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DENR to pursue dolomite project in Manila Bay – Cimatú

Published October 9, 2020, 7:19 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is keen to pursue its “white sand” beach project in the [Manila Bay](#) despite criticisms on its [environmental impacts](#) and sustainability.



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatú (RTVM / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

During the Senate’s committee discussion on the DENR’s P25.55-billion proposed budget for 2021 on Friday, DENR officials said they will continue pouring crushed dolomite in the 500-meter stretch of the Manila Bay once they are able to procure more from private suppliers. Defending the project, Secretary Roy Cimatú maintained that controversial dolomite sand will not cause hazards on health and the environment.

“They asked us if it is hazardous, I say and we say: No, it is not hazardous,” Cimatú said. Before this, Senator Imee Marcos had asked the DENR for an environmental impact assessment as she raised studies from the University of the Philippines on the risks of the DENR’s beach nourishment project.

Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the dolomite, having been formed in a marine environment, is not destructive to the ecosystem and said it is already being in used other parts of the world, besides big resorts in the Philippines.

Although he admitted that the fake beach sand is prone to being washed out by currents, Leones said he thinks that it would also be sent back to coast “because of the wave action.” He also explained to senators that the DENR has employed engineering interventions to prevent strong waves and currents from washing it away.

Leones said the agency halted the overlaying of “white sand” in the Manila Bay due to some problems with their private contractor in Cebu where they sourced the dolomite. He noted that they cannot extract sand from the country’s coastal areas as it is prohibited by law.

“Iyong dolomite lang po ang nagka-problem doon, but yung continuous rehabilitation, dredging, desilting, water quality improvement, tuloy-tuloy pa din po sa buong baywalk (We only had problems with the dolomite supply, but the rehabilitation, desilting, water quality improvement are still ongoing for the entire baywalk),” he said.

“Kung magkaroon po ng available na (If we will get an available supply of) dolomite, we can still continue. Because we believe dolomite is an enhancer of the sand in the Manila Bay,” he said.

The government has allocated this year some P389 million for the Manila Bay beach nourishment project. The procurement of dolomite cost P28 million, or six percent of the total budget, Leones clarified.



Rehab, tourism

Cimatu, for his part, stressed that the white sand beach project only forms part of its efforts to clean up and rehabilitate the Manila Bay as the Supreme Court (SC) and President Duterte have ordered.

But he said the baywalk is the “epicenter” of their program as they aim to also revive the American colonizers’ purpose to transform the Roxas Boulevard as a “tourism center.”

Among others, he said they plan to put up souvenir shops along the stretch of the baywalk for tourists, as well as a fishermen’s wharf to cater to fisherfolk in the Manila Bay.

“Itong baywalk na ito (This baywalk), I will make this really a tourist center, makikita ng foreigners na nandyan ‘yong magandang beach natin sa Pilipinas (so that foreigner will see that we have beautiful beaches in the Philippines)... Ito lang kasi maipakita natin sa Manila ngayon na iyon ang showcase, like in the other countries (This is the only thing that we can showcase for Manila, like in other countries). Sa atin (For us) it will be the baywalk,” Cimatu said.

While he supports calls for mangrove planting, Cimatu said this will not be feasible in the Manila Bay due to its features.



Rehab project sa Manila Bay, tuloy!

ni [Ronalyn Seminiano Reonico](#) | October 10, 2020



Matatandaang pinalagan ng mga environmental groups at eksperto ang paglalagay ng artificial white sand sa Manila Bay dahil umano sa "harmful environmental effects" nito. Photo: @DENR

Tuloy ang paglalagay ng crushed dolomite sa Manila Bay na parte ng rehabilitation project ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), ayon kay Undersecretary Jonas Leones.

Aniya, "Ang dolomite lang ang nagkaproblema doon... [The] dredging, silting [and] water quality improvement, tuluy-tuloy pa rin po sa loob ng Baywalk. Ang nagkaroon lang ng problema ay 'yung small portion but the project would still continue."

Matatandaang pinalagan ng mga environmental groups at eksperto ang paglalagay ng artificial white sand sa Manila Bay dahil umano sa "harmful environmental effects" nito. Pahayag pa ni Leones,

"Nagkaroon lang po ng problema sa private transaction nu'ng private contractor nu'ng dolomite.

At saka nagkaroon po ng violation 'yung supplier natin sa Cebu, but wala naman pong epekto sa atin."

Bago pa ipatigil ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ang operasyon ng dalawang dolomite mining firms sa Alcoy, Cebu kung saan kumukuha ang pamahalaan ng synthetic white sand noong Setyembre, naglabas na ng cease and desist order ang Cebu Provincial Government laban sa mga naturang kumpanya dahil ang shipment umano ng crushed dolomite sa Manila ay walang public consultation.

Ayon din kay Leones, normal lang na ma-wash out ang crushed dolomite sa Manila Bay. Aniya, "Ito pong beach nourishment natin, in a regular, natural situation, talaga namang paalis-alis ang sand doon pero pabalik-balik din po because of the wave action.

Pero kung permanently washed out, hindi naman... because we have already instituted engineering works [and] intervention.

"Ibig pong sabihin, kahit malakas po 'yung [wave] doon, doon lang po sa perimeter naglalaro 'yung sand like the normal beaches... Would it be totally washed out? Palagay ko po, hindi, dahil may engineering intervention doon."

Source: <https://www.bulgaronline.com/post/rehab-project-sa-manila-bay-tuloy>



DENR tuloy paglalagay ng dolomite sa Manila Bay

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Oct 9, 2020

METRO



Kailangan pa umanong dagdagan ang mga dinurog na dolomite rock sa Manila Bay para sa beautification project dito ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, ang paunang delivery ng dolomite ay kulang pa sa 500 meter area na lalagyan ng pekeng puting buhangin. Aniya, 120 metro pa lamang ang nalalagyan ng buhangin, ngunit nilinaw naman na kasama na sa P389M pondo ang parating pang dolomite rock.

"Aaminin natin kulang 'yung dolomite na dumating sa atin, kung kaya't mapapansin ninyo talagang kakarampot lang. Pero dahil sa doon sa, nagiisip na babayaran pa muli sa susunod na delivery nagkakamali po kayo. 'Yung P389 million for the 500 meters na po 'yun. 'Yung buong proyekto na po 'yun, wala na idadagdag na i-gagastos doon 'yung ating pondo," paliwanag ni Antiporda.

Aniya pa, kontraktor at Department of Public Works and Highways na ang bahala kung saan kukuha ng mga idadagdag na dinurog na dolomite.

Hindi rin umano dapat mangamba ang publiko dahil ang mga contractor ang sasagot sakaling lumubog ang mga dolomite sa Manila Bay. (RP)

Source: <https://tonite.abante.com.ph/denr-tuloy-paglalagay-ng-dolomite-sa-manila-bay/>



Antiporda sa UP experts: Kung libre ang serbisyo ninyo, handa kaming makipatulungan!



October 9, 2020 @ 6:57 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Tahasang sinabi ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda na handa ang DENR na makipagkapitbisig sa mga University of the Philippines expert para sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay kung libre ang konsultasyon sa mga ito.

Dagdag ni Antiporda, bibigyan pa niya ng espasyo sa kanyang opisina ang mga UP expert mula sa University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI).

Ipinaliwanag nitong karaniwang daang milyong piso ang ginagastos para lamang sa mga konsultasyon sa mga eksperto at kung maniningil ang mga taga-UPMSI ng katulad na mga halaga, hindi umano tutugot ang DENR.

Dapat umanong tapatin ng mga taga-UPMSI ang taumbayan kung maniningil sila o hindi.

Diin pa nito, puno ang DENR ng mga eksperto na kumikilos ukol sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay at sapat na ang kaalaman at kakayahan ng mga ito bilang gabay ng DENR sa pagsasagawa ng proyekto.

May mga eksperto mismo ang DENR na geologist, biologist at iba pa, sabi niya.

Kaya naman, hindi umano tama na sabihin ng mga taga-UPMSI na hindi kumokonsulta ang departamento sa mga eksperto para sa tamang pagkilos sa rehabilitasyon, kasama na ang paggamit ng dolomite sa nasabing lugar.

Nauna rito, sinabi ng UPSMI na hindi madali ang pagkamit ng malinis na kapaligiran.

Hindi umano solusyon ang dolomite sa mga problema sa kapaligiran at kung tutuusin, pampanganda lang ito na sobrang mahal bukod sa pansamantala lamang.

Kung may gagawin man umano sa Manila Bay, dapat umanong pangmatagalan na pakikinabangan maging ng mga susunod na lahi. RNT

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/antiporda-sa-up-experts-kung-libre-ang-serbisyo-ninyo-handa-kaming-makipatulungan/>



More crushed dolomite needed to complete Manila Bay ‘white beach’ – DENR exec

By: [Consuelo Marquez](#) - Reporter / [@ConsINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:12 PM October 09, 2020



In this September 3, 2020, photo, workers prepare the white sand for the beach along Manila Bay in Manila as part of its rehabilitation plan. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO/ RICHARD A. REYES

MANILA, Philippines — Additional crushed dolomite is needed to finish the Manila Bay “white beach” project, an official of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) admitted Friday.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the crushed dolomite that previously arrived and covered a portion of Manila Bay to create the white beach was not enough but assured that the next delivery of the fake “white sand” would be of no extra cost to the government.

“Aaminin natin kulang ‘yung dolomite na dumating sa atin, kung kaya’t mapapansin ninyo talagang kakarampot lang. Pero dahil sa doon sa, nagiisip na babayaran pa muli sa susunod na delivery nagkakamali po kayo. ‘Yung P389 million for the 500 meters na po ‘yun. ‘Yung buong proyekto na po ‘yun, wala na idadagdag na i-gagastos doon ‘yung ating pondo,” Antiporda said during an online press conference on updates regarding the Manila Bay rehabilitation project.

(We admit that the dolomite that arrived was lacking, that’s why, if you notice, it’s really inadequate. But for those who are thinking that the next delivery would have to be paid again, you are wrong. The P389 million, that’s for the 500 meters already. That’s for the whole project already, no more additional cost from our fund.)

According to Antiporda, only 120 meters of the 500-meter project area in the Manila Bay have been filled so far with the artificial white sand.

Asked about where they plan to source more crushed dolomite, Antiporda said: “That is the problem of the contractor and the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways).”

Antiporda also promised that the contractor of the Manila Bay Nourishment Project is tasked to ensure that there will be no issues with the crushed dolomites that will be used on the bay walk.

“Any untoward incident na mangyari, gumuho man ‘yan (dolomite), lumubog man ‘yan, well walang lugi ang tao diyan because they (contractor) need to do something about that,” he said.



(Any untoward incident that would happen, if there is erosion, if it would sink, the people will not lose in this situation because it's the contractor that should do something about that.) Previously, the DENR suspended two mining companies in Cebu that produced the crushed dolomite for the project after the firms reportedly destroyed corals in waters near its site.

Meanwhile, DENR Assistant Secretary Darius Nicer, head of the Manila Bay Task Force Operations Center, said "there is no definitive proof that any substantial portion of the dolomite beach has been washed away."

"If you make a conclusion, (that) the beach is washed away, then it should be based on measurements, based on beach area measurement and volumetric measurement," he said in response to claims that the white sand is being washed away from the shores of Manila Bay.

Nicer also said that the dolomite mining companies were an "ongoing business" that was approved by the DENR in the 2000s, which means it was not approved for the purpose of the white sand beach project.

"Just to dispel any conspiracy theory that the dolomite mining in Cebu was initiated, conducted [for] the purpose of Beach Nourishment Baywalk, it is an ongoing business and it was approved 20 years ago by the DENR," he said.

Nicer further noted that he was also previously a consultant for the DENR review committee on the dolomite mining company in Cebu.

KGA



DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said that so far, only 120 meters out of the 500-meter stretch of the bay's shoreline in Manila have been covered with artificial white sand.

Edd Gumban

'Not enough dolomite for beach'

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 10, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The current supply of dolomite will not be enough to complete the beach nourishment project for Manila Bay, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said yesterday.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said that so far, only 120 meters out of the 500-meter stretch of the bay's shoreline in Manila have been covered with artificial white sand.

"We learned that there is not enough dolomite to be used as synthetic white sand for the Manila Bay project. However, this matter should be taken care of by the contractor together with the Department of Public Works and Highways," Antiporda said in a virtual press conference.

The P389-million project has received flak from the public because of its timing during the pandemic and alleged health risks.



Dolomite sand safe sa kalusugan, kalikasan – DENR



October 9, 2020 @ 6:26 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines-Nanindigan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources na hindi nakapipinsala sa kalikasan ang inilagay na dolomite sand sa Manila Bay at hindi rin ito nakapipinsala sa kalusugan dahil hindi umano ito maaaring masinghot.

Ayon kay DENR Asec. Daniel Darius Nicer, wala ring epekto sa kalusugan ang dolomite at lalong hindi nakapipinsala sa karagatan ng Manila Bay patunay rito, walang isdang napinsala sa baybayin.

“Yung dolomite sand na nasa Bay Walk ‘di puwedeng masinghot ‘yun at hindi nakasasama sa lungs,” ani Nicer.

Sa virtual presser ngayong Biyernes, sinabi ni Nicer na dati nang idineklara ang Manila Bay bilang tourism area kung kaya’t nais nilang ibalik ang ganda nito.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda na kailangan nilang linisin ang Manila Bay at i-develop ito mula sa dating imahe nito na tambak ng basura.

Itinanggi ni Antiporda na nawa-washout na ang inilagay na dolomite sand sa Manila Bay bilang bahagi ng beach nourishment project sa baybayin.

Ayon kay Antiporda, walang katotohanan ang mga lumalabas na ulat hinggil sa pag-erode ng inilagay na dolomite sand sa Manila Bay.

“Yung isyu na mawa-wash out (dolomite sand) imposible po ‘yun kung may malakas na storm surge,” ayon pa kay Antiporda.

Sinabi pa ni Antiporda na ang kabuuang proyekto ng Manila Bay rehabilitation, kasama ang paglalagay ng dolomite sand sa baybayin ay nagkakahalaga ng P389 milyon.

Hindi rin umano totoo ang ulat na nagpapabaya ang DENR at inuubos ang pondo ng bayan sa naturang proyekto.

Nabatid pa kay Antiporda na bukas sila sa sinoman na gustong tumulong para sa proyekto ng Manila Bay rehabilitation.

Idinagdag pa nito na ang beach nourishment ang bagong proyekto para protektahan ang Manila Bay at walang sinisira ang DENR sa halip tinanggal nila ang basura sa baybayin upang ibalik ang ganda nito. **SANTI CELARIO**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/dolomite-sand-safe-sa-kalusugan-kalikasan-denr/ch>



Washing away of Manila Bay 'white sand' pure speculation – DENR

Published October 9, 2020, 8:51 PM

by [Chito Chavez](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Enforcement Daniel Nicer on Friday brushed off claims about the supposed disappearance of the dolomite white beach in the baywalk area of Manila Bay.

Nicer stressed that there was no substantial proof that a substantial portion of the dolomite white beach is being “washed away.”

He pointed out such conclusions or allegations should be based on the beach area and “volumetric area measurements” to determine if there was a substantial amount of white dolomite sand washed away from the Manila Bay white beach.

Apparently, Nicer said the baseless claims that the Manila Bay white sand beach was being washed away was based on mere speculations and wrong conclusions.

He theorized that this was brought about by the discoloration of the sand in certain areas of the Manila Bay white sand beach which went viral as observed from a distance by several groups, including some mediamen.

Nicer noted the photo taken that went viral was taken from the seawall, which is far away from the beach.

Stressing his point, Nicer said those who took the pictures were “into the perspective looking into the beach” seeing only portions of the beach which was still under construction and is “still not engineered to look perfect.”

“The portion is under development and is not intended to be perfectly covered with white sand,” Nicer said.

Nicer added that the portion is not intended to be permanent since additional white sand needs to be poured over the area.

Explaining further, Nicer said the discoloration of the 14-meter portion, around 63 to 65-meter long white sand beach is due to the “natural action of wash and backwash of grayish sand, stones, rocks, and other materials” that has piled over the white dolomite sand.

He stressed that some of the dolomite sand may have been “transported away elsewhere” but no data on its quantity to determine if it was substantial can be proven.

He added that photos taken by the DENR on September 21 and 24 showed that the disposition of dark materials in the white sand beach.

On October 7, Nicer said a greater amount of discoloration was seen in certain portions of the area where alternate low and high tides occur.

Nicer said that two inches of dark materials deposited on top of the white sand was observed when shallow holes were dug on the said areas.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/09/washing-away-of-manila-bay-white-sand-pure-speculation-denr/>



A man takes a selfie with the 'white sand' beach in Manila's Baywalk in the background, joining other people observing work on the controversial project from a pedestrian overpass on Roxas Boulevard over the weekend.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

DENR: Dolomite in Manila Bay not washed out, only covered by gray sand

[Christian Deiparine](#) (Philstar.com) - October 9, 2020 - 6:53pm

MANILA, Philippines — Environment officials on Friday sought to reassure a public divided over its controversial dolomite sand project, insisting that it had not been washed out and only piled by other materials.

The multi-million had strongly been opposed by environment groups who warned of its potential impact, while others have said that the funds could have gone to more pressing matters.

Assistant Secretary Darius Nicer said the dolomite had only been covered by "greyish sand" and other materials, describing claims as based on "speculation and raw conclusions" from an apparent change in the color of certain portions of the bay.

"There is no definite proof that any substantial portion of the dolomite beach has been washed away," he said in a briefing. "If you make a conclusion that the beach has been washed away, then it should be based on measurements, and volume metric measurements."

"The darkening of the beach is just a deposition of darker colored material on top of the white sand. Whereas the critics have concluded that the white sand has disappeared," Nicer added.

Officials said geotubes have been placed to ensure retention of the white sand in the bay and lessen the impact of waves and currents.

Overall, the project cost the government some P389 million of taxpayers' money, with the department saying P28 million have been used for the purchase and transport of the dolomite from Cebu to Manila.

Malacañang has said that the funds could no longer be realigned for other purposes such as to aid in the country's coronavirus response, as the project is already ongoing.

But for UP experts, the DENR'S beach nourishment project will not solve the environmental problems present in the baywalk.



"There are no shortcuts to a cleaner environment. The use of crushed dolomite sand will not help solve the environmental problems in Manila Bay. At most, it is a beautification effort that is costly and temporary," the UP Marine Science Institute said.

The state university's Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology also warned that putting foreign sediments could disturb plants and habitats of animals in burying them and lowering oxygen in seawater.

"These outcomes endanger the biodiversity of the area," they said. "The polluted waters discharging to Manila Bay are already causing the degradation of its marine environment. The addition of sediments only hastens its deterioration."

Such claims had since been countered by government, with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau saying it would help in improving the bay. The health department has also said that the crushed dolomite could pose adverse lung reactions, only to change its tune later on as saying that with the clearance from DENR, the project will not likely cause harm.

The dumping of the dolomite has been put to a halt after an issue with the contractor of the project. DENR officials said they will leave it to the public works department and the Cebu provincial government to resolve.

Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, while admitting that the project has an aesthetic value, also claimed that it could save the lives of motorists passing through Roxas Boulevard.

