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Cagayan's island paradise

By Jonathan L. Mayuga -April 11, 2021



An aerial photograph of the historic lighthouse on Palaui Island

The Palaui Island Protected Landscape and Seascape (PIPLS) in the municipality of Sta. Ana in Cagayan, known as the game-fishing hub of the Philippines, is an island paradise teeming with unique wildlife.

Its unique features make PIPLS a tourist magnet.

But beyond its tourism potential, the island paradise is gaining recognition as an outstanding marine protected area with some of the best management practices to showcase.



Palaui Island Protected Island Landscape and Seascape captivating sceneries make it as Cagayan's "island paradise."

Protected area

Proclaimed as a protected area by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 447 on August 16, 1994, the PIPLS became a legislated protected area within the classification of a national park under Republic Act 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Systems (Nipas) Act of 2018.

Covering a total area of 8,048.57 hectares, approximately 2,439 hectares of the PIPLS is terrestrial, while the rest are coastal and marine areas.

The island, although exhibiting signs of human activities, remains generally pristine. It is under the protection of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), concerned local government units (LGUs) and the communities who have inhabited the island.

The PIPLS is twice recognized as an Outstanding Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Para El Mar: MPA Awards and Recognition. First, as third runner up in 2017, and first runner-up in the 2019 awards.





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Interconnected ecosystems

An island hosting a former military base as declared under Presidential Proclamation 201 series of 1967, Palaui boasts of several interconnected ecosystems and plays vital roles in the ecological integrity of the ecosystems on mainland Cagayan.

Its ecosystems include coral reef, seagrass, mangrove forest, mudflats, dipterocarp forest and beach forest.

More importantly, the island boasts of outstanding sceneries with sweeping landscapes and seascapes, as well as a rich history.

The protectors of PIPLS said the island presents a combination of natural, historical and cultural elements that need to be preserved through economically viable community-based activities.

Endangered species; bird sanctuary

The island is home to endangered species like the green turtle, commercially viable fish, the Philippine hawk eagle and several dipterocarp species.

It is also known to host a good number of the critically endangered narra tree, and commercially viable white lauan.

According to the protectors of PIPLS, a total of 60 species of flora were identified and counted along the nine stations established for flora on the island.

The island is also known as a bird sanctuary. One time, a total of 424 birds classified into 37 different species were identified and counted along the 2-kilometer transect.

Most of the birds identified were classified as endemic, with 13 "resident" birds and three species classified as migratory species.

Four different species of bats and two forest rats were recorded on the island.

Growing human population

The growing population of human inhabitants on the island is a cause for concern for the protectors of Palaui.

A total of 803 people, comprising 171 households, are currently on the island. Ninety-seven of the families are considered "tenured migrants" as they have been living there before 1987, the cut-off period, or five years before the establishment of the PIPLS as a protected area in 1994.

A total of 74 families are considered "untenured," or new entrants from neighboring barangays or municipalities.

Being an island surrounded with the ocean's bounty, fishing is the primary source of income of the people on the island, although some are also subsistence farmers who plant mostly vegetables and root crops.

Best practices





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Part of the strategy in managing the PIPLS, the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) has come up with various activities to help the people generate income other than fishing, by introducing sustainable livelihood and biodiversity-friendly enterprises.

The PAMB, along with the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority (CEZA) and concerned LGUs, also trained and deputized Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEO) to help protect and conserve the island's rich biodiversity.

The WEO are actively involved in the protection and regular monitoring of the terrestrial and marine resources in the PIPLS.

People on the island have also earned their so-called badges as Reef Rangers, Tour Guides and Honey Hunters and they are also simultaneously conducting monitoring activities within the PIPLS while providing services to guests visiting the island.

Environmental protectors

As early as 1993, the Palaui Environmental Protectors Association (PEPA) was established through the DENR's Coastal Environment Program.

It started as a multipurpose cooperative, and later on was registered as a rural workers' association in 2006. It has a total of 320 members.

PEPA is conducting regular coastal clean-up every last Tuesday of the month, and the weekly collection of solid waste within the island.

The group is in charge of visitor management, such as briefings and orientation with quests before the island tour.

The group also provides support to tourism facilities' maintenance and development through their funds.

More importantly, as beneficiaries of the PIPLS, the group's members actively participate in addressing issues and concerns within the protected area through the Integrated Coastal Resource Management Project (ICRMP).

Community help and support

Mervelyn Guiang, the protected area superintendent of PIPLS, said the people in the communities within the protected area are very supportive of the DENR's programs.

"The barangays and local government units are also supportive, including the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority [CEZA]," she said.

According to Guiang, CEZA promotes PIPLS as a tourist spot by training tourist guides and linking the tourist guides to the Department of Tourism.

She said people on the island are now becoming more and more self-reliant with the various programs of the DENR.

"Communities in the PIPLS form self-reliant groups to do economic activities, such as weaving native baskets. Another group is into honey bee gathering" from the narra trees where bees build their homes, she said.





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She added that tourism is important that helps generate much-needed income for the people.

Fortunately, she said during the pandemic, the DENR was able to facilitate the distribution of social amelioration program fund to all families on the island.

"Each of the family received P8,500. But they also did some work for that amount," she said.

Tourist magnet

Being a favorite tourist destination in the Cagayan Valley Region, the PIPLS boasts of humble facilities.

The Nature Village is the only area allowed as camping site.

It also has the Cape Engano Lighthouse (Faro de Cabo de Engano), a 19th century light house that was constructed during the Spanish era in the Philippines and which architect is the same as that of Cape Bojeador Lighthouse at Burgos, Ilocos Norte.

The Baraturbut Falls Crocodile Island, almost 2 kilometers from San Vicente Port in Sta. Ana, Cagayan, is between Luzon mainland and Palaui Island.

There are also two eco-trails on the island. There is the Lagunzad that was named after Dr. Daniel Lagunzad, a Filipino botanist, which is a 7.4 kilometers from Punta Verde bound to Cape Engaño Lighthouse.

The Leonardo Trail, named after Leonardo Co, the late Filipino botanist and plant taxonomist, who was considered the foremost authority in ethnobotany in the Philippines.

Care and maintenance

Interviewed on March 16 via telephone, Gwendolyn C. Bambalan, DENR-Region 2 executive director, said the DENR is currently focused on maintaining the tourism facilities on the island to promote ecotourism.

The PIPLS PAMB, she said, is also working on a draft guideline in preparation for the reopening of the island to tourists.

