59,337 or 4.7% of the total
- Recoveries: 7,372, bringing the number to 1,188,243
- Deaths: 166, or now 21,898 in total

What's new today?

- One million more [Sinovac](#) doses reached the Philippines this morning. It was part of government's direct purchase from the Chinese vaccine manufacturer.
- Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. said nearly 10 million doses of COVID-19 jabs will be delivered to the country this June, as inoculation efforts reach its fourth month.
- Authorities reported over 100 COVID-19 deaths for almost the entire week, except on June 1. The fatality count crossed the 21,000th mark also last week.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/06/06/2103516/philippines-sees-7228-more-covid-19-cases>



DOH says COVID-19 surges still manageable

(Philstar.com) - June 7, 2021 - 12:00am



Health Undersecretary Leopoldo Vega, however, stressed the need for the people to observe health protocols to prevent the transmission of the virus.

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) yesterday assured the public that the surge in COVID-19 cases in various parts of the country remains manageable.

Health Undersecretary Leopoldo Vega, however, stressed the need for the people to observe health protocols to prevent the transmission of the virus.

“(It’s) manageable, but there’s still a need to enforce minimum health standards because we’ve noticed that once there is a break of level of compliance in local government units, cases really rise,” Vega said in a radio interview mostly in Filipino.

He noted that more transmissible COVID-19 variants have entered the country, but these could be prevented from spreading by strictly complying with minimum health protocols.

Vega said the government has ramped up vaccination in regions with rising COVID-19 infections.

Based on DOH data, Vega said COVID-19 cases are rising in Western Visayas, Negros Oriental particularly the capital Dumaguete as well as Northern, Western and Southern Mindanao.

The DOH earlier reported that Mindanao has outpaced the number of COVID-19 infections in the National Capital Region.

According to Vega, the DOH has augmented the healthcare workforce in the virus-hit areas. He said hospitals in these regions were also directed to expand their critical healthcare capacity to ensure that severe and critical cases of COVID-19 would be accommodated.

7,228 new COVID cases

The number of COVID-19 cases nationwide rose to 1,269,478 as the DOH logged additional 7,228 cases yesterday.

The DOH said 93.6 percent or 1,188,243 of the cases have recovered, including 7,372 new recoveries. Active cases stand at 59,337.

The number of COVID-related deaths increased to 21,898 after 166 people succumbed to the disease.

As of June 4, Calabarzon posted 1,169 COVID-19 cases, surpassing Metro Manila which recorded 1,118 new infections.



Renaming virus variants

Meanwhile, the DOH sees possible challenges in using the Greek alphabet in naming COVID-19 variants.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire reported that local experts are studying the plan of the World Health Organization (WHO) in naming variants based on the Greek alphabet.

“This might lead to confusion,” Vergeire said at a press briefing on Saturday. “We might have a deficiency in reporting because of this change into Greek alphabet letter.”

She said the WHO is looking into the possibility of renaming COVID variants based on Greek alphabet to avoid stigma.

WHO intends to rename the United Kingdom variant to Alpha, South Africa variant Beta and Brazil variant Gamma. The Indian variant will be called Delta and the Philippine variant Theta.



Government rolls out A4 vaccination today

By [Mayen Jaymalin](#)(Philstar.com) - June 7, 2021 - 12:00am



“We will already begin with the simultaneous jabbing for A1, A2, A3 and A4,” Health Secretary Francisco Duque III announced yesterday.

MANILA, Philippines — Immunization of essential workers, or those belonging to the A4 category, is set to start today.

“We will already begin with the simultaneous jabbing for A1, A2, A3 and A4,” Health Secretary Francisco Duque III announced yesterday.

There will be a ceremonial rollout of the vaccination for the A4 group, whose immunization, Duque said, is critical for economic recovery.

“It is crucial that we already start vaccinating them as they are our economic frontliners,” he explained.

An estimated 35.5 million frontline workers are listed under the essential sectors.