"Talking about the white beach as an aesthetic only, we don't think so. In the past whenever there's a storm, trash and debris would pile from the bay putting the lives of motorists at risk," he said in mixed English and Filipino.

Still, the department said it has proposed to Congress a P1.3 billion budget for next year to continue rehabilitation efforts. The clean-up, they said, will stretch to other coastal areas of nearby provinces such as Cavite, Bulacan, Bataan and Pampanga.

Officials recognize that rehabilitating the iconic Manila Bay entails cleaning up esteros and creeks in the the National Capital Region.

Out of the 378 waterways in Metro Manila, the DENR said only 36 have been cleaned up so far from 2019 to early this year, with more than 512,000 cubic meter of dredged materials collected in its operations.



Pangako ng DENR: Milyones na dolomite 'hindi lahat tatangayin' kahit maaalon

(Philstar.com) - October 9, 2020 - 6:22pm



Nakikiusisa ang mga taong ito habang pinapanuod ang pagtatambak ng durog na "dolomite" sa baybayin ng Manila Bay bilang artipisyal na white sand, ika-6 ng Setyembre, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Tiniyak ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Biyernes, na hindi masasayang ang kontrobersyal na pekeng "white sand" sa Manila Bay kahit na anurin nang malakas ang pampang, bagay na pinagkagastusan nang malaki ng gobyerno.

Ito ang inilahad ni Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones kanina sa pagdinig ng Senado sa 2021 DENR budget, para masigurong hindi mapupunta sa wala ang ginasta ng gobyerno sa beach nourishment project.

"Kung permanently wash out, palagay ko hindi naman [mangyayari] dahil we have already instituted engineering works, intervention such as geotubes," ani Leones.

"Ibig sabihin kahit malakas yung [alon], doon lang sa perimeter naglalaro 'yung sand like the normal beaches."

Sa ilang ulat ng ABS-CBN, [makikita kung paanong inanod ang pagkamahal-mahal na "white sand,"](#) dahilan para ma-expose na ang orihinal na mangitim-ngitim na buhangin.

Sa kabuuang P47 bilyong Manila Bay rehabilitation program ng gobyerno, P389 milyon ang kabuuang halaga para sa nasabing white sand project.

Pero sa halagang 'yan, una nang sinabi ng DENR na [P28 milyon lang mula sa P389 milyon ang iginugol para sa "dolomite"](#) — isang uri ng bato na mukhang puting buhangin kapag dinurog.

Una nang sinabi ng Department of Health (DOH) na nakasasama sa kalusugan ang dolomite, ngunit kapag pinong-pino gaya ng alikabok ang pagkakadurog.



Pagtatambak natigil

Kasalukuyang nakahinto ang pagtatambal ng dolomite sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay, dahil na rin sa [patong-patong na reklamo at violations sa dalawang kumpanya ng mina na nag-suplay sa gobyerno](#).

Pero sambit ni Leones, muli naman daw aarangkada ang operasyon sa look oras na maayos ng Dolomite Mining Corp. at Philippine Mining Service Corp. ang kinasasapitang gusot.

"Kaya natigil, nagkaroon ng problema sa transaction sa private contractor ng dolomite at nagkaroon ng violation 'yung supplier sa Cebu," paliwanag ng DENR official.

"Kung magkaroon ng available na dolomite, we can still continue because we believe that dolomite is an enhancer of the sand in the Manila Bay."



Dolomite along Manila Bay won't be permanently washed out —DENR

Published October 9, 2020 9:06pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

The artificial white sand or crushed dolomite along Manila Bay would not be permanently washed out, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Friday.

During the Senate hearing on the agency's proposed P25.5 billion budget for 2021, Senator Imee Marcos asked if the concern on the crushed dolomite being eventually wiped out is valid.

"Ito pong beach nourishment natin, ito po talaga in a regular natural situation talaga namang paalis-alis lang po ang sand doon pero bumabalik-balik din po because of the wave action but kung permanently washed out po palagay ko po hindi naman," DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones said.

He assured that engineering intervention they made by installing "geotubes" will prevent the artificial white sand from being washed away permanently.

"Ibig sabihin kahit malakas ang [wave] noon doon lang po sa perimeter naglalaro ang sand like the normal beaches po pero 'yung sinasabi po na total wash out? Palagay ko po hindi dahil meron po tayong engineering intervention doon that will prevent strong current in moving away the sand," Leones said.

Marcos asked if the DENR would stop putting dolomite along Manila Bay.

"Kaya lang po natigil 'yun, nagkaroon ng problema sa transaction noong private contractor ng dolomite at saka nagkaroon ng violation yung supplier sa Cebu. Kung magkaroon po talaga ng available na dolomite, we can still continue because we believe that dolomite is an enhancer of the sand," Leones responded.

He added that dredging and water quality improvement will continue.

The beach nourishment project along Manila Bay costs P389 million and P28 million of which were allocated specifically for the crushed dolomite, according to the DENR. The agency [suspended](#) dolomite mining in Cebu in September amid concerns on its environmental impact.

During the hearing, however, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said dolomite is "not hazardous."—LDF, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/759233/dolomite-along-manila-bay-won-t-be-permanently-washed-out-denr/story/>



DENR to continue Manila Bay white beach project, says crushed dolomite 'won't be washed away'

Job Manahan, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 09:23 PM



People flock to the Manila Bay during the temporary opening of the "white sand" project in time for International Coastal Clean Up Day on September 19, 2020. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA — An official from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Friday the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, particularly the beautification of its beach portion where crushed dolomite was dumped, will continue.

This, despite strong opposition from environmental groups and experts over the synthetic white sand's allegedly harmful environmental effects around the area.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones, defending DENR's 2021 budget before the Senate's Finance Committee, said the difficulty in procuring the dolomite would only pose a small problem in the rehabilitation efforts.

"Ang dolomite lang ang nagka-problem doon... [The] dredging, silting [and] water quality improvement tuloy-tuloy pa rin po sa loob ng Bay walk. Ang nagkaroon lang ng problema ay yung small portion but the project would still continue," Leones said.

(It's only the dolomite that had problems on the rehabilitation, the dredging, silting, and water quality improvement continued inside the Bay walk. We only had a problem on a small portion but the [project would still continue](#).)

In September, during the height of the dolomite dumping controversy on Manila Bay, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu suspended the operations of two dolomite mining firms in Alcoy, Cebu, where government sourced the synthetic white sand.

Before Cimatu's move, the Cebu Provincial Government issued a cease and desist order against the two firms, saying shipment of crushed dolomite to Manila was done without public consultation.

"Nagkaroon lang po ng problema sa private transaction nung private contractor nung dolomite. At saka nagkaroon po ng violation yung supplier natin sa Cebu, but wala naman pong epekto sa atin," he added.

(We had a problem on our transactions with the dolomite's private contractor. We also found out that our supplier in Cebu had violations but this did not affect our project.)

Leones added that the dolomite serves as an "enhancer" of the sand dumped on Manila Bay for the beautification project.

Responding to observations that the crushed dolomite was washed out to sea just days after being dumped, he said it's normal.

He also claimed that the sand on the artificial beach won't be washed away by storms and large waves because the department has installed geotubes, and submerged machines, around the perimeter of the man-made beach.



"Ito pong beach nourishment natin, in a regular, natural situation, talaga namang paalis-alis ang sand doon pero pabalik-balik din po because of the wave action. Pero kung permanently washed out, hindi naman... because we have already instituted engineering works [and] intervention," he said.

(This beach nourishment we are doing, in a regular, natural situation, sand would be washed away but it would also naturally return due to the wave action. But if people fear it would be permanently washed out, it won't happen because we have already instituted engineering intervention.)

Geotubes, he said, would prevent strong currents from washing away the sand.

"Ibig pong sabihin kahit malakas po yung [wave] doon, doon lang po sa perimeter naglalaro yung sand like the normal beaches... Would it be totally washed out? Palagay ko po hindi dahil may engineering intervention doon."

(If large wave hits, the sand would only be around the perimeter just like in the normal beaches. It won't erode. It won't be washed out because we installed engineering interventions already.)

Senator Imee Marcos, meanwhile, raised the negative reaction of Cebu local officials amid the DENR's use of crushed dolomite.

"The point really is, it's not naturally occurring and that it was quarried in Cebu where apparently the provincial government as well as the mayors were unhappy about the quarrying and ordered the cease and desist. So ano ba talaga? Talaga bang pollutant itong dolomite?" Marcos asked.

(What's the truth? Are dolomites pollutant?)

Cimatu said crushed dolomite is not hazardous to the environment.

"We say no. It's not hazardous," Cimatu said.

The DENR is proposing a P25.5 billion budget for 2021, of which P1.32 billion would be used to continue the Manila Bay rehabilitation project.

Focus on rehabilitation, not beautification

Senator Nancy Binay, however, urged DENR to focus on cleaning the water of Manila Bay instead of spending a portion of its already limited budget for the bay's beautification.

"Ang dapat main goal is to clean the water. Maganda po talaga yugn nakikita ngayon na white sand pero kung babalikan natin, madumi pa rin ang tubig. Ang goal ultimately.... sana yung puwede nang mag-swimming diyan... dahil malinis na ang tubig," Binay said.

(Our main goal is to clean the water. We appreciate seeing the white sand but if we would go back to the main problem, the water is still dirty. Our ultimate goal is to reach the point where we could swim in Manila Bay because the water's already clean.)

The senator reminded the DENR that its purpose is to clean and protect the environment.

Cimatu, meanwhile, said the department's goal is to transform Manila Bay into a tourism area with 500 meters of the bay's view beside the United States Embassy dressed in synthetic white sand.

— **With a report from Sherrie Ann Torres, ABS-CBN News**

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/09/20/denr-to-continue-manila-bay-white-beach-project-says-crushed-dolomite-wont-be-washed-away?fbclid=IwAR1Ry5p_OiWXAouwGanqCoV0sE2PE6BYCKI66IcCpqzA0NxEcD0tbwP3Hmc



ABS-CBN News

10h · 🌐

...

"The white sand did not disappear. It's still there underneath the gray sand."

Kapansin-pansin nitong mga nakaraang araw ang tila paglaho ng dolomite sand sa Manila Bay.

Paliwanag ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, hindi tuluyang natangay ng alon ang buhangin kundi nagkaroon ng "discoloration". | via Vivienne Gulla, ABS-CBN News

BASA HIN: <https://bit.ly/3nA0r40>

Recording...

Manila Bay White Sand Beach, gradual discoloration



September 21, 2020

9:30 pm

14.57472° N 120.97889° E



September 22, 2020

6:00 pm

14.5747° N 120.97889° E



September 24, 2020

5:00 pm

14.57481° N 120.97903° E

observed that the various deposited sediments have been of the dolomite sand underneath (Photos taken by: ASec. Daniel Nicer)



Fig. 1

- Grey sand, silt, etc. are deposited along Manila Bay beach, about 2 inches on top of dolomite sand

(Photo taken by: ASec. Daniel Nicer)(October 10, 2020)

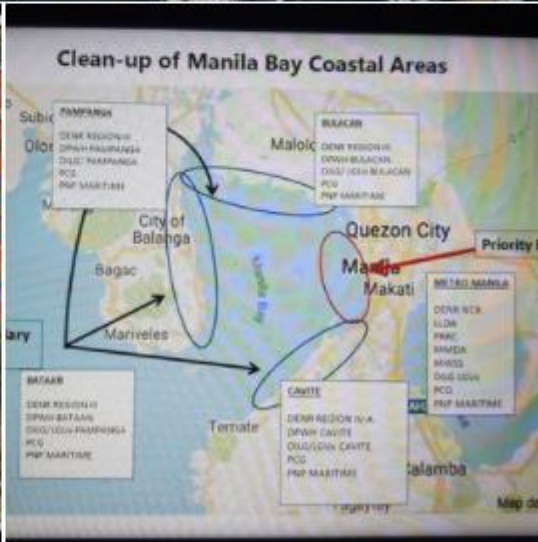
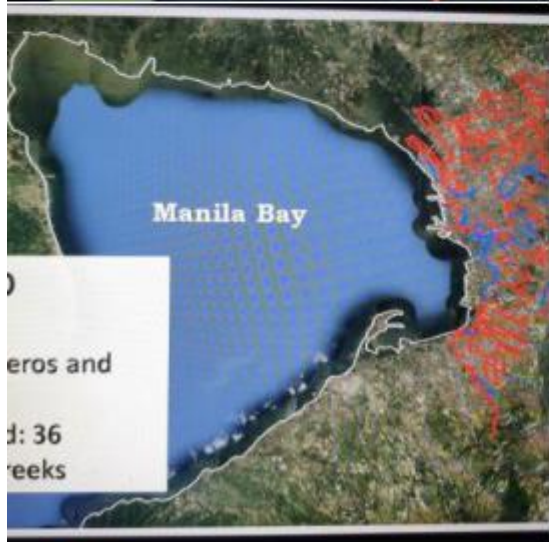
👍👎🗨️ 9K

2.6K Comments 1.2K Shares



ONE News
15h · 🌐

LOOK | The DENR presents plans for Manila Bay's baywalk area, as well as areas covered by the bay's rehabilitation. "We intend to make this a tourist destination," says Environment Usec. Jonas Leones. (via [News5](#) / Shyla Francisco)



👍❤️😬 1.1K

284 Comments 234 Shares



Saturday, 10 October 2020
Daily Tribune

Manila baywalk tagged 'discipline' zone

He said to guard against litter and waste polluters, they are looking at putting up a police outpost in front of the white beach

BY FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD
@tribunephil_FTW

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it has prepared a letter to be sent to the City Government of Manila to declare the whole stretch of the baywalk area as a "discipline zone" to maintain the cleanliness and peace and order in the area.

Benny Antiporda, DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns, said there will be a strict implementation of the city's anti-littering ordinance to ensure the whole area will be clean and shielded from any waste or garbage thrown by undisciplined people.

"We prepared a letter to the local government of Manila already declaring the whole stretch of the baywalk area as a discipline zone *para magkaroon ng strict implementation ng anti-littering, 'yung anti na naghahintay ng alam mo na, lahat po iyan hihigpitan po iyan,'* Antiporda said during a recent interview of *Daily Tribune's* online program "Katribu Council."

He said to guard against litter and waste polluters,

they are looking at putting up a police outpost in front of the white beach where environmental marshals and representatives of the Department of Tourism (DoT) will be staying. They will also be provided with bikes to conduct bike patrols along the baywalk area.

"At the same time, *yung second floor ng magiging outpost diyan* will serve as a viewdeck for the white sand area," he added.

To prevent people from defecating in the bay's waters, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu ordered the Manila Bay Task Force to come up with two public toilets in the area that can be used by visitors and poor people. Sidewalk vending will also be prohibited.

A facility built during the time of former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza will also be converted into a souvenir shop where tourists can buy souvenirs and other items.

We prepared a letter to the local government of Manila already declaring the whole stretch of the baywalk area as a discipline zone *para magkaroon ng strict implementation ng anti-littering.*

To ensure that floating garbage will not reach the baywalk area, Antiporda said they will set up trash boom barriers within the two kilometer stretch of the breakwater.

With regards to the dolomite white sand that was deposited along the bay, the DENR official said this will also be maintained with additional sand every six months.

"*Lahat ng nourish area, lahat ng beach area talagang mine-maintian po. Kahit Boracay, mine-maintain po,*" he said.

Cimatu earlier thanked officials and employees of DENR and other *mandamus* agencies for their "dedication and hard work to fully carry out the President's marching order to rehabilitate Manila Bay in compliance with the Supreme Court's continuing *mandamus.*"



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFONSO PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE *@tribunephil_of*

SOUTHERN Police District members donated convalescent plasma in a drive by its Community Affairs Development Division in coordination with the Philippine Red Cross. Plasma contains antibodies that are vital in the fight against COVID-19.



Focus on cleaning Manila Bay waters, Binay tells DENR

Published October 9, 2020, 7:26 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senator Nancy Binay on Friday called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to prioritize cleaning up the waters of Manila Bay as was primarily ordered in the Supreme Court's 2008 mandamus.



Sen. Nancy Binay

“Dapat ang main goal is to clean the water (Our main goal should be to clean the water). Yeah, maganda ho talaga yong nakikita natin ngayon na white sand, pero kung babalikan natin, madumi pa rin ang tubig, hindi ba (the white sand we are seeing now is pleasing, but if we backtrack, the water quality is still poor, isn't it).”

“Baka apo sa tuhod na natin ‘yong maabutan na pwedeng nang magswimming dyan kasi malinis na ‘yong tubig (It might be our great grandchildren who will finally enjoy swimming in a clean Manila Bay),” she added.

Binay, proposed to Senator Cynthia Villar, chairperson of the Senate environment committee and sponsor of the DENR's 2021 budget, to consider aligning some funds for improving the water quality in the Manila Bay.

Villar, who has initiated programs for the Manila Bay's rehabilitation in her own capacity, supported Binay.

“We support you on that, we just want clean water in Manila Bay,” she said.

In its presentation before the Senate panel, the DENR reported that it has cleaned up 36 estuaries and creeks since the Task Force Manila Bay was formed in 2019. There are a total of 378 of them connected to the Manila Bay.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said they aim to bring down fecal coliform levels in the Manila Bay to 200 most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters so it could be swimmable.

For 2021, a P1.7-billion budget was proposed for the Manila Bay rehabilitation, which also includes funds for cleaning up of river system and esteros.

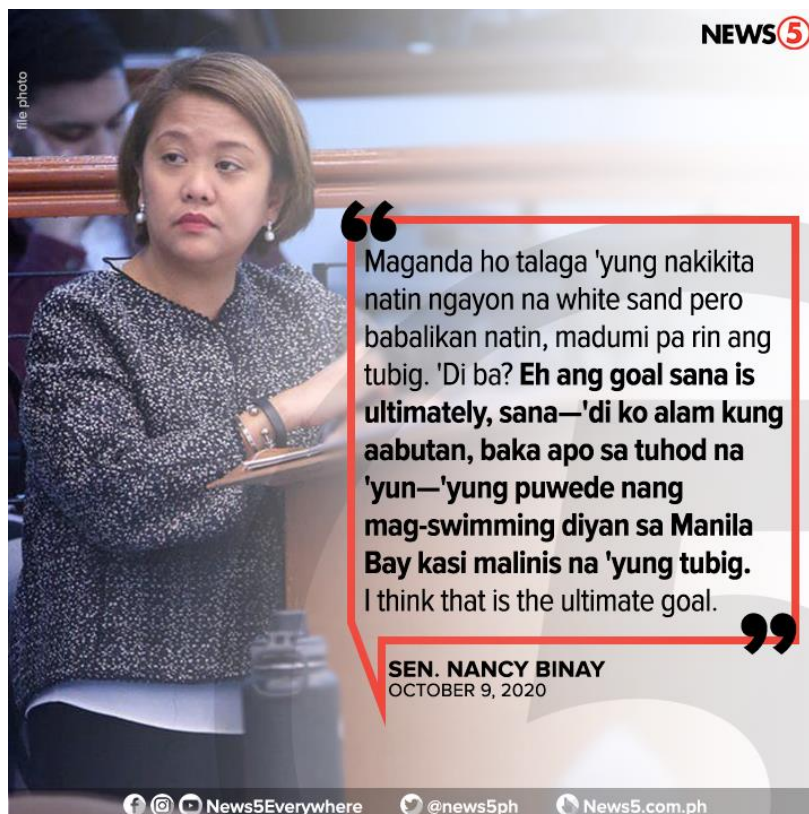


News5
8h · 🌐

Sinabi ni Sen. Nancy Binay na dapat mas prayoridad ng budget ang paglilinis ng tubig sa Manila Bay kaysa sa ginagawang beach nourishment project at baywalk area.