As chairman of the island's PAMB, Bambalan is eyeing to resume tourism activities on the island without compromising the health and wellbeing of both the tourists and the people on the area.

"I am really for limited scale [in tourism]. We want to avoid exposing the local communities," she said.

She said Sitio Palaui, where the communities are concentrated, should be closed to tourism until an established safety and health protocols are put in place and integrated with tourism guideline.

She said part of the island can still be open to the public to generate income which is important in running the PIPLS.





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Beautiful island

According to Bambalan, the island is a beautiful island, giving the DENR one good reason to protect it from destructive human activities.

"We know that Palaui is very beautiful. I've seen its forest cover and it is still intact. There are many flora and fauna. Biodiversity monitoring is conducted there. The area has priority species both in terrestrial and coastal areas," she said.

According to Bambalan, the island boasts of dipterocarp tree species that can be targeted by illegal loggers.

"It is only an 8,000 hectare island and it is very fragile," she said.

She maintained that the people living on the island are prohibited from cutting trees.

"There's no tree-cutting or harvesting of trees there. But agricultural activities within the designated areas are allowed," she said.

However, she said farming on the island means planting root crops and fruit-bearing trees, adding that there are other ways to earn on the island without targeting its fragile environment.

"They are subsistence farmers and they are fishers. They are also earning a lot from ecotourism," she said.

Bambalan underscored the need to maintain the current pristine status of the island's ecosystem, particularly the coastal and marine area, saying it is one of the reasons why Sta. Ana is teeming with commercially viable fishes.

"The mangroves are very important. And the coral reefs there are habitats of fishes. That's why there's plenty of fishes in Sta. Ana. Plus, of course, our ecotourism activities because we maintain our good forest cover, making the tourists are attracted to it," she said.

Image credits: DENR Cagayan Valley Region , DENR Cagayan Valley Region

Source: https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/04/11/cagayans-island-paradise/





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Science-based water resource management eyed in Boracay

Published April 10, 2021, 6:28 PM by Charissa Luci-Atienza

Researchers from the Ateneo de Manila University (AdMU) and Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (DOST-PNRI) are seeking to develop science-based monitoring techniques and planning guidelines for sustainable water resource management in tourist islands, such as Boracay Island.

This was disclosed by DOST Secretary Fortunato "Boy" T. de la Peña during his weekly report on Friday, April 9.

Supported by the DOST-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD), the project "intends to provide a comprehensive understanding on the water conditions and outlook," he said.

"Guidelines in the management of both surface and groundwater resources in the Nabaoy River Watershed and Boracay Island will be formulated as well."

De la Peña said under the project, AdMU researchers are expected to use advanced surveying and monitoring equipment to assess and map the water resources and location of groundwater aquifers in Boracay. They will also evaluate the water quality and quantity and develop water projection/forecasting tool for both surface and groundwater reservoirs, he added.

"The DOST-PNRI, on the other hand, will characterize water quality and quantity, determine groundwater system dynamics, recharge mechanisms, potential degradation and impending sources of pollution in Nabaoy Watershed and in Boracay Island, using isotope techniques in conjunction with classical hydrology," he said.

"Data generated will be used in the development of short-medium-long term management strategy including the plans, programs and policies related to water infrastructure."

The DOST chief noted that the project is co-implemented with the UK-British Geological Survey and Aklan State University.

Also involved in the project are the DOST-Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA), Department of Tourism- Tourism Industry Economic Zone Authority (DOT-TIEZA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources – National Water Resources Board (DENR-NWRB), Boracay Water Concessionaires, and the municipality of Malaya local government unit (LGU).

"Through this pilot study, DOST expects that the methodologies and tools to be established and developed planning guidelines will be adopted and utilized by partner NGAs (national government agencies) and LGUs for other major tourist islands in the Philippines facing challenges in water availability and sustainability," de la Peña said.

Source: https://mb.com.ph/2021/04/10/science-based-water-resource-management-eyed-in-boracay/





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Children walk on a path at the Dumagat-Romentado community in Antipolo, Rizal on February 13

Philstar.com/Deeiae Dumlac

Antipolo Dumagats hope new 31,000-tree reforestation project takes root

Euden Valdez (Philstar.com) - April 10, 2021 - 9:42am

MANILA, Philippines — Ernesto Dorroteo, chieftain of a Dumagat-Remontado community that has settled in the remote sitio of San Ysiro in Antipolo, Rizal, witnessed how surrounding forests were destroyed by logging in the '80s and '90s.

"I was so sad to see the illegal logging. So many big trees disappeared so quickly," Dorroteo told **Philstar.com** in Filpino during a visit to the community. "That kind of logging is such a waste."

Claiming parts of Sierra Madre as their ancestral domain since before colonization of the Philippines, the nomadic Dumagat-Remontados also have rights over the comprising lands, inland bodies of water, and of course, natural resources, which include the forests.

Dorroteo decided to settle in Purok Libis of Sitio San Ysiro so that he can send his children to school. It was around this time that he witnessed the large-scale logging before Republic Act 8371 was passed.

<u>The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997</u> recognizes the rights of IP communities over their ancestral domains or lands, and more importantly, identifies their rights for the government's promotion and protection.

Dorroteo, not a chieftain yet at the time, didn't know how to report the illegal logging activities.

"There was nobody to report it to. We saw the soldiers with the illegal loggers, so who could we turn to?" he said, recalling large-scale logging decades ago.

Three decades and two reforestation efforts later, Sitio San Ysiro's forests may see a greener future for new generations of Dumagat-Remontados.

This year, the community has sealed a partnership with Haribon Foundation to reforest 50 hectares of forests with over 31,000 trees.





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Waiting for the green light

According to Haribon, the partnership with Sitio San Ysiro is part of a five-year reforestation project covering 100 hectares of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL).

A large portion of this Protected Area was declared Ancestral Domain of the Dumagat-Remontado of Antipolo in 2017.

Talks with the community began in July 2019, when the Pinagsama-samang Grupong Magbubukid sa Casunugan (PINGRUMAC) sent a formal request letter to Haribon, followed by a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) meeting that was also attended by representatives of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and UMRBPL.

As PAMB member for the protected upper Marikina watershed, Dorroteo was one of the representatives of the Dumagat-Remontado of Antipolo.

The next step will be a Memorandum of Agreement among the DENR, PINGRUMAC, the local governments of Antipolo City and Barangay San Jose and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to restore 100 hectares of denuded forests in the Upper Marikina watershed over the next five years.