Duque said the Department of Health is continuously urging local government units (LGUs) to enhance efforts to reach the two vulnerable sectors.

Meanwhile, the proposal to allow fully vaccinated senior citizens outside their homes would still need to be discussed “extensively” by health experts, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said yesterday.

In an interview aired over dzBB yesterday morning, MMDA chairman Benhur Abalos said the proposal should be discussed by health experts before any decision is reached.

He added that there are a lot of factors to be considered especially if it concerns the safety of senior citizens, among the most vulnerable to the coronavirus.

“If I were to be asked, it is a good proposal. However, this is a safety issue. We should consider if it is already safe for fully vaccinated senior citizens to go out, if there are a lot of individuals who are not yet vaccinated,” Abalos said in Filipino.

“We have to reach a certain level so they could go out. But we would leave it up to the experts, the health experts,” he added.

However, if “population protection” is reached, the proposal may become more feasible.

The country aims to have herd immunity against COVID-19 before the end of the year. However, supply issues and vaccine hesitancy hamper the influx of vaccines.



The government is eyeing to vaccinate the next sectors of the community – economic frontliners and indigenous people – as more supplies are expected to come into the country soon.

Meanwhile, Abalos, in another interview, also asked the public to be responsible with waste management as the rainy season was officially declared in the country.

In an interview with dzMM, Abalos said the public should not just they throw their garbage anywhere as this blocks drainages and results in floods.

Metro Manila's waterways should also be cleared and uninhabited, the chairman said, so floods would be prevented.

Areas prone to flooding should also be monitored constantly.

Loosen requirements

As more supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine arrive in the country, Vice President Leni Robredo yesterday urged the government to loosen the requirements for other priority groups to speed up the immunization program.

Robredo cited the capital Manila which allows walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations for essential workers or those who belong to the A4 category, including non-residents.

She said the Quezon City government would also inoculate individuals who are non-residents, but are working in the city.

"It's OK that we were strict when we started the vaccination program because our supply is limited and we want to make sure that those who will get inoculated are those who really need it. But now that more supplies are arriving, we should be more liberal in vaccinating," Robredo said over dzXL.

Manila Mayor Isko Moreno earlier said informal sector workers will receive COVID-19 shots. He said those who are employed need to present their company IDs to get inoculated.

Meanwhile, Robredo said the Office of the Vice President is set to launch its mobile vaccination project in Manila. "We will pilot the mobile vaccination in Manila to show that it can be done," she said.

Robredo said they are targeting to inoculate about 24,000 people using the mobile vaccination clinics once more supplies arrive in the city.

"So now, we are doing time-and-motion study, we are looking for areas where we will do the mobile vaccination. Vaccinators don't need to leave the vehicle. We will first vaccinate non-medical frontliners who need protection," she said.

Get the vaccine, win a cow

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) lauded out-of-the-box initiatives of LGUs that help boost vaccine confidence in their areas amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DILG said these strategies can help encourage constituents to register and get vaccinated as the government ramps up its national vaccination drive.

"We are pleased that LGUs are thinking of innovative ways or 'out of the box' strategies to enjoin their constituents to get the COVID-19 shots. For now, only the vaccine can stop this pandemic. The more who are vaccinated, the earlier we can recover from this pandemic," Interior secretary Eduardo Año said in a statement.



In San Luis, Pampanga, the local government launched the “Baka Para sa Bakuna” project where vaccinated residents are qualified to join a monthly raffle to win a cow. A similar initiative was launched in Sucat, Muntinlupa, where vaccinated residents are also eligible to join a weekly raffle to win 25 kilograms of rice.

Año said these strategies can help incentivize vaccination and increase vaccine confidence.

“The out-of-the box initiatives by some LGUs can be replicated by other LGUs so they, too, can fast-track their COVID-19 vaccination efforts. By taking giant leaps, we can all move forward towards achieving the added layer of protection against COVID-19 and its variants,” he added.

Other LGUs are also using different strategies to boost the vaccination program in their localities, such as conducting house-to house registration in Biñan, Laguna, or use of technology such as in Taguig and Malabon City.