Ito'y matapos ipahayag ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa budget hearing na nais nilang gawing tourism center ang baywalk noong ipresenta ang kanilang plano para rito.

"Ang aim naman is to improve the water quality so ang issue ngayon, limitado na nga 'yung pondo. Eh baka dapat 'yung pondo na gagastusin for the baywalk eh baka dapat mas nilagay na lang sa paglilinis ng tubig," aniya. | via JC Cosico See Less



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/News5Everywhere/photos/a.182218585268237/222382022774719/?type=3&source=48>



Dolomite bad for Manila Bay; plant mangroves instead – UP scientists

Published October 9, 2020, 7:16 PM

by [Alexandria Dennise San Juan](#)

Scientists from the University of the Philippines (UP) are pushing for the planting of mangroves in the shorelines of [Manila Bay](#) rather than overlaying it with crushed [dolomite "white sand"](#) to help solve environmental issues in the area.

The UP Institute of Biology reiterated that it is “strongly against” the overlaying of crushed dolomite on a portion of the Manila Bay shoreline, a rehabilitation and beautification project currently being carried out by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“The dumping of dolomite sand on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way of spending government money. The fund should have been directed to more viable, scientifically sound projects that can restore Manila Bay to a state that is fit for recreation,” it said.

The Institute also expressed its willingness to assist the DENR in implementing a science-based rehabilitation program for the heavily polluted bay that targets the recovery of its biological functions and services and understands the interplay between natural processes and human activities.

According to the group, environmental problems hounding Manila Bay caused by increasing human settlement and years of use and poor management moved the Supreme Court to issue a mandamus directing government agencies to clean, rehabilitate, and preserve the bay. This began in January, 2019 with three phases – cleanup/water quality improvement; rehabilitation and resettlement; and education and sustainment.

However, the recent project involving the use of dolomite sand does not address any of these rehabilitation phases, adding that it is “even more detrimental to the existing biodiversity as well as the communities in the area,” it added.

Among those who will be affected by this project are migratory and resident birds, including species classified as “threatened” that use the whole stretch of the bay as a feeding, resting, roosting, and breeding area.

“The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds thereby reducing their habitat,” the Institute explained.

For the rehabilitation program to be successful, the Institute recommended that the project should demonstrate a grasp of land-sea connectivity as well as possible immediate, short-term, and long-term impacts at species, ecosystem, and seascape scales.

“Its core must be the strategic protection and conservation of biodiversity and ecological integrity providing the ecosystem services: the very reason why we need to rehabilitate Manila Bay,” it said.

Instead of dumping dolomite sand, the Institute pointed out that rehabilitating mangroves is a nature-based solution that is cheaper and more cost-effective.

It is also promoted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as one of the most effective nature-based solution programs that can contribute in biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation strategy.



The group cited as example the mangroves in Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA), a protected wetland that is also managed by DENR, which has contributed in biodiversity conservation not just for shorebirds but also for various terrestrial and aquatic fauna.

“Having ecologically healthy mangroves will also help lessen heavy metal contamination a condition that beset Manila Bay for a long time. A similar ecosystem- and/or bay-wide approach can be implemented rather than in a narrow strip, which is the case in the recent beach nourishment project,” it emphasized.

“Collaborative action among institutions and stakeholders is needed to ensure that efforts to rehabilitate Manila bay will benefit both the environment and the society,” the group added.



Mangroves, not dolomite: UP group offers help in ‘science-based’ bay rehab

05:50 AM October 09, 2020



TRUE COLORS The natural gray sand of the shores of Manila Bay can be seen at the edge of the artificial “white sand” dolomite beach adjacent to the US Embassy in this photo taken on Thursday. Planting mangroves, instead of the expensive and “even more detrimental” beautification project, was the correct way of helping rehabilitate the polluted bay, according to the University of the Philippines Institute of Biology. —RICHARD A. REYES

Instead of overlaying Manila Bay’s shoreline with crushed dolomite rocks, the government should invest in rehabilitating mangroves as part of the solutions to its woes, according to scientists from the University of the Philippines (UP).

In a statement, the UP Diliman Institute of Biology expressed its willingness to assist the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in forming and implementing a science-based rehabilitation program for the heavily polluted bay. This program, it said, would target the recovery of the bay’s biological functions and services by restoring and protecting key habitats, reducing pollution and managing invasive species.

“January 2019 was declared the official start of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program, which had three phases, namely cleanup/water quality improvement, rehabilitation and settlement and education and sustainment,” the institute said on Monday.

“The recent project involving the use of dolomite sand does not address any of these,” it said.

Harmful to biodiversity

The project is “even more detrimental” to the existing biodiversity, as well as communities in the area, the institute said.

The UP scientists were the latest to oppose the government project which involved the overlaying of crushed dolomite rocks sourced from Cebu province along a short stretch of baywalk near Roxas Boulevard. Government officials, including President Duterte, have welcomed the P389-million “beach nourishment” project, but environmentalists have called it an expensive beautification effort that will not solve Manila Bay’s persisting problems.

Among those who will suffer from the costly project are the migratory and resident waterbirds that use the whole stretch of the bay as their feeding, resting, roosting and breeding areas, according to the UP Institute of Biology.



Reduced habitat for birds

“The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds, thereby reducing their habitat,” it said. “Any habitat reduction or loss will reduce opportunities for migratory birds to feed and refuel on their migration journey.”

Mangrove rehabilitation, on the other hand, is a cheaper nature-based solution that can contribute in biodiversity conservation and in climate change adaptation, the institute said. “Having ecologically healthy mangroves will also help lessen heavy metal contamination, a condition that beset Manila Bay for a long time,” it said.

“The recent effort of dumping dolomite sand on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way of spending government money; a critical resource during the pandemic that could have been put to better use by spending for the needs of medical front-liners and the millions of our hungry fellow Filipinos,” it added. —JHESSET O. ENANO



UP Diliman Institute of Biology on Sunday



Statement of the Institute of Biology Against the Artificial Placement of Crushed Dolomite as part of Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program



Institute of Biology Statement Against the Artificial Placement of Crushed Dolomite as part of Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program

The Institute of Biology is strongly against the recent artificial placement of crushed dolomite in the reclaimed area of Manila Bay being carried out by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Manila Bay's scenic sunsets is its significant role in the ecological integrities surrounding it. Manila Bay provides provisioning (e.g., fish production), filtering functions by mangroves, cultural (e.g., tourist attraction), and ecosystem services (e.g., as habitat for species). However, increasing years of unsustainable use and poor management took their toll on the bay. The wide range of environmental problems that need to be addressed include erosion and siltation to harmful algal blooms, subsidence and ground water depletion, overexploitation of fishery resources, habitat conversion and degradation, land-based and sea-based pollution, and tides of garbage. To address this, the Supreme Court issued SC Mandamus on Manila Bay (G.R. 171947-171949) in 2016, which directs government agencies to clean, rehabilitate and protect Manila Bay. January 2019 was declared as the official start of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, which had three phases namely 1) cleanup/water quality improvement and resettlement, and 2) education and sustainability. The recent use of dolomite sand does not address any of these rehabilitation phases and is more detrimental to the existing biodiversity as well as the communities in the bay.

Successful, the rehabilitation program needs to demonstrate a grasp of the bay's ecology as well as possible immediate, short-term, and long-term impacts at the local, regional, and seascape scales. Its core must be the strategic protection and conservation of the bay's ecological integrity providing the ecosystem services: the very reason for the bay's existence.

For instance, the case of the waterbirds. At the peak of the migration season, Manila Bay is home to 171,500 to 208,500 waterbirds of 90 species (Jensen, 2018). Many of these species are of international conservation concern or classified as threatened species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), such as Chinese Egret, Black-faced Spoonbill (IUCN Endangered), and Far Eastern Curlew.

Manila Bay, with its intertidal and mangrove areas, is considered an important stopover site for migrating waterbirds including three threatened species. Except for built-up areas, migrating and resident birds use the whole stretch of the bay as a feeding, resting, roosting, and breeding area. Any habitat reduction or loss will reduce opportunities for migratory birds to feed and refuel on their migration journey. The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds, thereby reducing their habitat. Moreover, intertidal muddy sediments, and the epibenthic organisms that inhabit them, perform crucial ecosystem functions including erosion protection, nutrient cycling and carbon sequestration (Boots, et al. 2020). The stretch of intertidal area that is buried in dolomite will no longer be able to provide the above mentioned ecosystem services thereby affecting the productivity and integrity of the coastal environment.

Rehabilitating mangroves (based on species-substrate matching and species restoration) is an example of a nature-based solution (NBS) that is cheaper and more cost-effective than the dolomite dumping project. It is promoted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as one of the most effective NBS programs that can contribute to biodiversity conservation and in climate change adaptation strategy. The mangroves in Las Piñas-Malabon Critical Habitat Ecosystem Area (LPMCEA) is a protected wetland under the international Ramsar Convention that is also managed by DENR. Indeed, LPMCEA contributes to biodiversity conservation not just for shorebirds but also for various terrestrial and aquatic fauna. Having ecologically healthy mangroves will also help lessen heavy metal contamination (Gabriel and Salmo 2014), a condition that beset Manila Bay for a long time. A similar ecosystem- and/or bay-wide approach can be implemented rather than in a narrow ring, which is the case in the recent beach nourishment project.

We advocate and are willing to assist the DENR in a science-based rehabilitation program for Manila Bay that targets the recovery of its biological functions and services (e.g., through restoring and protecting key habitats, managing invasive species, reducing pollution, and understanding the interplay between natural processes and human activities). The recent effort of dumping dolomite sand on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way of spending government money; a critical resource during the pandemic that could have been put to better use in spending for the needs of medical frontliners and the millions of our hungry fellow Filipinos. The fund should have been directed to more viable, scientifically sound projects that can restore Manila Bay to a state that is fit for recreation. Collaborative action among institutions and stakeholders is needed to ensure that efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay will benefit both the environment and the society.

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Mangroves better than dolomite for Manila Bay rehab –UP biologists

Published October 10, 2020 12:08am

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

Biologists from the University of the Philippines on Friday advised the government to use mangroves instead of covering Manila Bay's shoreline with crushed dolomite as the former was a "cheaper and more cost-effective" form of rehabilitation.

In a statement, the UP Diliman Institute of Biology (IB) said that the use of mangroves for rehabilitation was promoted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as one of the most effective nature-based solutions that can contribute to biodiversity and conservation as well as being a climate change adaptation strategy.

"We advocate and are willing to assist the DENR in a science-based rehabilitation program for Manila Bay that targets the recovery of its biological functions and services... and understands the interplay between natural processes and human activities," said the institute.



According to the IB, a rehabilitation program must demonstrate a grasp of land-sea connectivity as well as possible immediate, short-term, and long-term impacts at species, ecosystem, and seascape scales.

“Having ecologically healthy mangroves will also help lessen heavy metal contamination, a condition that beset Manila Bay for a long time,” it said.

The institute disapproved of the dolomite project, saying that the funds given to it could have been directed to “more viable, scientifically sound projects.”

According to the Department of the Interior and Local Government, P28 million of the [P389 million allocation for Manila Bay rehabilitation and cleanup project](#) was used for the crushed dolomite.

“The recent effort of dumping dolomite sand on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way to be spending government money; a critical resource during the pandemic that could have been put to better use by spending for the needs of medical frontliners and the millions of our hungry fellow Filipinos,” it said.

It further added that the dumping of dolomite sand reduced the habitat of vulnerable and endangered bird species.

“Any habitat reduction or loss will reduce opportunities for migratory birds to feed and refuel on their migration journey. The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds thereby reducing their habitat,” The institute said.

[The project was widely criticized](#) in September over issues of possible health hazards from crushed dolomite as well as the timing of the project amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The DENR rejected the criticism while President Rodrigo Duterte [congratulated Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu](#) for the developments at Manila Bay. — **DVM, GMA News**



Mangroves not dolomite: UP biologists offer services to rehabilitate Manila Bay

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 06:06 PM



People flock to baywalk to witness the sunset by the new “white sand” project in Manila Bay on September 19, 2020. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA — “Science-based” programs should be implemented in order to rehabilitate Manila Bay, biologists from the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman said, as they offered their services to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“We advocate and are willing to assist the DENR in a science-based rehabilitation program for Manila Bay that targets the recovery of its biological functions and services (e.g., through restoring and protecting key habitats, managing invasive species, reducing pollution, etc.) and understands the interplay between natural processes and human activities,” the UP Institute of Biology said in a recent statement.

“To be successful, the rehabilitation program needs to demonstrate a grasp of land-sea connectivity as well as possible immediate, short-term, and long-term impacts at species, ecosystem, and seascape scales. Its core must be the strategic protection and conservation of biodiversity and ecological integrity providing the ecosystem services: the very reason why we need to rehabilitate Manila Bay,” it added.

The institute said that the budget for dolomite sand could have been allotted as resources for the pandemic response or “viable, scientifically sound projects that can restore Manila Bay to a state that is fit for recreation.”

“The recent effort of dumping dolomite sand on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way of spending government money; a critical resource during the pandemic that could have been put to better use by spending for the needs of medical frontliners and the millions of our hungry fellow Filipinos,” the experts said.

“The fund should have been directed to more viable, scientifically sound projects that can restore Manila Bay to a state that is fit for recreation. Collaborative action among institutions and stakeholders is needed to ensure that efforts to rehabilitate Manila bay will benefit both the environment and the society,” it added.

They added that the dumping of dolomite sand reduced the habitat of migrating waterbirds including those “threatened species.”

“The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds thereby reducing their habitat,” the institute said.

“Any habitat reduction or loss will reduce opportunities for migratory birds to feed and refuel on their migration journey,” it added.

Citing the Las Piñas Parafiaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA) as an example, the group of biologists suggested that rehabilitating mangroves can help in “biodiversity conservation” in Manila Bay.



“Rehabilitating mangroves (based on species-substrate matching and species zonation) is an example of a nature-based solution (NbS) that is cheaper and more cost-effective than the dolomite dumping project,” the group added.

The UP Marine Science Institute earlier said that the rehabilitation of Manila Bay is an "arduous task" and efforts should come from residents, people using the area, and the government.

The institute noted that authorities should address "poor water quality" and the "threat of erosion" in Manila Bay under the government's rehabilitation program.

- With reports from Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/09/20/mangroves-not-dolomite-up-biologists-offer-services-to-rehabilitate-manila-bay?fbclid=IwAR1LmMwu7J3hCIIpkO86smyCnA_Nz6US5x8WHgWVvSNoM7HXtmCaIW4Lg6w



Environmentalists claim Manila Bay's dolomite beach rehab is a waste of money

October 9, 2020 3 min read

By Tracy Cabrera

WHAT was intended to beautify Manila's bay front into a world-class beach area with the dumping of crushed dolomite rock has turned out to be something that environment officials did not expect as the once white material has been stained and blackened by dirt and tidal waters.

And according to scientists from the University of the Philippines, instead of overlaying Manila Bay's shoreline with dolomite, the government should invest in rehabilitating mangroves as part of the solutions to its pollution woes.

In a statement, the UP Diliman Institute of Biology expressed its willingness to assist the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in forming and implementing a science-based rehabilitation program rather than the questionable measure it has initiated to improve conditions of the heavily polluted bay.

This program, the scientists said, would target the recovery of the bay's biological functions and services by restoring and protecting key habitats, reducing pollution and managing invasive species.

"January 2019 was declared the official start of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program, which had three phases, namely cleanup/water quality improvement, rehabilitation and settlement and education and sustainment," the institute disclosed.

"The recent project involving the use of dolomite sand does not address any of these," it added.

The UP scientists pointed out that the 'project' that has been implemented is "even more detrimental" to the existing biodiversity, as well as communities in the area.

Government officials, including President Rodrigo Duterte himself and foreign affairs secretary Teodoro Loacin Jr., have welcomed the P389-million 'beach nourishment' project, saying it was a "stroke of genius."

But environmentalists insisted it would not solve Manila Bay's persisting problems, branding it an expensive beautification effort that will go kaput eventually.

"Among those who will suffer from the costly project are the migratory and resident water birds that use the whole stretch of the bay as their feeding, resting, roosting and breeding areas," the UP Institute of Biology stressed.



“The dumping of dolomite in Manila Bay has effectively covered part of the intertidal area used by the birds, thereby reducing their habitat. Any habitat reduction or loss will reduce opportunities for migratory birds to feed and refuel on their migration journey,” it said.

“Mangrove rehabilitation, on the other hand, is a cheaper nature-based solution that can contribute in biodiversity conservation and in climate change adaptation. Having ecologically healthy mangroves will also help lessen heavy metal contamination, a condition that beset Manila Bay for a long time,” the institute enthused.

As a final word, the scientists noted that the recent effort of dumping crushed dolomite on a reclaimed part of Manila Bay is not the best way of spending government money.

“(Amidst the coronavirus pandemic we face today,) money is now a critical resource . . . that could have been put to better use by spending for the needs of medical front-liners and the millions of our hungry fellow Filipinos,” they concluded.



'Biggest policy shift': Cimatu pushes to prioritize bamboo in tree-planting efforts

Katrina Domingo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 11:03 PM

MANILA - Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu on Friday said the national government is undergoing its "biggest policy shift" in terms of its planting efforts by prioritizing the propagation of bamboo over lumber.

The government's tree planting efforts go to waste when illegal loggers cut trees for lumber, but bamboo regrows even when cut, Cimatu said in a Senate budget hearing.

"I-maximize natin 'yung bamboo... Ito ang ating concentration ngayon," he said.

(Let us maximize the bamboo... We will concentrate on it.)

"Dagdagan natin ito, taniman natin kung puwede 'yung public and private [properties] mismo para hindi na tayo mag-rely masyado sa lumber sa bundok," he said, noting that there are now machines that can convert bamboos into lumber.

(Let's increase it, and if possible let's plant it in public and private properties so we do not have to rely much on lumber from the mountains.)

Before the "policy shift," bamboo only makes up 20 percent of the total number of trees being planted and propagated by the government.

That number will be doubled to 40 percent, Cimatu said.

As of last year, 84,000 hectares of land has already been planted with bamboo trees, DENR Forest Management Bureau Director Lourdes Wagan said in an earlier interview.

But Cimatu said that the success of the DENR's bamboo-planting program would not just "rely by hectares."

"Kahit hindi masyado malaki, basta punong-puno ng mga kahoy at mabubuhay lahat," the Environment chief said.

(It's okay even if we don't cover a lot of land, as long as an area is filled with trees that are all alive.)