"As of now, this partnership is yet to be implemented since the MOA is not yet signed. Though the PAMB of DENR has already approved our forest restoration project in the area, however, the NCIP's validation process is yet to be conducted," forester Thaddeus Martinez, head of Natural Resources Management Division-Site Action Department at Haribon, said.

As a Community Initiated Project, the NCIP requires an endorsement with 100 signatures of members of the Indigenous Political Structure/System — the councils and other bodies within the community.

This was initially prepared, including signatures of their elders and chieftains in December 2019, however, the pandemic hit, affecting NCIP's validation process.

"Recently, in the past few weeks, the Dumagat-Remontado has already re-informed their tribes and was able to collate the 100 signatures of their IPS members, which Haribon is currently awaiting from the Dumagat-Remontado to submit to NCIP and Haribon," Martinez said.

The next step after validation is identifying the specific site for the project and the signing of the MOA. Haribon hopes the reforestation can start by July.



Early morning in Sitio San Ysiro in Antipolo, Rizal on Feb. 13, 2021. Philstar.com/Deejae Dumlao

Learning from experience

As Sitio San Ysiro awaits the formal MOA signing, Dorroteo said that they have already started seedlings of fruit-bearing trees like tamarind, jackfruit, soursop, cacao and coffee. As one hectare would have 625 native tree seedlings, they hope to grow and plant a total of 31,250 seedlings.





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"Haribon has its standard process of site-species matching, meaning the project will facilitate the planting of native tree species that are sourced from the remaining patches of forests in the area—particularly from the quality mother trees which the communities are also familiar with," Martinez said.

As their partner, Haribon will also provide the community the livelihood incentives from the production and planting of native seedlings, followed by a three-year maintenance of the planted seedlings.

For Dorroteo, this commitment is important as he does not want to make the mistakes of the past.

He said that in 2012, the National Greening Program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources <u>also planted native trees</u> in Sitio San Ysiro. This was part of the NGP's goal to rehabilitate the upper Marikina watershed, which encompasses 26,125-hectare of lands and forests.

Dorroteo, however, lamented that the five-year greening program wasn't fully accomplished by its implementers.

"The government did not take care of the trees as much. Even when they planted and planted—they planted for nearly five years—nothing happened. After they planted, they didn't visit the seedlings to check."

On their end, he admitted that his people worked on their personal farms and other sources of livelihood. They needed to earn money to survive so they couldn't tend to the newly-planted trees.

Apart from the DENR, non-profit organizations like the Foundation for the Philippine Environment, <u>also joined hands</u> with Sitio San Ysiro to plant trees in the area as early as 2010, in the aftermath of Typhoon Ondoy.

Pre-pandemic, volunteer groups such as RAK Ph Mountaineers also frequently visited the community to hold tree-planting activities for hikers. The sitio used to accept visitors to hike surrounding summits as a source of livelihood.

Today, as the San Ysiro community continues to develop—a concrete health center was recently built for the people—Doroteo hopes for the successful rehabilitation and preservation of its forests.

After all, their ways of life remain dependent on the natural resources of the land and mountains.

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The Dumagat-Remontados of Barangay San Jose, which covers Sitio San Ysiro, officially <u>received their Certification of Ancestral Domain Title</u> from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples in 2017.





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Here's how you can turn plastic waste into cash with this company's new recycling program

Published April 10, 2021 3:57pm



In this September 2017 photo, a worker sorts bottles to throw them in a plastic bottle chipper at a recycling workshop in Islamabad, Pakistan. REUTERS/Caren Firouz

Here is how you can earn money and help the environment at the same time!

As part of its sustainability program, Century Pacific Food Inc. (CPFI) has launched a waste-to-cash program where people can turn in their plastic waste and receive money in return.

The program, established by plastic offset platform Plastic Credit Exchange (PCEx), uses the "Aling Tindera" project, where women-owned sari-sari stores are turned into collection points for the plastic waste.

In exchange for cash, people can bring to these sari-sari stores their plastic waste, which will be placed in specially designed containers.

Once the containers are full, PCEx will then buy purchase the plastic materials from the stores "at a markup" and bring these to their recycling partners.

Through this initiative, the program aims to give communities ways to earn income while helping depollute the environment.

"In addition, by incorporating sari-sari store owners in this effort, we are helping build a strong network of women micro-entrepreneurs, who can be catalysts for sustainability in their respective communities," said Century Pacific COO Greg Banzon.

Since the launch of the project, CPFI has installed two 10-20 foot containers in Barangays 432 and Baseco Port in Manila to help the sari-sari store owners with their collection. Each container can hold up to 5,000 to 7,000 kilograms of post-consumer plastic waste.

Last year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) partnered with PCEx and launched the "Aling Tindera" program to support the cleanup of Manila Bay. – **Kaela Malig/RC, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/hobbiesandactivities/783221/here-s-how-you-can-turn-plastic-waste-into-cash-with-this-company-s-new-recycling-program/story/





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EcoWaste Coalition urges Environmental Law Enforcers to check compliance of crematories to pollution prevention regulations

By EcoWaste CoalitionPublished on April 10, 2021

QUEZON CITY, Apr. 10 -- With COVID-related deaths reaching a new single-day high of 401 yesterday, the EcoWaste Coalition prodded national and local government authorities to ensure that overworked cremators safely operate in accordance with pollution prevention regulations.

Aside from checking the compliance of crematories to the Clean Air Act and related regulations, the waste and pollution watchdog group also urged the authorities to look into the occupational health and safety of funeral service and crematorium workers amid the piling up of bodies to be cremated.

The group further requested the government to ensure that cremation fees and the prices of urns are duly monitored and regulated to prevent overcharging amid increased demand for cremations.

"As overburdened crematoria grapple with rising COVID deaths, we urge our environmental law enforcers to make it sure that relevant pollution prevention laws are strictly observed to protect the health of the living, especially downwind communities, from hazardous air pollutants," said Thony Dizon, Chemical Safety Campaigner, EcoWaste Coalition.

To this effect, the group urged the authorities to conduct random inspections of public and private crematories to check on their compliance to the requirements of the Clean Air Act and related regulations. A compliant cremation facility 1) has a valid permit to operate, 2) is a registered hazardous waste generator, 3) submits quarterly self-monitoring reports, 4) has an accredited pollution control officer, and 5) has adequate pollution prevention and control measures to ensure emissions are within "acceptable levels."