Año said the government is looking to vaccinate some 70 million Filipinos so the country can move into the new normal.

The DILG also urged LGUs to ensure that they are regularly updating their COVID-19 data in the national Vaccine Monitoring System (VMS).

Latest figures showed that only 444 cities and municipalities, or about 27 percent of the 1,634 total in the country have completed encoding their data on the VMS.

Failure to update VMS information could lead to low vaccination levels, inaccurate deployment of supply, or even irregularities such as the alleged vaccine slot-for-sale controversy. – **Ralph Edwin Villanueva, Helen Flores, Romina Cabrera**



PH gets 1M more doses of vax for areas with high Covid-19 cases

By Ferdinand Patinio June 6, 2021, 11:43 am



1 MILLION MORE DOSES. Vaccine czar Secretary Carlito Galvez (left) and Health Secretary Francisco Duque III (right) place "Resbakuna, Kasangga ang Bida" sticker on the cargo boxes containing 1 million Sinovac' CoronaVac vaccines that arrived on board Cebu Pacific flight 5J671 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City on Sunday (June 6, 2021). Galvez said the majority of the vaccines will be distributed in Visayas and Mindanao areas with high Covid-19 cases. *(PNA photo by Avito C. Dalan)*

MANILA – The Philippines on Sunday received 1 million additional doses of government-procured vaccine to be distributed in areas with high Covid-19 cases, particularly in Visayas and Mindanao.

National Task Force (NTF) against Covid-19 chief implementer Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. and Health Secretary Francisco Duque III welcomed the arrival of Sinovac's CoronaVac vaccines on board Cebu Pacific flight 5J671 that arrived at 7:22 a.m. at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City.

Galvez, also the country's vaccine czar, said majority of the additional batch of Sinovac vaccine will be distributed to areas in Visayas and Mindanao upon the directive of President Rodrigo Duterte.

"The President would also like other areas especially those with high cases to be given the vaccines, like Zamboanga, Cagayan de Oro, Butuan and other areas like Region 6 (Western Visayas)," he said in a press briefing.

With the arrival of 1 million doses of Sinovac jab, Galvez said the government is looking to administer 4 to 5 million more doses of Covid-19 vaccine before the end of June.

"Our target for this month is to have 4 to 5 million vaccinations," he said.

He said the government has so far administered nearly 6 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines.

"We have vaccinated some 5.9 million, we are nearing the 6 million mark," he said. "This coming week, supposed to be, our target is to reach 6 million (doses)," Galvez said.

The country has so far received 9.3 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine, including 6.5 million Sinovac jabs.

Galvez said more vaccines, that are set to arrive in the coming days, will be deployed to National Capital Region (NCR) Plus 8.



The NCR Plus 8 area is composed of Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Metro Davao, Bulacan, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Pampanga, and Rizal.

Aside from China-made CoronaVac, other Covid-19 vaccine brands in the country's inventory include AstraZeneca (UK), Sputnik V (Russia), and Pfizer (US).

Economic front-liners

Duque said the vaccination of the economic front-liners both from the private and public sectors under the A4 category beginning on Monday will help boost economic recovery.

"They are the so-called economic front-liners. So, it is very important that we start their inoculation," Duque said.

The government is set to conduct a symbolic vaccination rollout for economic front-liners at the Mall of Asia (MOA) in Pasay City on Monday.

About 30 million Filipinos will benefit under the A4 category from June to November.

"Tomorrow there will be a ceremonial rollout of vaccination for the A4. We will start the simultaneous jabbing for A1, 2, 3 and 4, it will be held at the MOA at 10 a.m.," Duque said.

Covered by A1 are frontline workers in health facilities; A2 -- senior citizen; A3 -- persons with comorbidities; and A4 -- frontline personnel in essential and working sectors. **(PNA)**



P82.5 bilyong pondo sa bakuna kinapos

By [Malou Escudero](#)(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - June 6, 2021 - 12:00am



Sinabi ni Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado na sa P82.5 bilyon, P70 bilyon ang ginamit para sa pagbili ng bakuna at P12.5 bilyon ang inilaan sa “ancillary at logistical requirements.”