"I will not accept below 85 percent survival rate," he said.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/09/20/biggest-policy-shift-cimatu-pushes-to-prioritize-bamboo-in-tree-planting-efforts>



DENR reminds 'plantitas' of Wildlife Law

Published 2 hours ago on October 10, 2020 04:40 AM

By [Hananeel Bordey](#) @tribunephil_hana



CALDERON: Just a reminder PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF IISD REPORTING SERVICES

Plant enthusiasts called “plantitas” or “plantitos” should be reminded of the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act as the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DENR) warned that they may be buying “critically-endangered” plant species.

DENR Assistant Secretary Ricardo L. Calderon told the Senate hearing on DENR’s proposed P25.5-billion budget for 2021 that with the advent of COVID-19, more and more plant enthusiasts should be reminded of the Wildlife Act.

“The Wildlife Act covers the flora and fauna (plants and animals) that’s why we emphasize the presence of endangered species,” Calderon said.

Calderon explained that there are permits needed before collecting plants as traders may be violating the law if they gathered plant species considered as critically endangered.

Most of these critically-endangered plants are species that can only be found in the Philippines.

“They may be gathering threatened and critically endangered plants and other s that are endemic to the Philippines,” he explained.

The environment official was further asked by Senator Nancy Binay if there are ongoing information campaigns about plants that can and cannot be collected.

Calderon said the information and education campaign is part of the P78 million for Wildlife Conservation Program of the agency.

The DENR has yet to provide the Senate panel all the details and specific amounts for the information campaign on plant collection.

Binay pointed out that they should inform the plant enthusiasts about the penalties of collecting and selling plants that are considered “critically endangered.”

Calderon said there are criminal and administrative penalties for those who will violate the Wildlife Act.

DENR was also asked to submit a briefer on the information campaign they do to avoid poaching and trading of critically-endangered plant species.



Under the Republic Act 9417, any person who willfully and knowingly exploits wildlife resources through trading, collecting, and possessing will face fines and imprisonment provided by the same law.

The department was also asked about their programs that will protect the plants from being poached.

Calderon said the protection of these plant species is covered by their Protected Area Management program which will receive P643 million for 2021.



DENR cautions ‘plantitas, plantitos’ from collecting endangered plants

By: [Christia Marie Ramos](#) - Reporter / [@CMRamosINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 10:56 PM October 09, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has cautioned “plantitas” and “plantitos” from collecting threatened or critically endangered plants as doing so would result in penalties.

“With the advent po ng COVID-19, marami nga ho ang (there are many) plantitos and plantitas...Dapat aware din po tayo na mayroon tayong (We should be aware of the) Wildlife Act,” DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau director Ricardo Calderon said during Friday’s Senate hearing on the proposed budget of the agency.

“Yun pong Wildlife Act, covered po noon ang flora and fauna kaya po ine-emphasize po natin sa publiko na hindi ho basta nagga-gather ng halaman sa mga kagubatan kasi po meron po silang mga permiso bago makapag-gather nito at baka po ang naga-gather nila ay mga threatened at critically endangered plants natin,” he added.

(The Wildlife Act also covers flora and fauna; that’s why we are emphasizing to the public that they can’t just go ahead and gather plants from the forest without the permits because there could be instances that they are not aware that what they are gathering could be endangered plants.)

Under the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, “no person or entity shall be allowed possession of wildlife unless such person or entity can prove financial and technical capability and facility to maintain said wildlife.”

Senator Nancy Binay then asked the DENR if it has sufficient budget to fund a campaign informing the public on which species are allowed or are prohibited from being collected.

According to Calderon, the DENR’s wildlife conservation program, which has an allocation of P78 million, includes funding for an information education campaign conducted by the agency’s regional offices.

“Although iyun po ay maliit, kulang,” the DENR official said.

(Although that’s too small, it won’t be enough.)

“Siguro magandang tignan if there’s enough information campaign dahil ang dami ngang bagong plantita and plantito e baka hindi nila alam na yung binibili pala nila e kasama na do’n sa listahan ng endangered species,” Binay said.

(I think we should determine if there’s enough information campaign because many have become plantitas and plantitos, they may not be aware that what they’re buying could be included under the endangered species list.)

JE

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1345910/denr-cautions-plantitas-plantitos-from-collecting-endangered-plants>



DENR may paalala sa mga plantito, plantita

By [Gemma Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)

- October 10, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Pinaalalahanan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga plantito at plantita na may umiiral na batas tungkol sa pag-aalaga at pagkuha ng mga halaman na itinuturing na mga endangered o malapit nang maubos.

Sa pagdingig ng Senado kaugnay sa panukalang budget ng DENR, sinabi ni Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon, na umiiral ang Wild Life Resources Confirmation and Protection Act of 2001 kung saan nakasaad dito na dapat ay may permiso muna bago makakuha ng ilang uri ng halaman sa gubat.

Ito ang sinabi ni Calderon matapos na tanungin ni Sen. Nancy Binay tungkol sa pag-aalaga ng mga halaman sa mga bahay na nauso sa gitna ng COVID-19 pandemic.

Paliwanag ng opisyal, may partnership naman sila sa mga pribadong institusyon para mapangalagaan ang mga endangered species at kasama rin sa budget ng DENR ang P643 milyon para maalagaan ang mga deklaradong protected management area.

Umabot na umano sa mga 137 ang mga protected management area na idineklara ng Kongreso kung saan nandoon ang mga itinuturing na endangered species na mga halaman.

Nasa 7.2 ektaryang lupain umano ang protected management area sa iba't ibang bahagi ng bansa.

Sa ilalim ng batas, makukulong ng hanggang 4 na taon at pagmumultahin ng hanggang P300,000 kapag napatunayang nangolekta sa mga kagubatan na protected management area.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2020/10/10/2048545/denr-may-paalala-sa-mga-plantito-plantita/amp/>



Plantito, plantita `wag basta mangolekta

By Abante News Online — Last updated Oct 9, 2020

NEWS



Pinaalalahanan ng Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) ang mga plantito at plantita sa pagbili ng mga "critically-endangered" na mga halaman.

Sa pagdinig ng panukalang P25.4 bilyong pondo ng DENR para sa 2021, nagbabala si Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon tungkol sa Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act kung saan may katumbas na parusa ang bumibili ng mga endangered plant species.

"Yon pong Wildlife Act covered po noon ang flora and fauna (plants and animals) kaya po ine-emphasize po natin sa ating publiko na hindi ho basta naga-gather ng halaman sa mga kagubatan," dagdag pa nito.

Paliwanag pa ni Calderon, binibigyan umano nila ng permit ang mga trader bago sila makapagbenta ng mga halaman.

Tinanong ni Senador Nancy Binay ang DENR kung may information campaign ba silang ginagawa tungkol sa mga halaman na hindi maaaring kolektahin na sinoman.

Sabi naman ni Calderon, ang information at education campaign ay bahagi ng P78 milyong pondo para Wildlife Conservation Program ng ahensiya. (Dindo Matining)



DENR seeks P643M for wildlife protection vs. poaching amid brisk sales of plants

Published October 9, 2020 9:51pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA news

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Friday said it has earmarked over P600 million for protected area management to prevent poaching of endemic and endangered plant and animal species in the Philippines.

During a Senate hearing on the agency's proposed P25.5 billion budget for 2021, DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Director and Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon confirmed that the COVID-19 lockdown resulted in higher demand of "plantitos" and "plantitas" for leaf babies.

"Yun pong ating programa sa wildlife kasama po 'yun sa ating protected area management na kung saan meron po tayong P643 million for 2021 sapagkat dito po sa ating mga protected area, dito po ang gene pool ng ating mga endemic flora and fauna kaya po ang mga habitat natin pinoproteksyunan natin at pinapangalagaan natin," he told senators.

There are 107 legislated protected areas nationwide which covers 7.2 million hectares of land, he added.

Calderon also warned the public against gathering plant species in these areas as they may face fines and imprisonment in violation of Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

"Ine-emphasize po natin sa ating publiko na hindi ho basta nagga-gather ng halaman sa mga kagubatan sapagkat meron po dapat silang mga permiso bago makapag-gather nito at baka po ang naga-gather nila ay mga threatened and critically endangered plants," he said.

In August, the Bureau of Plant Industry proposed guidelines to [regulate](#) the growing ornamental plant industry in the country.—LDF, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/759237/china-to-issue-10-million-digital-yuan-in-first-public-test/story/>



DENR to 'plantitos, plantitas': Collecting critically endangered plants illegal

Katrina Domingo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 06:14 PM



Plant shops at QC Memorial Circle are seen in this file photo. *Kara Santos*

MANILA - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Friday warned plant and gardening enthusiasts to avoid collecting plants considered "critically endangered" as getting these from the wild is considered illegal.

"Dapat aware din po tayo na mayroon tayong Wildlife Act," DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Director Ricardo Calderon said during a Senate budget hearing.

(We have to be aware of the Wildlife Act.)

"Covered noon ang flora and fauna kaya ine-eemphasize natin sa ating publiko na hindi basta nagga-gather ng halaman sa mga kagubatan kasi meron silang mga permiso [na kailangan] bago makapag-gather nito," he said.

(It covers both flora and the fauna that's why we are emphasizing to the public that they should not just gather plants from forests because some of these need to have permits.)

Under the said law, "no person or entity shall be allowed possession of wildlife unless such person or entity can prove financial and technical capability and facility to maintain said wildlife."

"Threatened wildlife possessed without certificate of registration shall be confiscated in favor of the government, subject to the penalties," the law read.

Breaking this law could result in up to 12 years in prison or a fine as much as P12 million.

The government is asking P643 million in 2021 to fund the management of some 107 protected areas where the "gene pool" of endangered plants and animals are being grown and kept, Calderon said.

Plantitos and plantitas -- vernacular for plant hobbyists -- have become a fad after Luzon was placed on lockdown in mid-March, forcing Filipinos to stay indoors for several months to avoid the possible spread of COVID-19.

Sen. Nancy Binay urged the DENR to launch more information campaigns to ensure that more Filipinos would be aware of the consequences about collecting endangered plants.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/09/20/denr-to-plantitos-plantitas-collecting-critically-endangered-plants-illegal?fbclid=IwAR3zu2TF_O5IC6oAKB4Qkk3tw4ZJ1_Rhkkq6gV7oy3kflGvIbusM7QarURk



Binay urges DENR to intensify info drive on 'critically endangered' plants

Published October 9, 2020, 6:19 PM

by [Hannah Torregoza](#)

Senator Nancy Binay on Friday urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to beef up its information campaign to let plant enthusiasts know about the penalties of collecting and selling plants that are considered "critically endangered."



Senator Nancy Binay (Senate of the Philippines / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Binay said it is imperative that the DENR is able to inform "plantitos" and "plantitas" about the penalties they could face under the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act should they be caught collecting rare plant species that are protected by the government.

The senator noted there are more poachers now due to the rising demand for plants.

"I think it's best to look into the agency's information campaign because we have so many plant enthusiasts right now (and) they may unknowingly be buying plants that are already in the list of endangered species," Binay said during the Senate's hearing into the DENR's proposed P25.5-billion budget for 2021.

"For instance, 'waling-waling,' for a time is considered an endangered species but due to science and technology, luckily breeders were able to propagate 'waling-waling'," she pointed out.

DENR Assistance Secretary Ricardo Calderon assured that the agency is doing its part informing the public to be aware of the country's wildlife conservation law through various social media platforms.

"We emphasize to the public that under the Wildlife Act, we cannot just be careless in gathering plants from our forests," Calderon said in his response to Binay.

"They might be gathering plants considered threatened and critically endangered plants like the feature plant which we are trying to preserve because this is already endemic to us, in the Philippines," he explained, adding that the law carries criminal and administrative charges for those who will violate the law.

The DENR, however, has yet to provide the Senate specific details about its information campaign on plant collection.

The agency was then asked to submit to the committee a briefer on their information campaign program aimed at protecting critically endangered plant species from being poached.

Calderon assured that the protection of plant species is also covered by the DENR's Protection Area Management program, to ensure that the gene pool for the country's flora and fauna are sheltered and tended in their habitats.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/09/binay-urges-denr-to-intensify-info-drive-on-critically-endangered-plants/>



‘Turn trash site into ecotourism site’

posted October 09, 2020 at 10:05 pm

Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya—Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regional Director Gwendolyn Bambalan recently urged local officials here to further develop their Sanitary Landfill (SL) into ecotourism purposes.

Bambalan, along with local government officials here visited the town’s SL and recognize it as a show window for state-of-the-art facilities for Minerals Recovery Facility (MRF) in Cagayan Valley.

She also thanked local officials for their compliance to the provisions of the Ecological Solid Waste Management (ESWM) act and recommended that the area will be further developed into an ecotourism area for ESWM.

“You can plant trees surrounding the area through the National Greening Program (NGP) and use the treated water to irrigate the plantations,” she said.

Bambalan advised local officials to apply for tenure instrument for occupying and utilizing forestland in the operation of their facilities. Ben Moses Ebreo

“You need to have a permit for you to be more environmentally compliant, the staff working in the facilities should be provided with protective gears for their safety,” she said.

Bambang’s SL also has leachate treatment facility and MRF which was established in compliance with the ESWM Act of 2000.

Mayor Pepito Balgos said the P65 million SL, inaugurated in June 2019 is an engineered waste management facility touted as the first of its kind in Region 2.

He said the facility serves as the town’s final disposal site for solid and residual wastes providing a leachate management system simultaneously storing solid wastes while decomposition process takes place thus, protecting the underlying groundwater against contamination.

Kim Jimenez, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (MENRO) said the LGU established its MRF and vermi composting facility in 2011.

He said the LGU started operating its machines for biowaste crusher, and bottle and glass pulverizer in its MRF last year. Ben Moses Ebreo



MGB: Mining sector needs govt support

By Eireene Jairee Gomez

October 10, 2020

The country's mining industry has great potential that is only "waiting to be tapped," particularly by investors willing to do business and comply with the country's mining laws, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

In an interview with The Manila Times on Thursday, MGB Director Wilfredo Moncano said that although the sector "has enormous potential waiting to be tapped," it also needs "legislative and executive department support."

His remarks came after Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez 3rd said the industry should be revived to create more jobs amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic, and that the sale of some government-held mining assets were being mulled over.

Moncano admitted that the country has idle mining assets worth billions "that need serious investors willing to comply...with our country's laws."

Citing data from its Land Geological Survey Division, the MGB chief said the value of metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources in the country, including sand and gravel, was estimated at about \$7 trillion.

"However, these resources are still in the ground. [They] need to be dug, hauled and processed before [they] become a saleable product. If [they are] not extracted, [they would remain as resources] and will not be a factor in this time of the pandemic," he added.

In the first semester of 2020, mineral production value fell by 14.37 percent to P53.88 billion from P62.92 billion in the same period last year. The overall performance of the metallic sector was dictated by the pandemic, which adversely hit world metal prices and hampered mining operations.

An agency under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), MGB is responsible for the conservation, management, development and use of the country's mineral resources. These include those in reservations and public lands.

The MGB and DENR have been coordinating with DoF on this matter since June, according to Moncano. In their regular Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) meetings, he said they had discussed the potential contribution of the industry to help the economy recover if given the "appropriate" support.

He added that the industry's contribution to the economy is less than 1 percent, which could be attributed to various factors, mainly the "unstable" government policy on mining.

"Right now, there are still suspended mines, unrenewed FTAA (financial or technical assistance agreement) and MPSAs (mineral production-sharing agreements), and issues on moratorium in the processing of new MPSAs and the open-pit ban," Moncano said.



The value of wildlife

Published 3 hours ago on October 10, 2020 04:00 AM

By [TDT](#) [@tribunephil](#)



The green sea turtle is often illegally caught for its green-hued meat and colorful shell. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DR. FRANCESCO RICCIARDI

What's the value of a parrot soaring above a forest? How about a marine turtle grazing serenely by the coast?

The reasons for conserving wildlife range from the moral obligation to prevent extinction to more pragmatic reasons like wildlife tourism or the protection of natural systems which benefit local communities.

To better appreciate the value of marine turtles and blue-naped parrots, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Department of Environment and Natural Resources Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB) and NIRAS Asia Manila sought expert counsel to review the economic value of wildlife recently.

Led by environmental economist Dr. Agustin Arcenas, the report analyzed the monetary value and ecosystem benefits derived from marine turtles and blue-naped parrots, representing some of the most iconic wildlife of the Philippines.

“The study aims to convince decision-makers that many animals are worth more alive than dead by assessing the trade, tourism and ecological value of marine turtles and blue-naped parrots,” explained Dr. Arcenas. Results will be publicized in the coming months.



Illegal wildlife trade is the second largest cause of extinction next to habitat loss.
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PNGKIT.COM

Other speakers included two marine turtle experts, Cecilia Fischer from ADB and independent consultant Romeo Trono. Two parrot experts, ornithologist Dr. Juan Carlos Gonzalez of the University of the Philippines Los Baños and biologist Peter Widmann from the Katala Foundation, shared their insights. Forty-two representatives from the government, academe, plus international aid and nonprofit agencies attended the online event, which was part of a DENR-ADB/GEF project to combat the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) in the Philippines.

The Philippines is a hotspot of biodiversity but also an IWT hub, having served as an illegal transshipment point for elephant ivory, as a source country of wildlife and its byproducts such as pangolins and marine turtles, as well as a destination of trades, such as parrots kept as pets.



“People know that wildlife plays an important role in balancing the environment, but their economic value has never been taken seriously,” added DENR-BMB Wildlife Resources Division OIC Theresa Tenazas. “This study can finally give our enforcers, law practitioners, prosecutors and judges the correct valuation of wildlife — preventing the dismissal of wildlife cases because of the inability to establish their economic value, an argument often used by offenders to escape conviction.”

DENR-ADB/GEF is pushing for stronger legal reforms against IWT, enhanced capacity-building for law enforcers, plus demand reduction measures targeting consumers, with an emphasis on marine turtles and blue-naped parrots — legally-protected animals, which are nevertheless regularly captured for consumption, curio and pet trade.

“Biology, conservation science and economics must be meshed together to defeat the illegal wildlife trade and we are glad to see that the Philippines is taking a leading role in this,” concluded ADB environmental specialist Dr. Francesco Ricciardi.



Villar tells DENR: 'Force' Manila Water, Maynilad to shoulder siphoning costs

Katrina Domingo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 12:21 PM



Oil and grease wastewater was collected from a restaurant in Pasay on February 1, 2019. *Kori Quintos, ABS-CBN News/file*

MANILA - Sen. Cynthia Villar on Friday urged Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to "force" water concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad to shoulder the cost of siphoning services of their customers, saying consumers are also being charged for water treatment.

Twenty percent of all water bills go to environmental charges for waste water treatment, Villar said during the Department of Environment and Natural Resources budget hearing in the Senate.

"Powersahin ninyo ang Maynilad at Manila Water na anuhin nila 'yung waste water. We're paying for that," said Villar, who chairs the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change

(You should force Maynilad and Manila Water to do something about the waste water. We're paying for that.)

"Pag na-over[flow] 'yung kanilang septic bowls, it's the responsibility of Maynilad and Manila Water to get it kasi we're paying for our waste water treatment," she said.

(If septic bowls overflow, it's the responsibility of Maynilad and Manila Water to get it because we're paying for our waste water treatment.)

While some companies are exclusively designed to provide declogging and siphoning services, these entities usually dump waste water in rivers without treating it in sewage treatment plants (STP), the senator said.