The group cited a 2018 study on the "Emission Characteristics of Harmful Air Pollutants from Cremators in Beijing, China," indicating that emissions from facilities directly discharging flue gas exceed standards. "The process of corpse cremation generates numerous harmful air pollutants, including particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, and heavy metals," the report said, stressing that "these pollutants could have severe effects on the surrounding environment and human health."

"Our society also has to look after the health and safety of our overburdened funeral service and crematorium workers, who are COVID-19 frontliners themselves. We hope they are provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, are able to adequately rest, and are justly compensated," said Dizon.

With some facilities reportedly jacking up their fees, the EcoWaste Coalition urged the authorities to monitor cremation and urn prices and provide subsidies for those in need.

The EcoWaste Coalition likewise affirmed its support to the recommendations made by the World Health Organization regarding "Infection Prevention and Control for the Safe Management of a Dead Body in the Context of COVID-19," which, among other things, state that:





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'	"The safet	y and well-bein	g of every	one who	tends to	bodies	should be	the first	priority.	"

--- "The dignity of the dead, their cultural and religious traditions, and their families should be respected and protected throughout."

--- "Hasty disposal of a dead from COVID-19 should be avoided." (EcoWaste Coalition)

Source: https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/1071906





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Check cremators' safety, environment watchdog says amid increase in COVID-19 deaths

Published April 10, 2021, 4:08 PM by Betheena Unite

The environment watchdog Ecowaste Coalition urged the government on Saturday, April 10, to check the safety of what it described as overworked creamtors amid the piling of bodies for cremation as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.



(RON LOPEZ / AFPTV / AFP / File photo / MANILA BULLETIN)

"Our society also has to look after the health and safety of our overburdened funeral service and crematorium workers, who are COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) frontliners themselves," said Thony Dizon, a chemical safety campaigner from the EcoWaste Coalition.

"We hope they are provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, are able to adequately rest, and are justly compensated," he added.

The group also prodded national and local government authorities to check on the compliance of crematories to the Clean Air Act and related regulations. It added that random inspections of public and private crematories should also be done to check whether or not they are compliant with the requirements of the Clean Air Act and related regulations.

"As overburdened crematoria grapple with rising COVID deaths, we urge our environmental law enforcers to make it sure that relevant pollution prevention laws are strictly observed to protect the health of the living, especially downwind communities, from hazardous air pollutants," Dizon said.

A compliant cremation facility has a valid permit to operate; a registered hazardous waste generator; submits quarterly self-monitoring reports; has an accredited pollution control officer; and has adequate pollution prevention and control measures to ensure emissions are within "acceptable levels."

The group cited a 2018 study on the "Emission Characteristics of Harmful Air Pollutants from Cremators in Beijing, China" which notes that "the process of corpse cremation generates numerous harmful air pollutants, including particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, and heavy metals."

It added that "these pollutants could have severe effects on the surrounding environment and human health."

Meanwhile, with some facilities reportedly jacking up their fees, the EcoWaste Coalition also requested the government to monitor cremation and urn prices and provide subsidies for those in need.

Source: https://mb.com.ph/2021/04/10/check-cremators-safety-environment-watchdog-says-amid-increase-in-covid-19-deaths/





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Legarda files Bill on Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting

By Office of Representative Loren Legarda /HORPublished on April 10, 2021

QUEZON CITY, April 10 -- Three-term Senator, now Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, filed a bill seeking to develop and implement an ecosystem and natural accounting system that applies to the Philippine environment, giving importance to the role, value, and impact of the country's natural resources on the economy.

"For decades, the debate has been whether to choose the economy over conservation of natural resources. This is a false dichotomy. The economy and all of society are fully and entirely dependent on natural resources—our natural capital that includes our forests, wetlands, and other ecosystems," Legarda said.

House Bill 9181, otherwise known as the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Law of 2021, will include what was formerly considered "externalities," not valued as capital, in the national income accounts. Conventional national income accounting systems measure economic performance by determining the value of goods and services produced in a country and aggregating them to develop economic development indicators, such as the Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Legarda explained that "the goods and services included in this accounting system are those that are "marketed," the prices of which are the basis for estimating the value that is then included in computing economic indicators. This methodology thus reflects the goods and services produced, sold, and bought in the economy. However, these goods and services are almost entirely reliant on the goods and services that the natural environment generates.

"Consumption benefits of products and amenities provided by the natural environment, waste disposal services, and pollution are part of producing marketed commodities but are not valuated (positively or negatively) and reflected in national income accounting. While it is difficult to undertake this valuation, and many would say it would tend to commodify what is priceless, the lack of such valuation has led to the appreciation of these services as having zero instead of priceless value," Legarda said.

Indicators and standards generated by the national income accounting system are considered vital information for economic management and policymaking. They serve as the basis for socio-economic planning, formulation of development programs, and policy analysis to aid legislation, among others. Legarda stressed that it is important that the national income accounts reflect a more accurate state of development and economic performance of the country and should incorporate both environmental and non-environmental economic inputs and outputs for policymakers to make responsive, relevant, and effective laws, plans, and programs necessary for national development.

"The bill, when passed into law, will allow government planners to have a full understanding of the natural capital available and expendable in the pursuit of national goals. For instance, there has not been an accounting of whether our legally harvested sand and gravel will suffice to meet the needs of both the Build Build Build program and the demands of the private sector. Good housekeeping requires that you budget what you have and not live beyond your means. It is the same for national patrimony. Not taking into account how much we have and how to allocate it





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drives our ecosystems to ruin. The climate crisis and biodiversity losses that could potentially lead to the next pandemic highlight the urgency of having this bill approved and implemented," Legarda concluded.

The proposed measure adheres to the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), which the UN introduced in 2006 and has been continuously advancing further with the adoption of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting in March 2001 and the UN collaborative project with other organizations on Natural Capital Accounting and Ecosystem Valuation that will end in 2021.

A Working Group of experts on environment and natural resources, economics, management, and science and technology from the Climate Crisis and Sustainable Development Network (CCSDN) and the former Sustainable Development Committee of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) assisted in drafting the bill. They include Dr. Marian delos Angeles, Dr. Corazon Claudio, Dr. Laura David, Ms. Maricor Ebarvia, Dr. Angelina Galang, former NEDA chief Dr. Cielito Habito, Dr. Ben Malayang, and Ms. Rina Ma. Rosales. (Office of Representative Loren Legarda/House of Representatives)

Source: https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/releases/1071902





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Back PH govt in strengthening climate action, CCC urges environment journalists

By Ma. Alaine P. AllaniguePublished on April 10, 2021



Courtesy of Climate Change Commission

QUEZON CITY, April 10 (PIA) -- The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has emphasized the influential role of the media in raising the alarming issue of climate change in the country, laymanizing its complexities, and shaping opinions and engaging the public in taking urgent, and ambitious climate action.