AFP/Kena Betancur

MANILA, Philippines — Hindi sapat ang P82.5 bilyon na inilaan ng gobyerno para sa pagbili ng bakuna ngayong taon laban sa COVID-19, ayon sa Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

Sinabi ni Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado na sa P82.5 bilyon, P70 bilyon ang ginamit para sa pagbili ng bakuna at P12.5 bilyon ang inilaan sa “ancillary at logistical requirements.”

“Alam ninyo po, sa taong ito ay nag-allocate po tayo ng P82.5 billion for COVID-19 vaccination program. Of this amount, 70 billion po iyong ginamit natin para ipambilli ng mga COVID-19 vaccines, at iyong P12.5 billion naman ay para sa ancillary and logistical requirements. Subalit hindi po tayo natatapos dito dahil talagang kailangan pa natin nang mas marami pang vaccine, at nakikipag-unahan nga tayo sa ibang bansa. Kaya nga po itong lahat ng ito ay covered ng mga loan agreements,” ani Avisado.

Pero hindi pa aniya natatapos ang pagbabakuna at mas marami pang bakuna ang kinakailangang bilhin.

Sinabi rin ni Avisado na inaprubahan na ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang paglalabas ng P2.5 bilyon na katumbas ng US\$56 bilyon na kukunin sa 2021 contingency fund.

Ang pondo ay gagamitin para sa pagbili ng karagdagang 4 milyong doses ng bakuna at logistic at administrative cost.

Tiniyak ni Avisado na ang bakuna ay maide-deliver ngayong buwan.

Ang contingency fund ngayong 2021 ay P13 bilyon na maaari lang gamitin kapag inaprubahan ng Pangulo, wika niya.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2021/06/06/2103484/p825-bilyong-pondo-sa-bakuna-kinapos/amp/>



DBM: Enough funds for government health workers' hazard pay

By [Christina Mendez](#)(Philstar.com) - June 6, 2021 - 12:00am



Citing the provisions of Administrative Order (AO) 43, Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado said the President's latest directive has allowed national government agencies, state universities and colleges and other government units to set aside portions of their funds for the additional special risk allowances for state workers.

The STAR/Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — The government will have the budget to finance the grant of hazard pay to all government workers and health care workers in the frontlines battling the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, the Department of Budget and Management said yesterday.

Citing the provisions of Administrative Order (AO) 43, Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado said the President's latest directive has allowed national government agencies, state universities and colleges and other government units to set aside portions of their funds for the additional special risk allowances for state workers.

The same goes for health care workers from private and government firms who are getting their special allowances up to the end of the month.

Avisado explained that the AO authorized the grant of COVID-19 hazard pay to all government workers who physically report to work during the period of implementation of an enhanced community quarantine and a modified enhanced community quarantine.

It covers qualified workers including regular, contractual, contract of service and job order positions, who shall receive an amount not exceeding P500 per day when they actually report for work.

"The funds will come from the national government agencies and the state universities and colleges; if you (have) regular and contractual employees, their allowances will be sourced from personal services allotments," Avisado said at the Laging Handa program yesterday.

For employees who are under contract of service or job order, Avisado said the funds will be sourced from maintenance and other operating expenses – or MOOE – allotments. All employees of government-owned and controlled corporations will get their funding from their respective approved corporate operating budget within the fiscal year.

As for local government units, Avisado said all local government employees including those in the barangays will be covered under the current year's local government funds.



In case there will be an entity which will have insufficient funds to fully cover the COVID-19 hazard pay at the rate of P500 per day per person, Avisado said a lower but uniform rate may be granted to all qualified personnel.

“This newly approved administrative order effectively amends AO No. 26 issued last year which covers only employees who report to work during the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine,” the budget secretary said.

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