"Itong STP na ito responsibility ng Maynilad at Manila Water," Villar said.

(These STPs are the responsibility of Maynilad and Manila Water.)

"Si Maynilad and Manila Water, dapat dalhin nila 'yun sa waste water treatment facilities nila," she said.

(Maynila and Manila Water are supposed to take these to their waste water treatment facilities.)

Villar's family owns Prime Water, another water concessionaire operating in 124 cities and municipalities in the Philippines.

The senator did not mention in the hearing if her family's water company has been shouldering siphoning services for their customers.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/09/20/villar-tells-denr-force-manila-water-maynilad-to-shoulder-siphoning-costs>



Use DENR funds for rivers other than Las Piñas-Zapote –Villar

Published October 9, 2020, 10:12 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar on Friday advised the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to redirect to more polluted rivers in the country its proposed funds for the clean-up of the Las Piñas-Zapote River.



Sen. Cynthia Villar (Senate of the Philippines / MANILA BULLETIN)

During the Senate finance subcommittee's deliberation of the DENR's proposed 2021 budget, Villar said the rehabilitation of the Las Piñas-Zapote River does not need funding from the national government as she said she and her family have been spending on it for nearly a decade.

"Remove us from here, baka sabihin ng mga tao mo sila naglinis ng Las Piñas-Zapote River as a performance, eh tanggalin mo 'yon kasi hindi sila ang naglinis no'n," Villar, who is set to sponsor the DENR budget, told Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

"I've been doing this for the last seven years, eight years. So we don't need you."

"Baka sabihin nila gawa nila. Hindi sila tumulong doon, kami naglinis noon," she pointed out.

Villar said that under the agency's P25.5-billion proposed 2021 budget, the DENR has allocated funds for desilting the Las Piñas-Zapote River. She did not specify the amount.

But she said they can manage, as they have been doing for years for their hometown Las Piñas City.

"We can take care of the Las Piñas-Zapote River. We have been cleaning it for the last seven years. We have constructed a 20-kilometer river drive already and were finishing another five-kilometer so don't worry about the Las Piñas-Zapote River. We have done it," she said.

Villar said the DENR could focus on rehabilitating the Pasig River, "because it has more problems than [ours]."

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said the Iloilo River could also receive the funds that Villar has rejected, saying his home city Iloilo is still faced with budget constraints in rehabilitating it.



Drilon also cited challenges in the resettlement of informal settlers and removal of commercial establishments along the waterway.

Cimatu said Pasig River continues to be a priority of the DENR. He also said that the rehabilitation of the Iloilo River serves as the “model” for this effort.

In 2002, Villar, former Las Piñas City representative, along with her husband, former Senate President Manny Villar, initiated the “Sagip Ilog” project to resuscitate the Las Piñas and Zapote Rivers thru the collection of garbage, plastics and water lilies in the river.

The project was recognized by the United Nations, giving it a “Best Practices Award” in 2011.



Budget sa Las Piñas-Zapote river clean-up, ipinababasura ni Villar

ni [Ronilyn Seminiano Reonico](#) | October 9, 2020



Ipinababasura ni Sen. Cynthia Villar sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang paglalaan ng budget para sa Las Piñas-Zapote river clean-up.

Pahayag ni Villar kay Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, "We don't need you. Just focus your attention on other rivers that need you."

Aniya pa, "I have worked so hard to clean up this river, and I did it without the help of DENR... so please remove this from your targets. "Baka sabihin nu'ng mga tao mo, sa inyo sila naglinis noon.

Hindi kaya mag-focus na lang kayo sa Pasig River kasi malaki problema ng Pasig River."

Matatandaang noong 2002, nagsagawa si Villar ng Las Piñas River Rehabilitation Program sa annual celebrations ng Las Piñas-Zapote River Festival. Noong 2016 naman, nagsagawa rin si Villar ng Zapote River Drive.

Nais naman ni Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon na ilaan na lamang ang budget para sa nasabing proyekto sa Iloilo river.

Aniya, "Replace that with the river in Iloilo kasi hanggang ngayon, kailangan pa rin namin ng tulong."

Samantala, ayon kay Cimatu, kailangan ding paglaanan ng pondo ang kapaligiran upang maiwasan ang mga environment-related issues ngayong panahon ng pandemic COVID-19.

Source: <https://www.bulgaronline.com/post/budget-sa-las-pi%C3%B1as-zapote-river-clean-up-ipinababasura-ni-villar>



Villar: DENR layas sa Las Piñas-Zapote river

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Oct 9, 2020

NEWS



Photo courtesy of facebook.com/SenatorCynthiaVillar



21 0

Pinalayas ni Senadora Cynthia Villar ang clean-up sa Las Piñas-Zapote river sa mga target na proyekto ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“We don’t need you. Just focus your attention on other rivers that need you,” lahad ni Villar kay Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

Ayon sa senadora, kanya nang napagtuunan ng pansin ang naturang dagat ilang taon na ang nakaraan at hindi siya papayag na angkinin ng iba ang credit sa paglilinis ng naturang katubigan.

“I have worked so hard to clean up this river, and I did it without the help of DENR... so please remove this from your targets,” aniya pa.

Dati nang kinasa ni Villar ang Las Piñas Rehabilitation Program para sa pagpapalinis ng naturang dagat, at nanguna din sa selebrasyon ng Las Piñas-Zapote River Festival. (RP)

Source: <https://tonite.abante.com.ph/villar-denr-layas-sa-las-pinas-zapote-river/>



'We don't need you': Villar tells DENR to scrap budget for Las Piñas-Zapote river clean-up

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 09 2020 05:41 PM

MANILA— Sen. Cynthia Villar on Friday told the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) not to allot funding for the clean-up of the Las Piñas-Zapote river, saying she has already shouldered the clearing of the waterway for nearly a decade.

"We don't need you. Just focus your attention on other rivers that need you," Villar told Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu during a budget hearing.

The DENR should not allot funds for the Las Piñas-Zapote river in its proposed 2021 budget so that the national government does not take credit for its clean-up, she said.

"I have worked so hard to clean up this river, and I did it without the help of DENR... so please remove this from your targets," said the senator, whose bailiwick is Las Piñas City.

"Baka sabihin nung mga tao mo sa inyo sila naglinis noon. Hindi kaya mag-focus na lang kayo sa Pasig River kasi malaki problema ng Pasig River," she said.

(Your staff might say that they were the ones who cleaned that up. Why not focus on the Pasig River because it's a bigger problem.)

In the early 2000s, Villar launched the Las Piñas River Rehabilitation Program and spearheaded annual celebrations of the Las Piñas-Zapote River Festival.

In 2016, Villar - who also served as Las Piñas representative - launched the Zapote River Drive, a road along the said river which starts from the Zapote Bridge and ends at the Molino Dam.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said his home province Iloilo would gladly take the fund Villar is letting go.

"Replace that with the river in Iloilo kasi hanggang ngayon kailangan pa din namin ng tulong (because until now, we need help)," he said, noting that informal settlers living along rivers and animal farming near streams continue to pollute waterways in his home province.

Cimatu told senators that the Pasig River remains to be a priority of his agency.

"The mouth of the Pasig river is in Baseco and Parola," he said.

"Nandiyan ang informal settlers (informal settlers are there) so that is our priority," he said.

The DENR is asking for a P25.5-billion funding in 2021.

While the COVID-19 pandemic remains top priority, funding for the environment should also be sustained as viruses usually emerge due to environment-related issues, Cimatu said.



P25.5B budget ng DENR sa 2021, suportado ni Villar; Pasig River rehab, pinatutukan ni Drilon



October 9, 2020 @ 2:32 PM 17 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Sinimulan nang talakayin ni Senador Cynthia Villar ang P25.5 bilyong badyet ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa 2021 upang mahusay na mapangalaan nito ang ating kapaligiran.

Sa hiwalay na pahayag, sinuportahan naman ni Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon ang pagkilos ng DENR sa rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River kaya't hiniling nitong tutukan ang pagkilos tulad ng ginawa sa Boracay.

"We aim to ensure that the proposed budget of DENR will be efficiently utilized towards the conservation, management, development, and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources, which constitute the primary responsibilities of DENR," ayon kay Villar.

Kaugnay nito, hiniling ni Drilon kay Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu na ipatupad ang malakas na political will sa Pasig River tulad ng ginawa nito sa Boracay Island upang tuluyan nang malinis ang naturang ilog.

Dahil dito, hiniling ni Drilon kay Cimatu na magsumite ng kaukulang listahan ng mga espisipikong lugar sa Pasig River na pauunlarin at lilinis ng DENR upang matukoy ng Senado kung sapat ang badyet dito.

"I have confidence in the leadership of Sec. Cimatu because he has shown it in Boracay. I would like him to exercise the same political leadership in Pasig River even on a limited extent so we can show our countrymen that we are doing something," ayon kay Drilon sa ginanap na virtual hearing sa budget ng DENR.

Samantala, kinuwestiyon naman ni Senador Imee Marcos ang pagtaas ng 60% sa pondong inilalaan ng pamahalaan sa National Greening Program na tumaas mula sa P3.15 bilyon tungo sa P5.15 bilyon para sa 2021.

Ayon kay Marcos, palagi na lamang natutuklasan ng Commission on Audit (COA) na nabibigo ang ahensiya sa pagtudla sa kanilang targets kaya't hindi nararapat na itaas ang pondo dito.



“The national government has given billions to this program and yet, year on year, our forest cover is diminished. Has the implementation or the program guidelines significantly changed so that these errors along the way will no longer be repeated?,” ayon kay Marcos.

Dinidinig ng Senate Finance subcommittee b ang panukalang P25.5 bilyong badyet ng DENR sa pamumuno ni Villar sa ginanap na virtual hearing.

“Inatasan natin ang ahensiya ang pagbagling mula sa people’s organization approach tungo sa paglalahok ng pamilya sa pagtatayo ng mga plantasyon at pagpapalakas sa paggamit ng punong kawayan upang mapahusay ang survival rate ng puno sa greening program,” ayon kay Cimatú bilang tugon sa katanungan ni Marcos. **Ernie**



Big hike in 2021 budget for ‘poorly-rated’ DENR greening program questioned

By: [Christia Marie Ramos](#) - Reporter / [@CMRamosINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:26 PM October 09, 2020



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu defends the proposed 2021 budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Friday, October 9, 2020, at the Senate. (Screengrab/Senate PRIB)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Imee Marcos on Friday questioned the “very large” allocation increase for the government’s flagship reforestation program despite its repeated failure to meet yearly targets.

“Tanim nang tanim lang ang DENR. Tusok lang ng tusok sa lupa at sa bundok eh wala namang tumutubo,” Marcos said during the Senate hearing on the proposed P25.5-billion budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for 2021.

“It has failed repeatedly to meet its targets year-on-year, the national government has given billions to this program,” added Marcos, even saying that the Commission of Audit has constantly flagged the said program.

Marcos raised this concern as she noted that DENR’s enhanced national greening program got a 60-percent increase in its proposed allocations from P3.15 billion this year to P5.15 billion for next year.

The National Greening Program or NGP is an initiative launched in 2011 that sought to plant 1.5 billion trees on 1.5 million hectares of land in six years from 2011 to 2028.

According to Forest Management Bureau Director Lourdes Wagan, DENR has so far planted 1.7 billion trees on approximately 2 million hectares area.

Still, Marcos pointed out that the country’s forest cover is constantly diminishing. The Philippines’ forest cover is the lowest in Asia at only 23 percent, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu also told senators.

“Every year we put billions into this project for almost a decade. Everywhere in the Philippines, we know that the forest cover has been severely diminished or compromised,” Marcos stressed.

“Ang tanong ko lang, may malawakang pagbabago ba ang pag-implement nitong programang ito, kasi kung tuloy-tuloy na ganito, sayang lang, dinagdagan pa natin sa taong ito,” she added.



Wagan said the DENR shifted its NGP strategy from people's organizations-approach to a design that involves families to foster better stewardship.

"The reason why is we would like to engage the upland communities or upland families," the DENR official said, noting that the agency shifted to this kind of approach last year.

"This is being done nationwide already. Secretary Cimatu has already provided the guidelines for this. We have the technical bulletin for our people in the field to follow and to guide them," she added.

Marcos requested the DENR to provide the Senate a breakdown of how the agency intends to spend its proposed 2021 allocation for NGP.

"Give us a breakdown of how you intend to spend this very large increase of 60 percent for the national greening program which has been poorly-rated over the decades in order to justify the increase," the senator said.

"I want you to prove me wrong. I am very keen to be mistaken because this has been crashing great disappointment to all of us," she added.

'Too ambitious'

According to Cimatu, he made a "drastic" policy shift in the DENR's implementation of the NGP.

"I had made a drastic policy on this National Greening Program because I think it was too ambitious. Padamihan ng hectares ang pinaguusapan," he said.

"We have to do something dito... 'Yung areas sa regions in the country na hindi talagang pwedeng magtanim ng mga native trees ay 'wag na nating pilitin. I-concentrate natin," he added.

KGA



DENR reforestation budget hike questioned

Published October 9, 2020, 6:22 PM

by [Mario Casayuran](#)

Sen. Imee R. Marcos has questioned the increase in the budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for its reforestation program.



Senator Imee R. Marcos (IMEE MARCOS FACEBOOK / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Marcos was referring to P5.15 billion for the DENR National Greening Program for 2021. This is higher by 60 percent compared to the 2020 budget of P3.15 billion.

During a Senate Committee on Finance sub-committee hearing, Marcos noted that DENR must be on the planting mode at any place because there is no growth of trees.

This, according to Marcos, leads to wastage of government funds.

Marcos, chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs Committee, said billions of pesos are spent but there appears no evidence that the reforestation program for denuded mountains could be a success.

Target of the DENR National Greening Program is to plant 1.5 billion seedlings in 1.5 million hectares from 2011 to 2028.



Paglobo ng budget para sa nat'l greening program ng DENR, kinuwestiyon sa Senado

By **Bombo Bam Orpilla**

-October 9, 2020 | 7:25 PM

Kinuwestiyon ng ilang senador ang paglaki ng pondo na hinihingi ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa kanilang reforestation program.

Partikular na tinukoy ni Sen. Imee Marcos ang national greening program na pinapopondohan ng DENR sa susunod na taon ng P5.15-bilyon.

Ito ay mas mataas ng 60% kumpara sa budget ng programa ngayong taon na nasa P3.15-bilyon lamang.

“Tanim nang tanim lang ang DENR. Tusok lang ng tusok sa lupa at sa bundok eh wala namang tumutubo,” wika ni Marcos sa ginanap na pagdinig sa Senado sa proposed P25.5-billion budget ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa 2021.

Sinabi ni Marcos, taon-taon ay tumataas ang pondo ng programa ngunit mistulang wala naman daw nangyayari kaya tila nagsasayang lang daw ng pondo ang pamahalaan.

Taon-taon din aniya ay hindi nakakamit ang mga layunin ng programa sa kabila ng pagbuhos ng pondo.

Ang naturang programa ay isang inisyatibo na inilunsad noong 2011 na naglalayong magtanim ng 1.5-bilyong puno sa 1.5-milyong ektarya ng lupa sa loob anim na taon mula 2011 hanggang 2028.

Ayon kay Forest Management Bureau Director Lourdes Wagan, nakapagtanim na raw ang DENR ng mahigit sa 1.7-bilyon na mga puno sa nasa 2-milyong ektarya ng lupa.

Pero bingyang diin ni Marcos, nakakalbo pa rin ang mga kagubatan.

“Every year we put billions into this project for almost a decade. Everywhere in the Philippines, we know that the forest cover has been severely diminished or compromised,” ani Marcos.

“Ang tanong ko lang, may malawakang pagbabago ba ang pag-implement nitong programang ito, kasi kung tuloy-tuloy na ganito, sayang lang, dinagdagan pa natin sa taong ito,” dagdag nito. Bunsod nito, ipinasusumite ni Marcos sa DENR ang detalye kung papaano nila balak gamitin ang pondo para sa greening program.

Sinabi naman ni DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu na magkakaroon daw ng malaking pagbabago sa nasabing programa.

“I had made a drastic policy on this National Greening Program because I think it was too ambitious. Padamihan ng hectares ang pinaguusapan,” ani Cimatu.

“We have to do something dito... ‘Yung areas sa regions in the country na hindi talagang pwedeng magtanim ng mga native trees ay ‘wag na nating pilitin. I-concentrate natin,” dagdag nito.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/paglobo-ng-budget-para-sa-natl-greening-program-ng-denr-kinuwestiyon-sa-senado/>



Villar grills DENR over tardy compost, plastic-recycling gear rollout

Published October 9, 2020 4:06pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

Senate committee on environment chairperson Cynthia Villar on Friday grilled the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) over the delayed distribution of composting and plastic recycling equipment.

"Under the 2017 budget of DENR, EMB (Environmental Management Bureau) will procure, you promised me 182 composting facilities to be given to LGUs in the Manila Bay area and 25 plastic recycling equipment into school chairs to be given in the Manila Bay area. What happened to this?" Villar asked during the deliberation on the agency's proposed P25.5 billion budget for 2021.

"Remember this is 2017 budget... 'Yan bang pangakong 'yan ay pangako o pako?' she added. Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said there had been bottlenecks in the implementation of the project but this is expected to be delivered by year-end or early 2021.

"The composters will be ready for delivery within December or January but I think there's a problem with the molder but again it's under process," Antiporda said.

"[For the plastic recycling equipment], the molders is under process, nagkaroon lang po ng failure of deed. Uumpishan po ulit ito. Basically, within year 2021 po eh mayroon na pong linaw ito," he added.

The DENR was just making sure that the equipment to be procured will be "advantageous to the people," Antiporda said.

But Villar stressed that a three-year delay is too much.

Further, the senator said P1.138 billion was again allocated for the said program under the DENR's 2020 budget.

As an update, Antiporda said 672 out of the 1,516 cities and municipalities that need shredders and composting facilities nationwide will be provided with such this year.

"Alam mo sana pagbigay mo niyan bigyan mo kami litrato na naipamigay ito dahil wala pa kaming nakikita," Villar said.

The senator also proposed to reduce the DENR's budget earmarked for composting facilities and recycling equipment in 2021.

"Anyway, wala naman nai-implement. Three years na wala pang nai-implement so puwede nang bawasan ang budget noon di ba," she said.

Villar required the agency to give updates regarding the pending project come January. — **DVM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/759182/2-996-new-covid-19-cases-push-philippines-total-over-334-000/story/>



Villar renews support to wetlands

posted October 09, 2020 at 11:15 pm

by [Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar again stressed the importance of the wetlands in providing wildlife habitats, including sanctuaries to migratory birds.

On the occasion of the World Migratory Bird Day, Villar said the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park South of Manila Bay had served as resting and feeding grounds for migratory birds from Japan, China and Siberia.

“Wetlands have a unique characteristic and serve a lot of functions, and that is why these areas are protected and preserved,” Villar said.

Villar, head of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, authored Republic Act 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas Act or E-NIPAS Act, which lists the Las Piñas-Paranaque Wetland Park as a protected area.

She also underscored the urgency of preserving the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park as a result of plans to reclaim Manila Bay.

“There are reclamation projects that plan to build on the buffer zones of the park. We are vigorously opposing this because buffer zones should not be touched in order to preserve the landscape where the wetland now thrives,” Villar said.