In the 'Collab on Climate Change Fellowship', organized by the Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University and Internews' Earth Journalism Network, the CCC, led by Commissioner Rachel Anne S. Herrera, delivered a lecture to the participating environmental journalists about the Philippine Government's response to climate change.

"The government welcomes this collaboration, such as with the media, where we can convey some of the work that we are doing and to seek your help to support us in conveying the needed messaging to more Filipinos about climate change. This pandemic has taught us that we could only achieve great things with unity. We need to have a common objective, and we need to reach out in terms of supporting those who are the most vulnerable," said Herrera.

Herrera tackled wide range of topics related to climate change which include: the international arrangements in response to climate crisis such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC), Paris Agreement, and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC); projected forecasts of scientists according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Philippine Climate Change Assessment (PhiCCA) reports; the country's response through adaptation strategies and programs; climate finance; and the future scenario of the country in pursuing these strategies.

The Commissioner also discussed the issue of single-use plastics in the country, and the campaign of the government led by the CCC and the Department of Finance, in collaboration with other national government agencies, local government units, and civil society organizations to launch the "PINASiglang Mundo - Earth Day 2021 Webcast," which aims to advocate not only the banning of single-use plastics, but also to promote sustainable consumption and production, and accelerate ecosystem restoration.





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Herrera then encouraged the participating journalists to support and help the government in mainstreaming the complex issue of climate change, and the programs, projects, and activities needed to act upon to reduce or adapt to its impacts.

"The power to act is in our hands, so whether you're a journalist, or from the government, or a student or a teacher, we must keep engaging everyone because no one can really escape the impacts of climate change. Each one of us can act to reduce its causes and also to adapt to it. Now that we are on this road together, we have to watch out for those who are most vulnerable and make sure they have ample protection. Kaya importante rin ang media, because you have the power to bring this knowledge across so that more people are aware that this is what awaits us, the whole of humankind, na ito naman yung susunod nating haharapin, and it will not be easy," Herrera said.

The lone female Commissioner of the CCC also recognized that the government should foremost be accountable and transparent in all its endeavors geared towards the protection of the environment and undertake efforts to bring together stakeholders.

"The government must be accountable and must be proactive in protecting the Philippines' interest in the international frameworks, and to bring in resources to develop the right policies. But then we must work together to bring all sectors' commitment to effectively help prepare our people, because the time really is now. We must adapt right now, we need to take wise steps, and we need to move fast, as the problem requires speed and scale." Herrera concluded.

To recall, the Climate Change Commission is the lead policy-making body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local, and sectoral development plans towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines. (PIA NCR)

Source: https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1071900





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Residents affected by the renewed enhanced community quarantine wait for their turn as they claim their cash assistance from the government inside the Old Balara Elementary school in Quezon City on Thursday midnight, April 8, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

Philippines logs 190,245 active COVID-19 cases, breaking records for 3rd day in a row

(Philstar.com) - April 10, 2021 - 4:00pm

MANILA, Philippines — **(Updated 4:36 p.m.)** The Philippines on Saturday recorded 12,674 additional COVID-19 cases, bringing the total number of infections to 853,209.

- Active cases: 190,245 or 22.3% of the total
- Recoveries: 593, pushing total to 648,220
- Deaths: 225, bringing total to 14,744

What's new today?

- The Philippines has seen a record-breaking number of active COVID-19 cases for the third day in a row.
- Intensive care unit bed occupancy in Metro Manila has hit a critical level at 86%.
- Malacañang is expected to announce new quarantine classifications for the 'NCR Plus' bubble — or the National Capital Region, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal — which will take effect on April 12. The so-called bubble is currently under an enhanced community quarantine — the strictest variation in an attempt to arrest an unprecedented surge in cases and assist hospitals that have become increasingly overwhelmed.
- The OCTA Research Team on Friday night <u>recommended</u> that the NCR Plus bubble remain under ECQ for another week, hours after the Philippines recorded a record-breaking number of new deaths and active cases of COVID-19.
- Presidential spokesman Harry Roque was <u>admitted</u> to a hospital due to COVID-19 after announcing that he recovered from the virus last month.

— Bella Perez-Rubio

Source: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/04/10/2090226/philippines-logs-190245-activecovid-19-casesbreaking-records-3rdday-row





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NCR+ fate still under study

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos April 10, 2021, 6:38 pm



NO DECISION YET. As of Saturday (April 10, 2021) afternoon, President Rodrigo Duterte has yet to decide on the fate of the National Capital Region Plus, which is under enhanced community quarantine until Sunday.

Malacañang said the President is still looking into pertinent data. (Photo courtesy of PCOO)

MANILA – President Rodrigo Duterte is still assessing the quarantine classification that will be implemented in Metro Manila and its four nearby provinces after Sunday, April 11.

Malacañang announced on Saturday that "President Rodrigo Roa Duterte is weighing the pros and cons before making his final decision regarding the quarantine classification of the National Capital Region Plus Area," a press statement issued by Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque read.

Members of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) met on Saturday to discuss the fate of National Capital Region Plus (NCR Plus), which has been under the most restrictive enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) category since March 29.

Roque did not divulge the IATF-EID's recommendation for Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal.

He said Duterte has to study first the "pertinent" data, including the health care utilization rate in NCR Plus, before making a decision.

"The Chief Executive would like to review and check pertinent information such as the Health Care Utilization Rate of the aforesaid area," he said.

Roque, who also announced earlier that he is in the hospital for Covid-19 treatment, said he would give an update, "once everything has been made final."

In his previous press briefing, Roque said the NCR Plus quarantine classification after April 11 would depend on the effectiveness of the "prevent, detect, isolate, treat, and reintegration" strategies.

Quirino province and Santiago City, Isabela are under modified ECQ until April 15 and 30, respectively.

The less restrictive general community quarantine (GCQ) is imposed in Cordillera Administrative Region, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Batangas, Tacloban City, Iligan City, Davao City, and Lanao del Sur for the whole of April.

The rest of the country is under modified GCQ, the most relaxed quarantine status. (PNA)

Source: https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1136359





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Pangulong Duterte may public address sa Abril 12

By Chona YuApril 10, 2021 - 03:09 PM



Photo grab from PCOO Facebook live

Magbibigay ng public address si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Lunes, Abril 12.