She has objected to the plan of the Bacoor and Parañaque local governments to reclaim 320 hectares and 287 hectares, respectively, in the portions of Manila Bay that are delineated as buffer zones of the Wetland Park

The 175-hectare nature reserve provides sanctuary to 82 species of wild birds, including Philippine ducks, Chinese egrets and the Black-winged stilts.

It has 36 hectares of mangrove forest, the thickest and most diverse among the remaining mangrove areas on Manila Bay. There are 11 mangrove species growing in the area, and it is the spawning ground of fish in Manila Bay supporting the livelihood of 300,000 fishermen.

The Ramsar Convention recognized the park’s global importance to biodiversity, so that it declared the park as a Wetland of International Importance along with six other sites in the Philippines: 1. the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park in Palawan; 2. the Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park in Sulu; 3. the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary in Agusan del Sur; 4. the Naujan Lake National Park in Oriental Mindoro; 5. the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Cebu; and 6. the Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area in Negros Occidental.



Villar: Wetland Park mahalaga bilang bird sanctuary



October 9, 2020 @ 12:57 PM 19 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Muling iginiit ni Senadora Cynthia Villar ang kahalagahan ng wetlands o latian sa pagbibigay ng wildlife habitats, kabilang ang santuwaryo ng mga migratory bird.

Sa paggunita ng World Migratory Bird Day, sinabi ni Villar na ang Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park (LPWP) na nasa timog ng Manila Bay ang nagsisilbing pahingahan at feeding grounds ng migratory birds mula sa Japan, China at Siberia.

“Wetlands have a unique characteristic and serve a lot of functions that is why these areas are protected and preserved,” ayon kay Villar.

Iniakda ni Villar, chairperson ng Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, ang Republic Act 11038 o ang Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas Act o E-NIPAS Act, kung saan nakalista bilang protected area ang Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park.

Nagsisilbing santuwaryo ang 175- hectare nature reserve park sa 82 uri ng wild bird ns kinabibilangan ng Philippine ducks, Chinese egret at Black-winged stilts.

Meron itong 36 ektarya ng mangrove forest, ang pinakamakapal at iba-ibang natitirang mangrove areas sa Manila Bay. Sa kasalukuyan, may 11 uri ng mangrove o bakawan ang tumutubo sa naturang lugar.

Ito rin ang lugar ng paitluga ng mga isda sa Manila Bay na sumusuporta sa pangkabuhayan ng mahigit 300,000 mangingisda.

Kinilala ng Ramsar Convention ang global importance ng Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park’s biodiversity kaya idineklara itong Wetland of International Importance kasama ang anim pang lugar sa Pilipinas.

Ang mga ito ay ang sumusunod: 1. Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park sa Palawan; 2. Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park sa Sulu; 3. Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary sa Agusan del Sur; 4. Naujan Lake National Park sa Oriental Mindoro; 5. Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary sa Cebu at 6. Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area sa Negros Occidental.



Binigyan-diin ni Villar ang pagmimintina sa Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park sa kabila ng planong reklamasyon sa Manila Bay.

“There are reclamation projects that plan to build on the buffer zones of the park. We are vigorously opposing this because buffer zones should not be touched in order to preserve the landscape where the wetland now thrives,” sabi ni Villar.

Tinutulan din ng senador ang balak ng Bacoor at Paranaque local government na i-reclaim ang 320 hectares and 287 hectares, ayon sa pagkakasunud-sunod sa Manila Bay na buffer zone ng Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park.

Ipinagdiriwang ang World Migratory Bird Day dalawang beses sa taong ito —May 9 at October 10.

May temang “Birds Connect Our World,” layunin ng pagdiriwang sa taong ito na itampok ang kahalagahan ng pagpapanatili at pagbabalik “ecological connectivity at integrity ng ecosystems” na sumusuporta sa natural na paggalaw ng migratory birds. **Ernie Reyes**



WETLAND MAHALAGA BILANG BIRD SANCTUARY

11 hours ago jake

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Source: http://saksingayon.com/nasyunal/wetland-mahalaga-bilang-bird-sanctuary/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR2ktZk1NZV7C0KQJeZ8yWl6jLbf3RK8ZUuc_eWb_IMjcK7myLCNpagj18

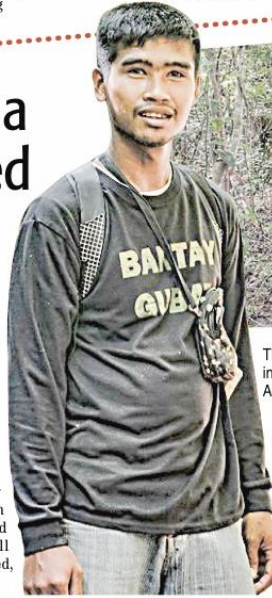


grey-coorea doipnms that can grow to about four meters long and have big

Bringing a watershed to life

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines, together with GCash will plant some 20,000 seedlings across Ipo Watershed.

This is part of WWF-Philippines' Forests for Water project, which seeks to rehabilitate the area. The watershed, located in Norzagaray, Bulacan, supplies 96 percent of the water for Metro Manila. Threats such as erosion and illegal and destructive practices still threaten parts of the watershed, however.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ALO LANTIN/WWF-PHILIPPINES

The watershed is managed and cared for by its inhabitants, many of whom belong to the local Agta-Dumagat people.

WWF-Philippines partner GCash has supported the Forests for Water project since June 2019. Through the program, GCash Forest, they hope to plant 365,000 seedlings across the country, with 120,000 committed to the slopes of Ipo Watershed.

Despite the coronavirus

pandemic, WWF-Philippines is committed to planting all 20,000 seedlings within the year. Restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic have made it difficult to continue with tree planting activities. The conservation organization is currently exploring ways to proceed without endangering their staff.

Both GCash and WWF-Philippines have also prioritized the safety of the communities of Ipo Watershed. Both organizations are currently working on protocols that will allow forest rehabilitation work to continue without endangering local communities.

"Now more than ever, we can see that protecting Ipo Watershed is vital not just because it ensures that there is a reliable water supply for Metro Manila, but because it keeps foreign diseases at bay. By protecting these forests, we reduce the chances of another pandemic," says WWF-Philippines Forests for Water Project manager Paolo Pagaduan.

By protecting these forests, we reduce the chances of another pandemic.

WWF-Philippines, together with its partners, has worked toward the protection and rehabilitation of

the top islands in Asia. Boracay was no. 1; Cebu and Visayas, no.2; and Palawan, was no. 4. Only Penang in Malaysia (no. 3) and Bali in Indonesia (no. 5) managed to break into the top five.

Ipo Watershed since 2017.

"More than ever, we need to ensure the health of this natural buffer, as well as the health and welfare of those who protect the forests for us," continued Pagaduan. "In this time of crisis, we are more relevant than ever, as more people are shifting online and trying out digital platforms for their safety."

"GCash complements the 'stay at home' lifestyle. In line with our vision of finance for all, we will continue to provide accessible, convenient, and a safe way to conduct your financial transactions," said GCash CEO Martha Sazon.

Since the start of the Philippine lockdowns and quarantine, GCash has seen increased user adoption and a 700 percent growth in transactions. The company has used its platform to raise awareness for the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as how their application makes online transactions easier.

Activities are on hold in Ipo Watershed, but both WWF-Philippines and GCash stand ready to continue their efforts to protect this vital source of water. Support WWF-Philippines and the GCash Forest project, and help #ChangeTheEnding as they pursue a sustainable future for all.

Dungon trees are now available for claiming through the GCash app.



Gold refinery owner, 7 workers arrested for illegal storage, disposal of hazardous substances

Published October 9, 2020, 11:06 AM

by [Jeffrey Damicog](#)

The owner of a gold refining facility and his seven employees were arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) after it was found illegally storing and disposing hazardous substances.

NBI Officer-in-Charge Director Eric Distor in a statement identified those arrested as 88 Golden Place Smelting Inc. owner Patrick Edwardson Malibiran and his employees Renato de Pablo, Eddie Ramoso, Josephine Pauso, Julius Villacastin, Federico Cortez, Eliseo Amar, and Aldwin Calano.

Distor said the eight were arrested last Tuesday, Oct. 6, by agents of the NBI's Environmental Crimes Division (NBI-EnCD) during the serving of a search warrant at the gold refining facility of 88 Golden Place Smelting in Bulacan.

Following their arrest, the eight were presented for inquest before the Meycauayan City Prosecutor's Office for violating Section 13 paragraph (a) of Republic Act 6969, the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990; and Section 1 of Executive Order 522, which amended Executive Order 60, Series of 1967, Prescribing Rules and Regulations for the Control and Supervision of the Importation, Sale and Possession of Chemicals Used as Ingredients in the Manufacture of Explosives and for Other Purposes.

"Information disclosed that the hazardous waste generated from their daily operation is not properly disposed in accordance with the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) rules and regulation," the NBI said in a statement.

The NBI-EnCD secured the search warrant after securing certification from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) that "no ECC or Certificate of Non-Coverage (CNC) issued to 88 GOLDEN PLACE SMELTING INC."

"In addition, there were no Permit to Operate, Wastewater Discharge Permit and Hazardous Waste Registration ID issued to the subject company," the NBI said.

The NBI-EnCD conducted surveillance operations at the facility and "were able to enter the premises of the subject area and were able to personally witness the toxic exhaust gases or smoke ejecting from the building chimney, produced by boiling of nitric acid and gold."

"The surveillance team also witnessed the reheating of nitric acid with gold and the emission of produced toxic exhaust gases direct to the air atmosphere from their chimney without proper treatment," the NBI said.



Mindoro Oriental bans mining

By Joe V.C. Laurente

October 8, 2020

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro: The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (Provincial Board) has approved and passed a 25-year moratorium on large scale mining and a ban on small scale mining for 15 years.

Believing that achieving development should not be at the expense of the environment, the 10th Sangguniang Panlalawigan upheld the propriety and legality of Provincial Ordinance 001-2002 the moratorium of mining in the province.

Presiding officer and Vice Gov. Antonio S. Perez Jr., who also authored the resolution, said that the approval of the resolution of all the members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan during its 59th regular session on Monday, October 5) is “a reiteration of the stand of the members of the board and a reflection of the over-all sentiment of Mindoro residents against mining in the province.

“Gayunpaman, ang Sangguniang Panlalawigan ay kailanma’y hindi humahadlang sa mga programang pangkaunlaran para sa Oriental Mindoro. Bagkus, kaagapay ang lahat ng mga miyembro nito sa pagpapasa ng mga ordinansa at resolusyon na magbibigay ng kaganapan sa mga adhikain ng nasyunal at mga local na pamahalaan ukol dito (The Provincial Board is not opposing development, we are one in fulfilling the advocacy of the national and local governments regarding this),” Perez said in a statement sent via SMS to the Manila Times.

With the resolution, it is the intention of the board members to ensure the security of the rich natural resources of the province for the benefit of the next generation of Oriental Mindoro, Perez added. The 25-year mining moratorium was passed during the 4th Provincial Board amidst the application of then Mindex Mining Corporation, a Canadian-owned mining firm for a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The company had since then changed management until today with Intex Minerals ASA. They are applying for an exploration and production permit to more than 9,700 hectares of mountainous area in the central portion of Mindoro Island.

The small-scale mining moratorium meanwhile, was passed in 2013 after the onslaught of several typhoons during that year capped by Typhoon Yolanda in November that inundated parts of the province’s mountain areas blamed on mining and quarry operations in the province.



FCF plants 3,308 tree seedlings

posted October 09, 2020 at 10:00 pm

by [Ben Moses Ebreo](#)

Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya—The FCF Minerals Corporation here has planted more than 3,308 seedlings as part of its commitment and support of the national government tree planting programs and activities.

Barangay Captain John Babliing, citing reports from the mining company said the volume of trees planted covered the second quarter of this year within and outside barangay Runruno.

“These seedlings were planted through the FCF Minerals Corporation’s various reforestation and rehabilitation programs,” he said.

FCF report showed that the company through its Mining Forest Program (MFP) has planted 1,176,115 seedlings with 198,999 seedling donations to barangay Runruno totaling to 1,375,114.

The company also donated some 1,248,785 seedlings to barangay Runruno through the National Greening Program (NGP) supervised by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Babliing also said the company has planted 498,298 seedlings under their Special Tree Cutting and Earth Barring Permit (STCEP) Replacement Program while 186,600 seedlings were also donated to Runruno’s adjacent barangays under the mining firm’s Green House Gas Offsetting Program (GHGOP).



255 North Cotabato residents paid P2k each for tree-planting, other activities

Published October 9, 2020, 1:48 PM

by [Czarina Nicole Ong Ki](#)

Around 255 residents of the municipality of Tulunan in North Cotabato were paid P2,330 each as part of the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) cash-for-work program.

The residents were hired for 10 days from August 4 to 14. They worked on gardening, rehabilitation of roads, daycare centers and schools, tree planting, and reforestation in the hopes of mitigating the economic effects of climate change.

DSWD Field Office XII Regional Director Cezario Joel Espejo said that their cash-for-work aid is part of the agency's Risk Resiliency Program for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (RRP-CCAM). It is a program designed to encourage people to strengthen their efforts against possible disasters.

He explained that the program had a dual purpose: to help people whose livelihoods were affected by the lockdowns imposed due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and improve the country's environmental health.

"It's not only designed to encourage people to strengthen their efforts against possible disaster risks within their communities but to help them ease the economic effects of the pandemic," he said.

The DSWD has targeted 66,381 residents for inclusion in the program this year, while 30,622 others were already covered for cash-for-work all over the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The DSWD explained that the compensation received by the workers of the program is 75 percent or P233 of the total P311 minimum wage set by the Regional Wages and Productivity Commission.



Evidences of whale sharks having injuries caused by boat propellers of different sizes and could be facilitated both from the habituation to boats caused by the practice of hand-feeding the whale sharks, as well as the increased traffic of motorized vessels in the surroundings of the provisioning area.

Steve De Neef, LAMAVE

95% of endangered Oslob, Cebu whale sharks injured due to tourism — study

(Philstar.com) - October 9, 2020 - 7:15pm

MANILA, Philippines — A study published this week showed that whale sharks observed in Oslob, Cebu reportedly have higher number of injuries due to tourism activities, as compared to whale sharks in tourism sites in Australia, Mozambique and the Seychelles.

The [study](#), titled "Scarring patterns of whale sharks *Rhincodon typus* at a provisioning site in the Philippines," was published by conservation biologist Luke Penketh and his group at Large Marine Vertebrates Research Institute Philippines (LAMAVE) in the journal "Aquatic Conservation, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems" last October 4.

According to the study's findings, after assessing the impacts of tourism activities on individual whale sharks in Oslob, Cebu since 2012, LAMAVE found out that "individual whale sharks observed in barangay Tan-Awan, where the butanding are hand-fed daily to enable the tourism interactions, show a significantly higher number of injury, and scars than whale sharks in other non-provisioned (non-fed) tourism sites in Australia, Mozambique and the Seychelles."

"The study highlights the increased risk for these sharks that regularly visit the provisioning site in Oslob, and underline the urgent need to implement proper management interventions to guarantee the tourism activities do not harm these endangered animals," LAMAVE explained in a statement sent to **Philstar.com**.

LAMAVE claims to be the largest independent non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of marine megafauna and their habitats in the Philippines. It strives for conservation through scientific research, policy and education.

The study reportedly presents results from photographic images of 152 individual whale sharks collected by the researchers from Large Marine Vertebrates Research Institute Philippines over a period of 34 months (March 2012 to January 2015) in Oslob, Cebu. The team used photo-identification (photo-ID) to monitor individual whale sharks' presence and movement and gathered data on the presence, size, type and location of scars on the whole body of these gigantic animals as well as the accumulation of these scars over time. These scarring patterns of whale sharks in Oslob were compared with quantitative studies from Ningaloo in Australia, the Seychelles and Mozambique, other known global aggregations where feeding the whale shark is prohibited and enforced.

The study found that whale sharks in Oslob were significantly more scarred than any other studied population: 95% of all whale sharks in Oslob had scars on their body, with abrasion being the most common type of scar. Most of the scars were categorized as nicks and abrasions and were most likely due to the close contact of ropes, small boats at the provisioning site.



Lacerations, which fall into the major category, were observed on 28% of individuals, which is significantly higher than in Ningaloo and Mozambique. These were caused by boat propellers of different sizes and could be facilitated both from the habituation to boats caused by the practice of hand-feeding the whale sharks, as well as the increased traffic of motorized vessels in the surroundings of the provisioning area.

Whale sharks that were observed more frequently in the interaction area showed a significantly higher rate of scarring compared to individual sharks that were seen less frequently in the area; these regular visitors to Oslob accumulated scars over the observation period and suggest a direct causal link between the exposure to the tourism activities in Barangay Tan-Awan and scarring rates.

Scars and wounds, even when non-lethal, may pose a serious risk to these endangered species, increasing the physiological stress of the animals, facilitating the contraction of diseases carried by pathogens like virus and bacteria and decreasing overall the health of the affected whale sharks.

According to LAMAVE, "the high incidence of injuries in the whale sharks provisioned in Oslob is a national concern and there is an urgent need to improve management practices to protect this endangered species."

The whale shark is protected by Republic Act No. 9147 "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act," whereby it is illegal to maltreat and/or inflict injuries on threatened wildlife, and this is further reinforced by the DOT-DA-DILG-DENR Joint Memorandum Circular no.01 series of 2020 (Sect. 8) where it prohibits acts in dedicated interactions sites that would hinder an animals' health, including injury and distress.

The Philippines is a signatory country to the UNEP Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), where the signatories agree and recommend the strict regulation, monitoring and enforcement of the whale shark tourism interaction activities to ensure its sustainable management and conservation value as highlighted in the Concerted Action for the Whale Shark (UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 12.7, 2017).

"The results highlighted in this study, when paired with the existing knowledge on the migratory nature of this species and connectivity between the archipelago, where individual whale sharks identified in Oslob have been re-sighted in Donsol (Sorsogon Region V) Sogod bay (Southern Leyte Region VIII), Tubbataba Reef Natural Park (Palawan Region VIa), Misamis Oriental (Region 10) and nationally connected further abroad to Malaysia, Indonesia and Taiwan, call the National Department of Tourism, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture - in collaboration with the Department of Interior and Local Government to urgently intervene to ensure the sustainable management the tourism activities in the municipality of Oslob, as well as in other Regions, to ensure the long term balance between the socio-economic benefit of the local communities, the conservation of the marine environment and preservation of endangered protected species like the whale sharks," LAMAVE said. — **Deni Rose M. Afinidad-Bernardo**



Photo by Samurai Sabadd Extreme

Antique LGU vows to preserve rare 'bowl corals' in Sebaste Shoal area

Published October 9, 2020 9:19am

Updated October 9, 2020 9:28am

By JUN N. AGUIRRE

PANDAN, Antique —The province’s environment office has promised to preserve the uncommon “bowl coral” (*Halomitra pileus*) that a diving enthusiast group had discovered in the Sebaste Shoal seabed area.

Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) chief Andres Untal said Thursday that the “bowl corals” area will be included in the proposed House of Representatives measure by Antique Rep. Loren Legarda, which seeks to declare the site as protected area.

Diving enthusiast group Samurai Sabadd Extreme from Pandan town had discovered the bowl corals.



Neighboring Pandan town local government, Untal said, backs efforts aimed at preserving the bowl corals. —**LBG, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/travel/759136/antique-lgu-vows-to-preserve-rare-bowl-corals-in-sebaste-shoal/story/>



Ilang dolphin, na-stranded sa baybayin sa magkahiwalay na barangay sa Catanduanes

Oktubre 9, 2020 8:08pm GMT+08:00

Nasa 70 melon-head whales, na kapamilya ng dolphin, ang nakitang stranded sa dalampasigan sa magkahiwalay na barangay sa San Andres, Catanduanes. Sinikap na sagipin ang mga ito at itinaboy sa mas malalim na bahagi ng dagat.

Sa video ng GMA Public Affairs, sinabing natagpuan ang mga melon-head whales, na kapamilya ng mga dolphin, sa Barangay Bon-ot.

"Out of habitat" stranding is a phenomenon when pelagic (off-shore) species of cetaceans, like these melon-headed whales, for some reasons are found close to the shore and are likely to be at risk of being stranded," sabi ni Nonie Enolva, spokesperson ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Sinabi ng BFAR-Bicol, na maaaring biktima ng dynamite o blast fishing ang mga nasawing balyena.

Dagdag pa ng BFAR-Bicol, posibleng na-damage ang kanilang internal organs sa lakas ng pagsabog, base na rin sa kanilang mga tinamong sugat kaya dumugo ang kanilang blowholes, tainga at bibig.

"Such huge damage can only be caused by a massive shock wave that can be caused by an explosion or any other similar activity of equal intensity that created violent changes in water pressure," ayon kay Enolva.

Isinailalim na ang mga ito sa necropsy, habang nakabalik naman sa dagat ang iba. Samantala sa kabilang barangay sa Agojo sa San Andres pa rin, napadpad din sa baybayin ang ilang dolphin.

Tila napansin ng mga residente na nasusugatan ang mga hayop habang pumupunta sa dalampasigan, kaya nagbayanihan sila para tulungan ang dolphins na bumalik sa dagat.

Ayon sa mga residente, hindi nakaalis agad ang mga dolphin at tila nahirapan ang mga ito.

Makalipas ang sampung minuto, nakalangoy na rin ang mga dolphin pabalik sa dagat.-- **Jamil Santos/FRJ, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/umg/759224/ilang-dolphin-na-stranded-sa-baybayin-sa-magkahiwalay-na-barangay-sa-catanduanes/story/>



14 na dolphin, nakitang patay at nakasiksik sa mga bakawan sa Catanduanes

Oktubre 9, 2020 6:46pm GMT+08:00

Labing-apat na dolphin ang nakitang patay sa mga bakawan sa San Andres, Catanduanes.

Sa ulat ng GMA News TV "QRT" nitong Biyernes, sinabi ng mga residente na siyam na dolphin ang una nilang nakita sa bakawan noong nitong Huwebes ng umaga, at kinalaunan at nasundan ng limang iba pa.

Inalis sa bakawan ang mga dolphin at dinala sa dalampasigan para ilibing.

Bago ang insidente, sinabi ng lokal na pamahalaan na unang namataan ang nasa 70 dolphin na malapit sa baybayin noong Oktubre 7 at itinaboy ang mga ito papunta sa malalim na bahagi ng dagat.

Kinabukasan, nakita na ang mga patay na dolphin sa bakawan.

Hinala ng isang biodiversity group, posibleng na-stress ang mga dolphin sa nangyaring pagdumog sa kanila ng mga tao.

Inihayag naman ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)-Bicol region, na posibleng may kinalaman ang dynamite fishing kaya napadpad sa lugar ang mga dolphin. --

FRJ, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/promdi/759213/14-na-dolphin-nakitang-patay-at-nakasiksik-sa-mga-bakawan-sa-catanduanes/story/>



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FRJ, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/promdi/759213/14-na-dolphin-nakitang-patay-at-nakasiksik-sa-mga-bakawan-sa-catanduanes/story/>



Thinking Green: Brian Poe Llamanzares on Sustainability and Climate Change Adaption

- BY THE MANILA JOURNAL EDITORS
- POSTED ON OCTOBER 9, 2020

The COVID-19 Pandemic has put everything on hold— our work, our lives, our economy; and with so much time on our hands, this has given us the opportunity to reflect on the direction of the country. Brian Poe Llamanzares asks the question “will we use this time to build the roadmap to a better tomorrow?”

Having finished Columbia University’s Climate and Society program, Brian, in a speech delivered before industry leaders, discussed how the country’s sustainability agenda relates to how the Philippines can achieve a greener, more resilient and self-reliant economy.

He came up with the three pillars of sustainability.

First Pillar: The Attainment of Sustainability

The 28 year-old speaker stressed on the importance of sustainability specifically in agriculture and fresh water management.

The agricultural sector has greatly affected the country’s economy. According to Brian, agriculture has caused a drop in the Philippine’s GDP from 11.3% in 2015 to 9.2% this year.

The World Food Program has also expressed concerns over the effects of the of the pandemic on countries that are heavily reliant on food importation. Due to the decrease in exports from Vietnam and Thailand, the country’s rice importation projections have also experienced a 10% drop. For Brian, this “raises concern over rice self-sufficiency and the development of a robust agricultural economy in order to remain sustainable” despite external factors such as a global outbreak.

There are several ways to improve our agricultural outlook, however, freshwater management ranks high, says Brian. In 2019, the country’s capital experienced the worst water crisis due to delays in expansion of water management infrastructure and lack of construction of new water sources. “The lack of infrastructure plus a growing population and more frequent dry spells resulted in a devastating water crisis,” he said.

Moving forward, Senator Grace Poe has filed Senate Bill No. 942 “Protection of Watersheds for Irrigation Act,” which aims to properly manage freshwater sources by protecting, conserving and rehabilitating all the Watersheds supporting the National Irrigation System.

“Better management would lead to a stronger agricultural economy, increased food security, and more freshwater would be made available for the urban centers of the country,” he said.

BRIAN POE LLAMANZARES, OFFICE OF SENATOR GRACE POE CHIEF OF STAFF



Second Pillar: Developing a more self-reliant energy sector using renewable energy and more energy efficient technologies

There are many renewable energy companies that are opening across the country due to the falling prices of renewable energy technologies. In an effort to support these start-ups “while attempting to address the rising demand for energy,” Senator Poe authored Senate Bill No. 581 “The Solar Rooftop Adoption Act of 2019” which seeks to help solar rooftop related industries grow by standardizing permitting process, lessening the energy restriction and developing a loan program to help the companies expand. In addition, all government agencies will be mandated to install solar energy systems in their respective offices.

Aside from supporting renewable energy start-ups, modernizing the transportation sector would also help in generating a more sustainable economy. With that in mind, Senate Bill No. 1382 “The Electric Vehicles and Charging Stations Act” was authored by Sen. Grace Poe, Sen. Win Gatchalian, who chairs the senate committee on energy, and other senators. About 79.3% of the country’s fuel consumption is generated by road transportation. The goal is to make our transport sector more energy efficient and through this Senate Bill, we may be able to “effectively make our economy more sustainable and self-reliant.”



Photo Source: Rappler.com

With a net loss of 72.8 Billion Pesos, one of the hardest hit industries by the COVID-19 Pandemic is the transport sector, and at the very heart of it– our Jeepney drivers. While modernizing our transport sector through e-vehicles lessens our dependence on energy importation, for Llamanzares, to mandate the removal without considering the economic burden it would place on the shoulders of our Jeepney drivers would be morally irresponsible. Because of this, Senator Poe called for a more sensitive approach towards any kind of modernization program.

With Senate Bill 867 “An Act Providing for a Just and Humane Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program,” Senator Poe pushes for financial assistance to help Jeepney drivers seek new opportunities and help them build a new life. They will also be given an opportunity to take out a loan with an amortization not exceeding 4% per annum, payable over the course of 15 years.

Third Pillar: Disaster Resilience

“Imagine being a 57-year-old farmer, and watching everything you’ve spent your life building be wiped away by a single typhoon. To rebuild what you’ve lost, you’d fall in debt and struggle to make ends meet. This is why insurance and a department specifically for disaster resilience is so important,” said Llamanzares.



Farmer Benny Taguinod shows his damaged crops in Tuguegarao, Cagayan. Photo By: *Kevin Manalo, ABS-CBN News*

The Philippines is the second most climate vulnerable country in the world; fourth globally in terms of deaths relating to extreme weather events. In 2013, Typhoon Yolanda caused 1.3 Billion pesos in losses in the fishing sector in Region 8 alone while Typhoon Ompong caused roughly 265 Million pesos in losses in livestock. The 2017 Global Climate Risk Index pegged the economic losses of the Philippines due to extreme climate related events at roughly 24.5 Billion pesos.

Imagine spending Billions or even Trillions on building the agriculture backbone of the Philippine economy and creating a more sustainable energy sector— without contingency plans, we stand to lose out what we've gained.

This is why Senator Poe filed Senate Bill No. 866 which provides insurance for farmers and fisherfolk who work in the most climate vulnerable industries in the country.

Aside from that, Senate Bill 124 was authored by Senator Poe in hopes of establishing a disaster risk and reduction management system. Under this bill, the Department of Disaster Resilience and Emergency Assistance and Management would be formed. Under this bill, 3% of all government revenue will be set aside so that the agency can provide funding and machinery to prepare and deal with any disaster as it recognizes that climate vulnerability is in fact, a primary concern of the government.

Of the three pillars, the third is most crucial for building a sustainable economy, said Brian. "It is our way of showing foreign investors that buying into the future of the Philippines comes with a warranty." He added that investing on tools that will help the country prepare for the worst "is not only pragmatic. It is of utmost importance."

As a new generation of young and promising entrepreneurs and political figures are coming to the forefront, Brian reminds them to keep these three pillars in mind.

Source: <https://themanilajournal.com/2020/10/09/thinking-green-brian-poe-llamanzares-on-sustainability-and-climate-change-adaption/?fbclid=IwAR1GZ6I0xCXwcYrHQ64jDSbmwPbesNfsRZRnkGQJnmKsZ4xQ51JEYlEupjg>

Pandemic trash

Text and photos by Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 10 2020 12:45 AM



The housekeeping staff of the Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center in Marikina City takes care of the hospital's medical waste daily. The increased number of COVID-19 patients and the protective personal equipment (PPE) required by both patient and staff, has led to a dramatic increase in the volume of medical waste. *Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News*

Hospital waste

Personal protective equipment (PPE) or the “white suits” come on as the Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center housekeeping team begins to handle its most important package of the day.

The daily routine to gather and dispose hospital waste happens at least twice a day, depending on the load of patients who come through the doors of the hospital in Marikina City.

They prepare a black bin for biodegradable waste and a yellow bin reserved only for biohazard waste, meaning waste with microorganisms that can infect and harm humans or the environment.



Walking down the long hallways of the hospital to the containment facility takes just a few minutes, but for the housekeeping team, where the few minutes are the most critical part of their day, it seems eternal.

They load healthcare waste such as face masks and face shields as well as other potentially infectious hospital waste into the containment facility at the back of the hospital, carefully following the protocols step by step.

In a [report published](#) by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) based on the experience in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the pandemic, it is estimated that Metro Manila's 14 million population can generate as much as 280 metric tons of medical waste in a single day.

The National Capital Region, with about 55% of the nation's total number of COVID-19 cases, used to produce an estimated 47 metric tons of medical waste daily before the pandemic.

As COVID-19 cases in the country continue to rise, medical facilities are getting the brunt, and with the increase in patients come the surge in the volume of infectious medical waste.

The housekeeping team themselves at the Amang Rodriguez hospital could use up to three complete PPE sets during their shift.

A complete PPE set includes the coverall suit, an N95 mask, surgical mask, gloves, goggles, face shield, shoe covers, and a surgical gown.



Despite the protective gear, hospital workers are most at risk to getting exposed to infectious medical waste specially if not managed properly.

But hospitals are not the only place that need to handle healthcare trash responsibly. The communities being serviced by the same hospitals need to know proper waste disposal if they are to fight the pandemic as well.

Masks in public



The coronavirus pandemic has changed the way we live. Everything, from commuting, to buying groceries, to doing ordinary chores in public must include the wearing of face shields and face masks.

What used to be a routine trip to the hospital is now a cause for worry as people have to don protective gear used to be reserved for medical workers.

The task of fighting the pandemic has come down to an individual's knowledge and practice of safety precautions before going out in public. Part of that is the use of protective equipment and what to do with it after use.

Because of the change in lifestyle, residential communities also contribute to the surge in medical waste in the country.

Infectious wastes in the households



In Banaba, San Mateo, Rizal, the community is trying to keep the fight against the accumulation of pandemic trash contained before it leaves the doors of households.

The community's garbage collectors adopted a similar scheme to the hospitals where medical waste, like surgical masks and face shields, should be put in a separate garbage bag.

They took this initiative upon themselves being front liners who have to service the needs of the community.

Jenny Sobrejuanite and her fellow volunteers said the idea is to make sure the medical waste is separated before they collect the garbage door to door. But come collection time, she said few households are able to follow the regulation. They end up segregating the waste themselves when it gets to the barangay materials recovery facility (MRF), a mandated facility that every barangay should have to recover recyclable wastes.



“Pagka may nakita kaming mga face mask o kaya face shields na kasama sa inilabas nilang basura, hindi na namin ginagalaw, direktso na yun sa truck.” Sobrejuanite said.

The task is tedious, and the garbage collectors now wear an extra layer of protection in handling these kinds of trash. When the municipal or city garbage truck comes in the afternoon, they just need to pick up the segregated trash from the MRF and take them to their designated garbage dumps.

“Buti nga po hindi pa kami tinatamaan dito ng COVID,” Sobrejuanite sighed in relief.

“Tumaba pa nga po ako dito,” she joked, “Patpat na patpat ako dati nung 5-years na nakalipas.”

But she said it’s no laughing matter when it comes to following the proper precautions.

“Dati ang mask namin washable pero nung nagkaroon ng COVID disposable na ang gamit namin,” Sobrejuanite explained to emphasize how they too had to change their behavior from before.



While the ADB report emphasized that the proper procedure in handling medical wastes from the household, to transportation, up to its proper treatment before disposal to the dumpsite should have limited manual intervention as possible, it acknowledged certain gaps in the informal sector that sometimes result in the handling of the wastes multiple times thereby upping the risk for informal sector workers.

Medical waste and the vulnerable sector

The people, de Luna lamented, may already be aware of face mask use, but it’s disposal after use is another matter.

De Luna recalled the countless times he has run over with his pedicab garbage bags strewn on the streets. In communities such as these, healthcare waste is mixed with common trash, making it harder for residents to avoid coming into contact with potential infectious material.



He also noted the irregular collection of wastes by the city's garbage trucks, a situation where they are sometimes left with uncollected garbage for weeks.

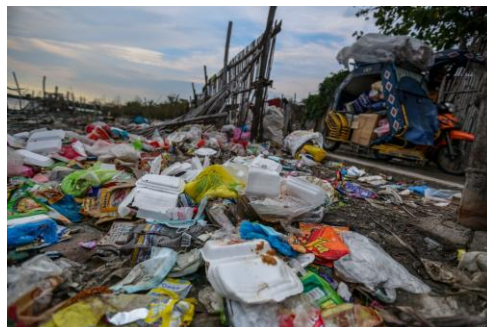
“Pag walang nagko-koleksyon, kanya kanya na lang kami ng walis sa paligid namin.”



Despite all the precautions he is taking, he realized danger is just lurking in the corner.

“Paano ‘ka ko yung health protocol, hindi yata naniniwala ang mga tao dito sa pagi-ingat,” de Luna observed about the improper waste disposal. “Pag nilipad ng hangin at tumapon, hindi na dadamputin.”

With a nervous laughter he implied that just like the garbage they are throwing in the air, the virus in the air could just come back at them without them knowing.





PH posts 2,996 new COVID-19 cases; 1,045 more recoveries

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Oct 9, 2020 4:04:11 PM



The country recorded 2,996 more COVID-19 infections, bringing the total number of cases to 334,770, the Department of Health (DOH) said on Friday. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, October 9) — The country recorded 2,996 more COVID-19 infections, bringing the total number of cases to 334,770, the Department of Health (DOH) said on Friday.

In its case bulletin, the DOH said the 2,554 new cases, or 85 percent, were detected in the last 14 days. Of the total cases, 53,311 are active or currently ill patients, of which 85.8 percent are experiencing mild symptoms, 9.9 percent have no symptoms, three percent are in critical condition and 1.4 percent are severe cases.

Metro Manila registered 1,094 new cases, making it the region with the highest number of new infections, followed by Cavite with 282, Batangas with 166, Iloilo with 152 and Laguna with 147 more sick residents.

The health department also announced 1,045 new survivors, raising the tally of recoveries to 275,307. This is the highest number of survivors since Sept. 19 that is not included in the agency's "time-based recoveries" announcement every Sunday which can sometimes list over 20,000 recoveries.

The death toll also jumped to 6,152 after 83 more patients succumbed to the disease. The new deaths were recorded in different months - one in May, two in June, three in July, five in August, 39 in September and 33 in October.

The DOH explained that 35 recoveries from the previous reports were actually deaths, after validation. It added that 95 duplicate cases including 21 recoveries were also removed from the total case count.

Twelve COVID-19 laboratories were not able to submit their case reports and were not included in the tally, the DOH noted.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) also announced three new cases and four new recoveries among Filipinos abroad. This brings the total number of infected to 10,864, and the number of survivors to 6,919 in 80 countries.

Meanwhile, 3,145 Filipinos overseas are being treated, while the death toll remains at 800, the DFA said.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/10/9/ph-covid19-cases-344-000.html>



PONDO LABAN SA COVID-19, GUTOM, KAWALAN TRABAHO AT IBA PA, NASAAN NA?



October 9, 2020 @ 5:07 PM 15 hours ago

NASAAN na ang pondo laban sa pandemyang coronavirus disease o COVID-19 at gutom, kawalan ng trabaho at iba pa na likha nito sakaling walang mapasang pambansang badyet para sa 2021 at paiiralin ang tinatawag nilang "reenacted budget" o paggamit ng badyet ngayong taon para sa 2021?

Mahalaga ang katanungang ito dahil itinuturo nito na dapat may tiyak at karampatang badyet ang lahat ng sangay ng pamahalaan upang maayos nilang magampanan ang kanilang tungkulin na pagsilbihan at proteksyunan ang mga mamamayan, lalo na sa panahong ito na binabalot ng krisis ang buong bayan dahil sa COVID-19.

Kung paiiralin ang reenacted budget, malaki ang problema dahil hindi akma ang mga badyet at proyekto sa malaking ipinagbago na kalagayan.

Halimbawa, wala sa badyet ngayong 2020 ang pambili ng bakuna at iba pang pangangailangan laban sa COVID-19.

Wala rin sa kasalukuyang badyet ang para sa malala at malawakang gutom na likha ng pandemyang COVID-19.

Gayundin na wala sa badyet ang paglikha ng maraming trabaho laban sa kawalan at labis na kakulangan nito dahil pa rin sa pandemya.