Ito ang inihayag ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque matapos ang dalawang linggong walang public appearance ng Pangulo.

Ayon kay Roque, ito na rin ang regular na "Talk to the People" ni Pangulong Duterte.

Matatandaang hindi itinuloy ni Pangulong Duterte ang "Talk to the People" noong Lunes at Miyerkules dahil sa dami ng tauhan ng Presidential Security Group na nagpositibo sa COVID-19.

Source: https://radyo.inquirer.net/289140/pangulong-duterte-may-public-address-sa-abril-12





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A patient of Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center in Marikina City passes in front of the hospital lobby turned into an emergency room on April 6, 2021.

The STAR/Michael Varcas

OCTA Research recommends week-long ECQ extension

(Philstar.com) - April 10, 2021 - 3:27pm

MANILA, Philippines — An independent research group on Friday night recommended that Metro Manila and nearby areas stay under enhanced community quarantine for another week, hours after the Philippines recorded a <u>record-breaking number</u> of new deaths and active cases of COVID-19.

While noting some improvement from late March, OCTA Research Team fellow Guido David warned that if infections continue to rise by around 10,000 per day, the Philippines will also record some 200 new deaths daily.

"Of course, if public health [and] hospitals are our primary consideration, our recommendation is to extend the ECQ so that we can lower the reproduction to less than 1," David told ABS-CBN News' "Teleradyo."

"If we can't do that, the middle ground would be a [modified ECQ], a more gradual easing [of restrictions]," he added.

David said that while the virus reproduction rate is slowing down in the NCR Plus bubble, going down from 1.43 to 1.24 on Wedneday, a week-long extension of ECQ would bring down the number of infections.

The 'NCR Plus' bubble — or the National Capital Region, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal — is currently under ECQ but Malacañang later Saturday is expected to announce new classifications that will take effect on on April 12, Monday.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque earlier this week ruled out the possibility of extending ECQ, claiming that the government no longer has the funds to help people affected by movement restrictions. However, Roque also said that upgrading to a modified ECQ would be contingent on the outcome of intensified prevention, detection, isolation, treatment and reintegration or PDITR efforts.

- Bella Perez-Rubio

Source: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/04/10/2090225/octa-research-recommends-week-long-ecq-extension

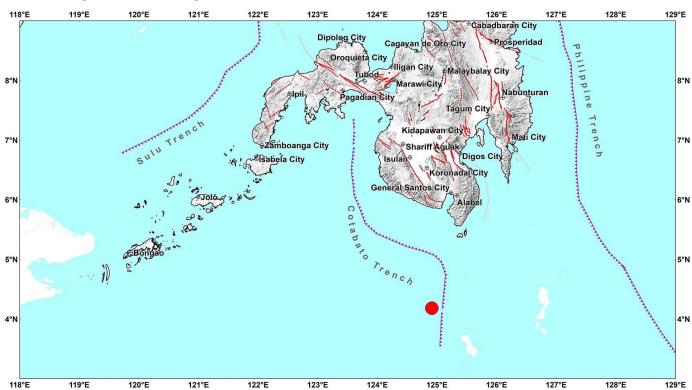




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Magnitude 6.1 quake strikes southwest of Davao Occidental

Published April 10, 2021 6:42pm



A magnitude 6.1 earthquake struck 148 kilometers southwest of Davao Occidental's Sarangani town Saturday afternoon, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) reported.

The tremor struck at 5:30 p.m., was tectonic in origin, and had a 314-kilometer depth of focus.

The quake was felt at:

- Intensity III in General Santos City
- Intensity II in Monkayo, Davao de Oro.

The tremor was also measured at an Instrumental Intensity I in Alabel, Sarangani.

While no damage was expected from the quake, aftershocks were likely. — DVM, GMA News

 $Source: \underline{https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/783228/magnitude-6-1-quake-\underline{strikes-southwest-of-davao-}\\$

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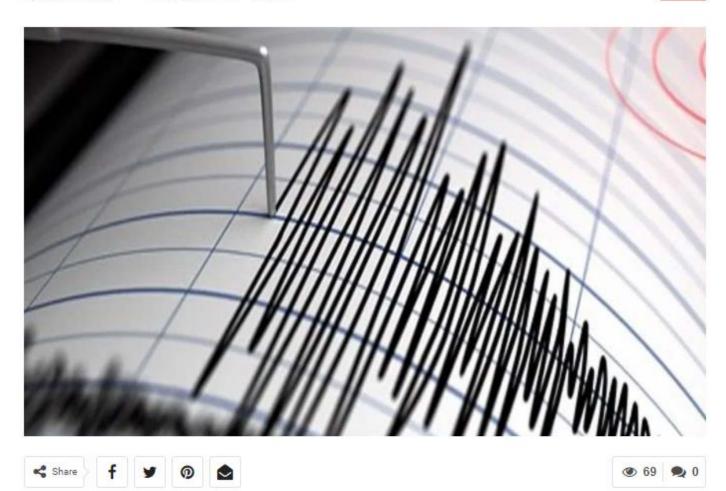


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Sarangani niyanig ng magnitude 6.1

By Abante Tonite - Last updated Apr 10, 2021





Tumama ang magnitude 6.1 na lindol sa bayan ng Sarangani sa Davao Occidental kahapon.

Ayon sa Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), alas-5:30 ng hapon naitala ang lindol.

Wala pang report ng pinsala ngunit inaasahan ang mga aftershock, dagdag ng Phivolcs.

Tectonic ang pinagmulan nito at may lalim na 314 kilometro.

Naramdaman ang Intensity 3 sa General Santos City, Intensity 2 sa bayan ng Monkayo, Davao de Oro at Intensity 1 sa bayan ng Alabel sa Sarangani province. (IS)

Source: https://tonite.abante.com.ph/sarangani-niyanig-ng-magnitude-6-1/





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Malaysia Sends Back Over 300 Containers of Illicit Plastic Waste



FILE PHOTO: Plastic waste piled outside an illegal recycling factory in Jenjarom, Kuala Langat, Malaysia October 14, 2018. Picture taken
October 14, 2018. REUTERS/Lai Seng Sin REUTERS

By Reuters

KUALA LUMPUR (REUTERS) – Malaysia said on Tuesday it had sent 267 containers of illegal plastic waste back to their countries of origin since 2019, and was in the process of returning 81 more.

Malaysia became the destination of choice for the world's plastic waste after China banned imports in 2018, but is struggling to fend off a deluge of generally unlicensed unrecyclable garbage.