HINDI PWEDENG REMEDYO LANG ANG TUGON

Ang 2020 badyet ay ginawa noong 2019 at wala pa ang nasabing mga problema kaugnay ng pandemya.

Kaya nang tumama ang pandemya magsimula sa mga unang buwan ng 2020, nagkandaletse-letse ang lahat dahil sa kawalan ng kahandaan sa badyet laban dito.

Kaya naman, para matugunan ang krisis na likha ng pandemya, gumawa ng remedyo ang gobyerno sa pamamagitan ng paghahabol ng mga batas na Bayanihan Act 1 at 2.



Tinugon ng Bayanihan Act 1 ang pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan laban sa gutom, kawalan ng trabaho at pagkakasakit sa COVID-19.

Pero kung saan-saan lang kumayod ng pondo ang pamahalaan dahil emergency na ang sitwasyon na kailangang tugunan.

Ang Bayanihan Act 2 ay ginawa ring remedyo makaraang mag-expire ang unang batas ngunit nakatuon na rin ang bahagi nito sa pagbangon ng ekonomiya ng bansa.

Ibig sabihin nito, tatagos ang Bayanihan Act 2 sa susunod na taon.

Kung paiiralin ang badyet ngayong taon na ginawa noong 2019, mawawalan ang buong gobyerno ng tama o akmang badyet na ikakabit sa mga karampatang proyekto para sa 2021.

Walang pambili ng bakuna at iba pang panlaban sa COVID-19, walang akmang badyet sa paglikha ng mga pagkakataon para sa produksyon ng pagkain at gayundin sa paglikha ng trabaho at pagtakbo ng negosyo para bumangon ang buong bansa mula sa matinding krisis.

Alalahaning ang mga ito ang kabilang sa mga pinakamahalagang dapat na pagtuunan ng pansin sa susunod na taon na maging matagumpay lang kung may kaukulang badyet sa mga ito.

PULITIKA ANG INUUNA

Sa ngayon, inuuna ng mga naatasang gumawa ng batas sa badyet ang agawan sa pwesto o pamumulitika.

Pinag-aawayan nina Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano at Cong. Lord Alan Velasco ang posisyong Speaker sa Kamara at kung hindi ito maaayos sa mga panahong ito, maaaring maapektuhan ang pagpasa ng badyet sa tamang panahon.

Habang pinipilit ng isa sa mga ito ang pagtalakay sa badyet sa mga araw na ito upang ngayong buwan ay mabuo ang batas, iginigiit naman ng isa na saka na lang gawin ang lahat sa kalagitnaan ng Nobyembre.

Ngunit lumalabas namang may komite na nagtatrabaho para ayusin ang mga problema sa badyet na ipinanukala ng Malakanyang.

At tila binigyan na ng panukalang badyet ang Senado upang subuking silipin na rin ito bilang panimulang hakbang tungo sa tamang panahon na pagkagawa nito.

Ang problema lang sa ganitong estilo, paano kung reretokehin ng mga kongresman ang panukalang badyet at magkaiba ang retikadong aprubadong badyet sa Kamara sa panukalang badyet na galing sa Malakanyang?



Karaniwang retoke ang paglalagay ng mga pork barrel sa kanya-kanyang distrito ng mga kongresman na maaari nilang gawing hindi basta makapa ng mga senador hanggang sa lumikha ng away ito sa pagitan ng mga kongresman at senador.

Dito na nababalam ang paggawa ng pinal na pambansang badyet at maaaring magkaroon ng "reenacted budget" para sa ilang unang buwan ng 2021 o, pinakamasama, para sa buong taon.

Anak ng tokwa, ano ang mangyayari kung ganu'n sa pagtugon ng pamahalaan sa napakalaki, napakalawak at matagalang krisis na nilikha ng COVID-19?

ANG SENADO AT MALAKANYANG

Sinasabi ngayon ni Senate President Vicente Sotto III, maaaring reenacted budget ang mangyayari o ang badyet para sa taong 2020 ang magagamit para sa susunod na taon.

Ayon naman kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte, kung hindi magawang maipasa ng Kamara ang badyet at matatrapik sa Senado, siya na mismo ang gagawa nito upang makaagapay ang badyet sa pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan, lalo na ang may kaugnayan sa COVID-19 na ikinamamatay na ng libo-libong Filipino at ikinasasakit ng mahigit nang 300,000 at ikinababagsak ng ekonomiya ng buong bansa.

Sa ibang salita, nadadamay na sa awayan sa Kamara ang Malakanyang at Senado at nakaamba ang kawalan ng katiyakan sa kung kailan magkakaroon ng pambansang badyet.

Pero ang higit na nakataya, mga Bro, ay ang kaligtasan sa COVID-19 ng mga mamamayan at pagbangon ng bansa sa krisis na maaaring magtagal ng kung ilang taon.

Nakataya rin ang kakayahan ng pamahalaan na supilin ang pandemya at muling buhayin ang sabihin nating naghihingalong ekonomiya.

Sana, sa huli, maisip ng lahat ng nagpupulitikahan at nag-aagawan ng kapangyarihan habang nakatuon ang mga mata sa maaari nilang manakaw sa salaping bayan ang nakalulungkot at bagsak na kalagayan ng mga mamamayan, pamahalaan at bansa.



US says climate change doesn't threaten snow-dwelling wolverines

Published October 9, 2020, 10:28 AM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

US wildlife officials said Thursday they were withdrawing a proposal to protect wolverines after finding the rare snow-dwelling predators aren't as threatened by climate change as previously thought.



In this file photo taken on January 28, 2016 a wolverine is pictured during its first public appearance at the Animal Park of Sainte-Croix in Rhodes, eastern France. (Photo by FREDERICK FLORIN / AFP)

The move was condemned by conservation groups, who said it was a result of the Trump administration's denial of climate science, and that extra measures were badly needed to save the estimated 300 or so wolverines left in the contiguous United States.

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) said its decision "reflects the latest and best available science, including improvements to our understanding of the biology and behavior of the species, as well as advances in snow and climate modeling."

In 2016, a court ruled the FWS must consider further its decision to drop proposed protections that the agency itself first put forward in 2013.

"In the time since our original proposal, the science on wolverine has been greatly advanced thanks to the work of state wildlife agencies and researchers in the U.S. and around the world," said FWS official Noreen Walsh.

The FWS said Thursday it had recorded 86 photographic detections of the animals through camera-trapping and 157 hair samples between 2016-17, and determined it wasn't as rare as thought, even though it couldn't make an estimate for actual population size.

It added that climate modeling indicated snow cover wasn't receding as rapidly as thought in certain areas, snow cover isn't as critical for the species to build dens, and that wolverines in the lower 48 states are connected to populations in Canada and Alaska where they can migrate.

But Timothy Preso, an attorney with Earthjustice, part of a coalition that intends to sue the government, told AFP the FWS announcement amounted to "smoke and mirrors."

"What they did was a one year snapshot of where there was wolverine occupancy detected by remote cameras, and they don't know whether that was numerous individuals, or one individual traversing an area."

"What we know is that climate change is literally melting the wolverine habitat out from under it," he added, attributing the new decision to the Trump administration's hostility to climate science.

What's more, he said, the fact that the species is more abundant in Canada and Alaska isn't a good rationale for not protecting it in the contiguous United States, he said.



Wolverines, which resemble small bears and have bushy tails, once roamed the northern US, but their population has been decimated by trapping, poisoning and habitat loss that started in the 19th century.

The largest member of the weasel family, they now exist only in small populations in Idaho, Montana, Washington, Wyoming and northeast Oregon, and are at risk from climate change because they dig their dens in declining snowpack to birth and raise their young.

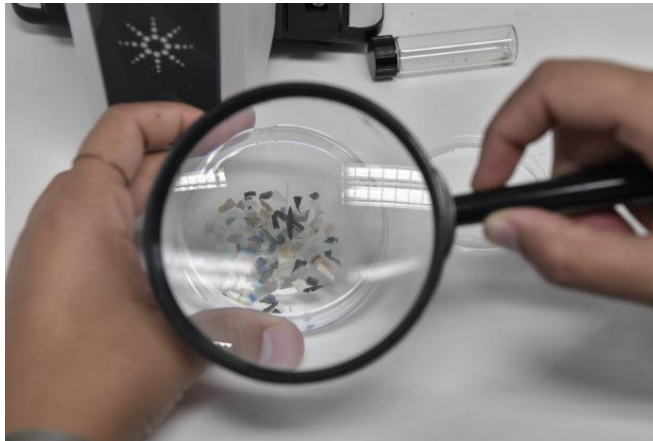
Signed in 1973, the Endangered Species Act is credited with saving iconic American species such as the gray wolf, bald eagle and grizzly bear.

It protects listed species from being killed or harmed, protects their habitats, and creates plans to restore healthy populations, among other things.



14 million tons of microplastics on seafloor — Australian study

[Agence France-Presse](#) / 04:59 PM October 09, 2020



A biologist looks at microplastics found in sea species at the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research near Athens, on Nov. 26, 2019. Image: AFP/Louisa Gouliamaki

The world's seafloor is littered with an estimated 14 million tons of microplastics, broken down from the masses of rubbish entering the oceans every year, according to Australia's national science agency.

The quantity of the tiny pollutants was 25 times greater than previous localized studies had shown, the agency said, calling it the first global estimate of sea-floor microplastics.

Researchers at the agency, known as CSIRO, used a robotic submarine to collect samples from sites up to 3,000 meters (9,850 feet) deep, off the South Australian coast.

“Our research found that the deep ocean is a sink for microplastics,” principal research scientist Denise Hardesty said. “We were surprised to observe high microplastic loads in such a remote location.”

The scientists, who published their findings in peer-reviewed journal *Frontiers in Marine Science*, said areas with more floating rubbish generally had more microplastic fragments on the seafloor.

“Plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean deteriorates and breaks down, ending up as microplastics,” study lead Justine Barrett said. “The results show microplastics are indeed sinking to the ocean floor.”

Hardesty called for urgent action to find solutions to marine plastic pollution, which affects ecosystems, wildlife and human health.

“Government, industry and the community need to work together to significantly reduce the amount of litter we see along our beaches and in our oceans,” she said. **RGA**

Source: <https://technology.inquirer.net/104665/14-million-tons-of-microplastics-on-seafloor-australian-study>



15 million tons of microplastics pollute the seafloor

By [Mindy Weisberger](#) - Senior Writer a day ago

Plastic debris is twice as abundant in the deep ocean as it is on the sea surface.



Density of microplastics in the deep sea is much higher than once thought.
(Image: © Shutterstock)

An estimated 15 million tons (14 million metric tons) of microplastics have settled in the deep ocean, according to a new report by Australia's national science agency. That's more than double the amount of plastic [pollution](#) at the ocean's surface.

Researchers sampled seafloor sediments in locations hundreds of miles from Australia's coastline, discovering that the quantity of microplastics was far higher than anticipated.

From that evidence, they calculated how widespread microplastics might be in ocean sediments worldwide — and their staggering number was a conservative estimate, they wrote in the report.

Prior studies have shown that millions of tons of plastic enter the ocean each year. And though scientists recognize plastic pollution as an important ecological issue, little is known about plastic accumulation near the sea bottom and what its impacts might be on marine life and ecosystems. This is especially true of microplastics; plastic particles that are less than 0.2 inches (5 millimeters) in length, no bigger than a sesame seed, [according to the National Ocean Service](#).

"The extent of microplastic pollution in deep-sea sediments has historically been poorly known," said study co-author Denise Hardesty, a principal research scientist with Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), a government agency responsible for scientific research.

"That's understandable given how difficult, time-consuming and costly it is to sample the depths of the 'big blue'. But understanding how much microplastic finds its way to the seafloor is imperative for predicting the distribution and potential impacts of global plastic pollution," Hardesty told Live Science in an email.

Separated from sediment

For the new study, the scientists used remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) to scoop 51 seafloor cores — cylinders of packed sediment — from six locations in an ocean region off the coast of southern Australia, known as the Great Australian Bight (a "bight" is a curve in a coastline holding an open bay). They sampled at depths ranging from 5,430 to 10,046 feet (1,655 to 3,062 meters), at distances of 179 to 221 miles (288 to 356 kilometers) from the shore.

Rinsing the samples and spinning them in a centrifuge flushed away organic matter, making the microplastics easier to detect. The researchers then stained the samples with fluorescent dyes, isolating and identifying microplastic particles with an optical microscope that used fluorescence to highlight organic material, according to the study.



In the samples, a single gram of seafloor sediment held as many as 14 plastic particles. Based on the average number of particles in the samples and the size of the ocean — which covers 139.4 million square miles, or 361.1 million square km — the scientists calculated that the total, global amount of microplastics on the seafloor would be between 9 million and 15 million tons (8 million and 14 million metric tons).

However, the amount of ocean microplastics worldwide could easily be much higher, Hardesty told Live Science. Particle density from the Great Australian Bight was likely lower than in ocean regions that are nearer to heavily populated coastal areas. And plastic microfibers, another known source of microplastic ocean pollution, were omitted from the analysis, in case the fibers they found in the sediment cores were introduced by clothing or other fabrics after the samples were collected.

"We didn't expect to have such high recorded levels of microplastics, particularly given how careful our sampling approach was," Hardesty said. "Therefore, our results are a conservative estimate of how much microplastic there is in deep-sea sediments."

The impacts of larger plastic pollution on ocean life and ecosystem health are all too clear, visible in [great garbage patches](#) that collect at the sea surface; as hardened "[plastic crusts](#)" coating island coastlines; as deadly nooses that [strangle sharks and rays](#); and as obstructions that fill the bellies of dead [sea turtles](#) and [whales](#).

"These findings highlight the extent of plastic pollution, and shows that no area of the ocean is immune to the plastic problem. We hope this work has people thinking about the choices we make, the impacts of what we make, buy, use and discard and where it can end up," Hardesty said.

"Hopefully, people start to see the connection between what we do in our daily lives and how far-reaching those impacts may be on what are considered the most pristine ecosystems in the world," she said.

The findings were published online Oct. 6 in the journal [Frontiers in Marine Science](#).
Originally published on Live Science.



Alarming online wildlife trade in Asean

By Amado S. Tolentino, JR.

October 10, 2020

SOMETIME in 2005, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) set up a network known as the Asean Wildlife Enforcement Network (Asean-WEN) to address its commitment to the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (Cites), which regulates collection and trade in wildlife so as to protect and conserve wildlife species and their habitats, ensure ecological balance and enhance biological diversity. The network links up with Interpol, wildlife enforcement groups in the United States and nongovernment organizations such as the Asia-based wildlife trade monitoring network known as Traffic.

Asean-WEN operates on two levels. At the national level, each country maintains an interagency task force composed of wildlife traffic monitoring units, police, customs, park rangers and wildlife enforcement officers. Together, the national task forces form the backbone of a regional network dedicated to battling transnational wildlife crimes.

Mention should also be made of the Asean Center for Biodiversity, a regional intergovernmental biodiversity conservation center based in University of the Philippines Los Baños, which mobilizes resources and continues to forge more partnerships that enhance support for Asean in meeting commitments to various multilateral environmental agreements like Cites and the Convention on Biological Diversity or CBD for the reduction of biodiversity loss, including wildlife loss caused by illegal traffic.

No wonder Asean experienced some years of improvement in wildlife law enforcement. Lately, however, enforcement action somehow slowed down brought about by illegal online wildlife trafficking which enables traffickers to hide behind social media platforms.

The scale of the illegal wildlife trade is alarming. Due to the illicit nature of the trade, it is difficult to obtain exact figures, but experts estimate a loss of approximately \$20 billion annually. It is considered the fourth largest illegal trade in the world after illegal drugs, arms and human trafficking.

Ironically, what lends credence to the estimate is the identification of some Asean species as objects of illegal trade mainly because of false claims that those are cures for some maladies. For example, in 2011, “tuko” or gecko was said to cure asthma, tuberculosis and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or AIDS. In the current health crisis, the pangolin was identified as the world’s most trafficked non-human mammal and mentioned by media as a possible intermediate host of the novel coronavirus — Covid-19, also known as SARS-CoV2 — picking up the pathogen from other species in the wild.

(Pangolins are largely covered in scales made of keratin — the same material as human fingernails — which give them the nickname “scaly anteater.” When chased, they roll like a ball.

In May 2020, sacks-full of pangolin scales from Palawan were found in a Wuhan warehouse destined for exotic wildlife markets. Pangolins are listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as critically endangered.)

In traditional Chinese medicine, pangolin scales are used to help those afflicted with ailments ranging from lactation difficulties to arthritis. Their meat is also a delicacy among the wealthy in China.

In the Asean region, targeted species for illegal trade usually originate from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. Aside from folk medicine and bushmeat consumption purposes, wildlife is also trafficked as ornaments and for the pet, zoo and aquarium trades, e.g. birds, reptiles and mammals. Other Asean wildlife which are the objects of illegal trade include, but is not limited to, the endangered Sumatran rhinoceros, Asian elephant, freshwater turtle and tortoises. Those are hunted to the brink of extinction due to beliefs in the potency of their body parts, especially as aphrodisiacs.



While illegal trade in wildlife is done in many ways, one of the latest methods is through an unsuspecting source — the internet.

Advances in technology and connectivity across the world have increased the ease of exchange from poacher to consumer. As a consequence, an unregulated online market allows criminals to sell illegally obtained wildlife products across the world. Purchasing wildlife had become as easy as “click-pay-ship” through smart phones. They provide easy accessibility and concealed communication schemes which make it difficult for authorities to track.

Fortunately, the world’s biggest e-commerce, technology and social media companies have joined forces in the effort to shut down online marketplaces for wildlife traffickers. The Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online brings together companies from around the world (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Microsoft, Google, eBay, OfferUp) in partnership with wildlife experts at the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and Traffic in an industry-wide approach to reduce wildlife trafficking online.

The coalition convenes dialogues between partners to share lessons learned and best practices. WWF, IFAW and Traffic, on the other hand, provide companies with updated global and regional trade trend data, training materials, policy guidelines and educational information for users to help spot illegal products.

Thus far, the coalition has flagged down more than 4,500 wildlife products for sale online, identified 170 suspicious wildlife codes for tracking purposes and trained 470 people on how to identify illicit wildlife products offered online. Indeed, the cooperation of technology companies is critical in the fight against cybercrimes as wildlife traffickers are abusing the anonymity of the internet to illegally trade endangered wildlife.

In this connection, a most recent report confirmed that internet listings for products made from or associated with endangered species are being either continuously blocked or taken down by technology firms comprising the coalition. These include live tigers, reptiles, primates as well as products from the body parts of endangered species such as pangolins and marine turtles.

The coalition, however, cannot do it alone. Asean-WEN should be revitalized to facilitate exchange of best practices and knowledge in combating illegal online wildlife trade in endangered species in the Asean region. Asean countries should also develop ways and means based on their own experience in dealing with the illegal wildlife trade in order to outwit more innovative illegal traders and criminals who, more often than not, escape the consequences of breaking the law because of corruption, the leading deterrent to effective wildlife law enforcement.

The partnership with the world’s biggest online companies through the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online is the best thing that ever happened in the fight against wildlife cybercriminals seeking to exploit web-based platforms to profit from endangered wildlife at the expense of sustainability.