New U.N. rules on the trade of hazardous waste under the Basel Convention came into force on Jan. 1, intended to discourage the production of hard-to-recycle plastics and to prevent rich countries from dumping trash in the developing world, where it often ends up polluting the local environment and the ocean.

Signatories to the Convention may only trade plastic waste if it is clean, sorted and easy to recycle – unless the importing country has granted an exemption.

In a statement on Tuesday, Environment Minister Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man noted how much illicit waste Malaysia had succeeded in intercepting and promised that shipping companies or agents who broke Malaysia's environment and import laws would face "strict action".

The United States, which produces more plastic waste per capita than any other country, is the only major nation not to have ratified the Basel Convention. However, under the treaty, Malaysia cannot accept prohibited plastic waste from the United States.

(Reporting by Mei Mei Chu; writing by A. Ananthalakshmi; Editing by Kevin Liffey)

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Source: https://www.villageconnect.com.ph/malaysia-sends-back-over-300-containers-of-illicit-plastic-waste/6769





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Brazil's Amazon deforestation data mixed ahead of Biden Earth Day summit

By JAKE SPRING Reuters

Published April 10, 2021 7:02am



Rainforest destruction has surged since right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro took office in January 2019, weakening environmental enforcement and calling for development of the Amazon.

BRASILIA, Brazil - Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest declined in the first quarter, preliminary government data showed, but the drop may be due mostly to more intense cloud cover this year, and experts point to a concerning jump in March destruction.

Rainforest destruction has surged since right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro took office in January 2019, weakening environmental enforcement and calling for development of the Amazon.

Official annual data - under intense scrutiny as US President Joe Biden's government says it hopes to work with Brazil to lower deforestation - shows deforestation hit a 12-year high in 2020.

But the government says recent monthly data shows that a costly military deployment launched in late 2019 to control fires and deforestation is finally yielding results.

Bolsonaro has been invited to Biden's April 22 Earth Day summit with world leaders, as the two sides attempt to negotiate a deal to protect the Amazon.

Biden said last year that the world should mobilize \$20 billion to give to Brazil to stop deforestation, threatening unspecified economic consequences if it did not.

About 576 square kilometers (222 square miles) were destroyed in the first three months of 2021, down 28% compared with the same period a year ago, according to data from national space research agency Inpe.

But cloud cover, which can obscure deforestation on satellite images, was 44-49% for the first three months of the year, higher than 17-32% a year prior.





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A Brazilian government scientist, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of professional consequences, said that January and February are not a reliable signal of the state of deforestation, as they have low levels of deforestation compared to peak months from May to October and are highly volatile.

But a 12.4% rise in deforestation for March is a cause for concern and trends will become clearer once April data is available, the scientist said.

Deforestation that has been obscured by clouds will be picked up in later months when the rainy season begins to ease.

The rise in March deforestation should serve as a warning sign to the Biden administration not to make a deal with Bolsonaro, said Cristiane Mazzetti, a forest campaigner for advocacy group Greenpeace Brasil.

"What's already bad is getting worse," she said. "The March data is another reason why the Biden government should not sign a blank check over to the Bolsonaro government."

Brazil's Foreign Ministry told Reuters that talks with the United States have consistently progressed since February in relation to financial and technical cooperation on combating Amazon deforestation. No specific agreements are ready to be announced, the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said the talks were strictly between governments. The statement did not address questions on first-quarter deforestation data. -- **Reuters**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/783196/brazil-s-amazon-deforestation-data-mixed-ahead-of-biden-earth-day-summit/story/



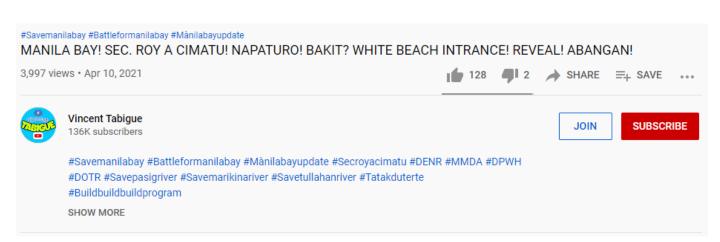




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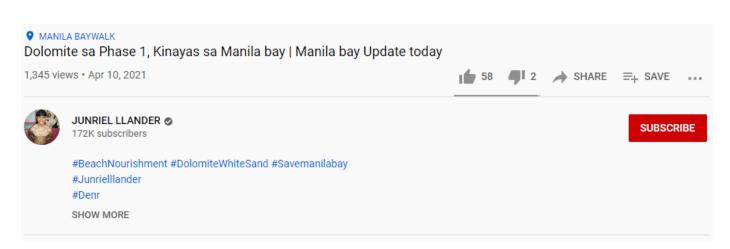




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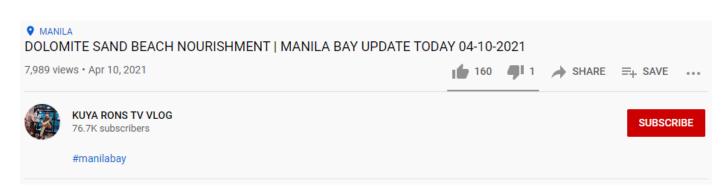




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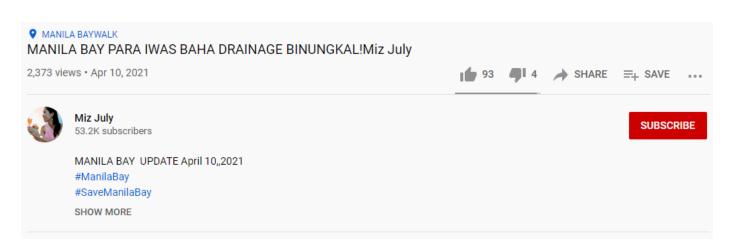




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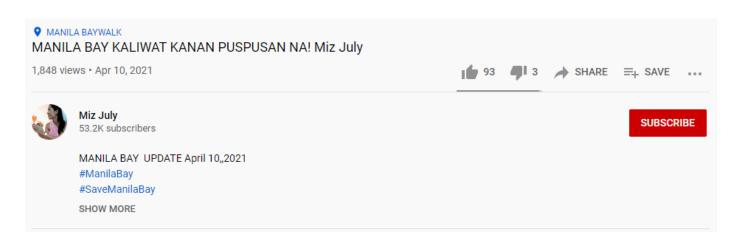




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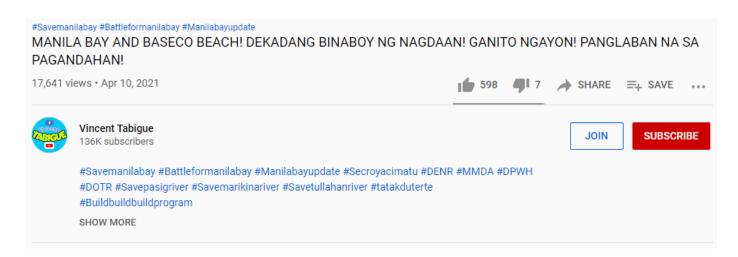




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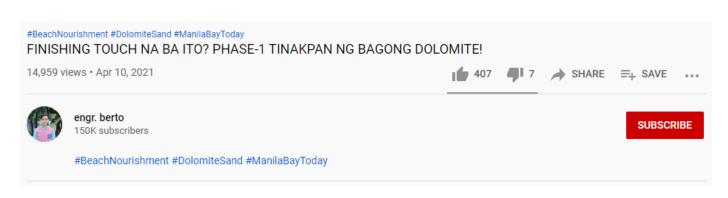




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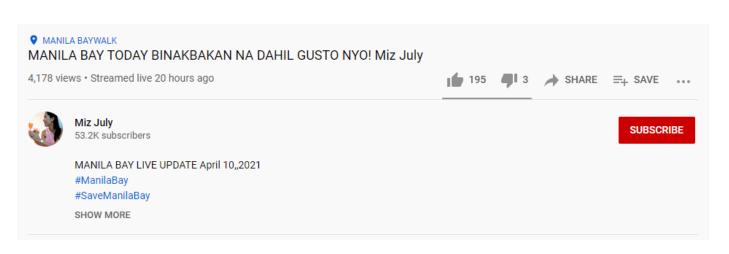




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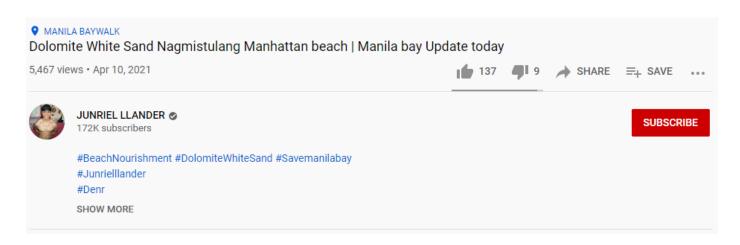




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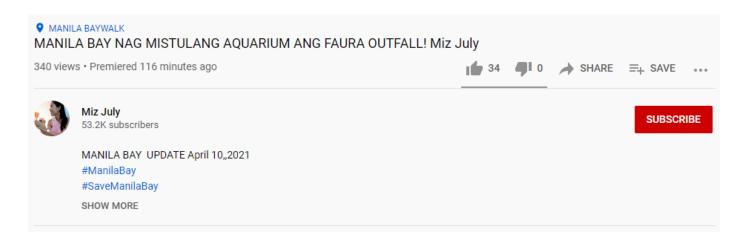




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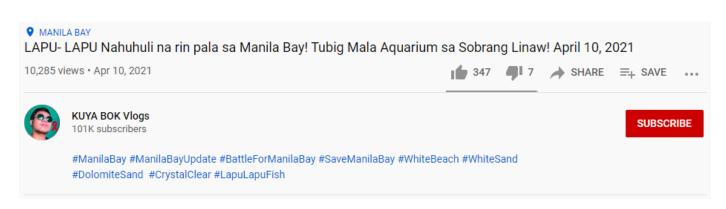




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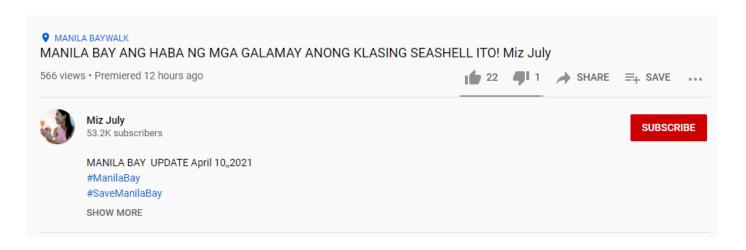




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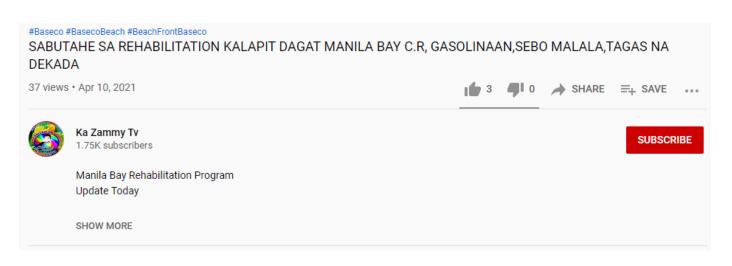




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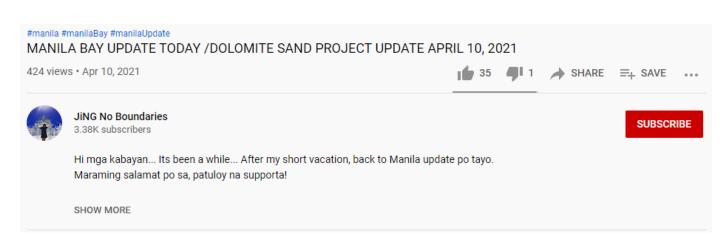




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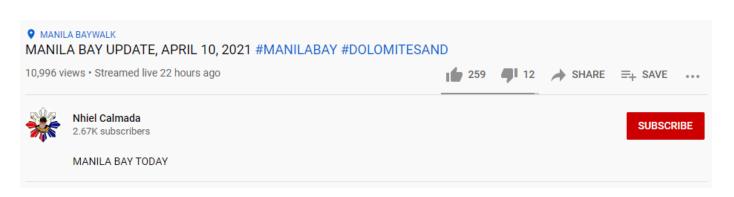




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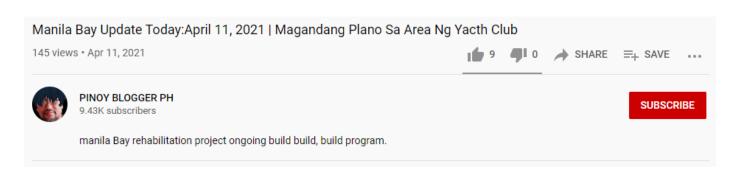




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