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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



SMALL-SCALE MINING OPERATION SA COTABATO IPINASARA NI CIMATU



December 12, 2020 @ 12:15 AM 6 hours ago

IPINAG-UTOS ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) sa Region 12 ang agarang pagpapasara sa illegal small-scale mining operation sa Magpet, Cotabato.

Ang mining site ay nasa 10 kilometro ang layo sa Mt. Apo Natural Park.

Ito ay hindi pa idinideklarang minahang bayan o lugar kung saan papayagan ang lahat ng small-scale miner na mag-operate.

“Whether big or small, any illegal mining activity will have to stop,” ayon pa kay Cimatu at idinagdag pa nito na sasampahan ng kaso ang lahat ng nasa likod ng illegal mining activity.

Ang direktibang ito ni Cimatu ay base na rin sa pinagsamang operasyon ng DENR, MGB, local government ng Cotabato at ng Armed Forces of the Philippines sa Barangay Don Panaca noong Disyembre 7.

Natuklasan ng grupo na ang sinalakay na lugar ay mayroong five-meter tunnel na nagpapatunay na ang mining operation ay nagsisimula pa lamang.

Natagpuan sa tunnel ang 25 sako na naglalaman ng tinatayang 90 kilograms ng ore bawat isa.

Ang isa namang sako ay nakita sa kahabaan ng Balingos River na matatagpuan sa tabi ng tunnel.

Ayon kay MGB 12 Director Felizardo Gacad, Jr., maglalabas sila ng cease-and-desist order laban sa illegal mining operation habang sasampahan naman ng kasong kriminal ang mga iligal na miner at kanilang financiers.

“Records from the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board of Cotabato and MGB 12 show that there is no declared Minahang Bayan in the Municipality of Magpet or in the Province of Cotabato, hence, the operation is illegal,” sabi pa ni Gacad.

Napag-alaman pa sa ulat ng MGB 12 na walang inabutang nagmimina nang isagawa ang pagsalakay ngunit lahat ng ebidensiya ay nagpapakita na may nagaganap na pagmimina sa lugar.

Ayon pa sa ulat, walang nakitang heavy equipment sa lugar ngunit nakakita naman ng tatlong pala at isang metal bar sa labas ng tunnel na nagpapatunay na ang operasyon ay ginagawa manually.



Ang mining operation ay isang malinaw na paglabag sa Republic Act (RA) 7942 o ang Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) maging sa RA 7076 o ang Peoples Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991 and its IRR.



DENR wins lawsuit vs illegal tarantula trader

By DENR Published on December 11, 2020

QUEZON CITY, Dec. 11 -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has won a legal case against the wildlife trader who was behind the illegal shipment of over 700 pieces of live tarantulas intercepted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport last year.

In a seven-page decision dated Nov. 20, 2020, Judge Allan B. Ariola of the Pasay City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 48 has convicted the said illegal trader for illegally transporting 757 pieces of tarantula with an estimated value of Php 310,900 and customs duties and taxes amounting to Php 54,752.



Photo credit to xinhuanet.com

He was found guilty of violating Republic Act (RA) 9147 or the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act and sentenced to six months imprisonment and fined Php 20,000. He was also fined Php 100,000 for violating RA 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the decision is "a testimony of DENR's effectiveness in bringing justice to the voiceless wildlife species."

"The growing number of illegal trading cases prompts us to make environmental law enforcement as one of the priorities in the DENR," Cimatu said.

Cimatu had earlier said the bill creating the Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) under the DENR should be "a priority law to protect those in the frontlines of environmental protection efforts."

The tarantulas were seized in April 2019 by the DENR's Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade or Task Force POGI, in cooperation with the Bureau of Customs.

Task Force POGI is a composite team of wildlife enforcers from various agencies, including the Biodiversity Management Bureau, the National Bureau of Investigation, and the Philippine National Police.

According to Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force Executive Director Nilo Tamoria, the creation of EPEB would not only help save lives of the enforcers, but also "make DENR more effective in enforcing environmental laws."

"If we have an enforcement bureau, we would have more flexibility and advantage in prosecuting the individuals who continue to violate our environmental laws," Tamoria said.



Tamoria noted that the pandemic has not hindered the illegal wildlife traders to take advantage of the situation and continue their activities that are against the law.

“It gives us more impetus on running after environmental crimes with the support we are getting from the legislature, especially with the increasing number of legislators manifesting their co-sponsorship to the EPEB Bill” Tamoria said. (DENR)



UNTV News and Rescue

December 10 at 7:43 PM · 🌐

Nananawagan si Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu sa mga mambabatas na matulungan sila sa pagtatatag ng enforcement bureau sa ahensya. Ito'y sa gitna ng pangha-harass umano ng mga armadong grupo sa mga protected areas sa mga kagubatan.



YOUTUBE.COM

DENR, nanawagan na magkaroon ng batas para sa protected areas ng bansa

Nananawagan si Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu sa mga mambabatas na matulungan sila s...

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150 IPs receive gifts from DENR

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

December 11, 2020

SOME 150 indigenous persons (IP) were given groceries, medical supplies and other provisions by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The IPs were represented by 15 leaders and elders of Barangay Camias during the program held at Hacienda Gracia Resort and Hotel in Lubao. Barangay Camais is a mountain village in Porac town, which is home to several Aeta communities. The event was attended by Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Concerns Benny Antiporda.

Penro chief Laudemir Salac said the event aims to bring much-needed support to the IPs, who are the foremost partners of the DENR in the care and upkeep of forest and vital ecosystems inside their ancestral domain areas.

Antiporda added the program aims to give back to IPs during the challenging time of the coronavirus pandemic. He also pledged to look into the possibility of helping Aetas cultivate high-value crops like coffee and cacao.

“We would like to help you with sustainable options to protect and environment and also improve your standard of living,” Antiporda told Aeta leaders. Antiporda also pledged to help in the machinery needs of the Aeta farmers in his private capacity.

Antiporda had also asked his personnel to map out the “blue lagoon” are in Porac town for possible promotion as a tourist destination. During the gift-giving Antiporda also discussed with tribal leaders possible areas of cooperation and further support for their community.

IP municipal representative Edwin Abuque lauded the efforts of the Penro and the DENR and expressed his optimism for further cooperation in the protection of the environment in Porac town. The leader also thanked the DENR for its continuing support to the Aeta communities of Porac.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1879753/Pampanga/Local-News/150-IPs-receive-gifts-from-DENR>



ACB at PH Senate hearing: biodiversity conservation is key to disaster risk reduction

By ACB Published on December 11, 2020

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna, Dec. 11 -- The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) provided its inputs to the Philippine Senate's inquiry on strengthening the protection and conservation of the country's forest cover and waterways to mitigate the effects of natural hazards.

The ACB, an intergovernmental body mandated by the 10 ASEAN Member States to facilitate joint programmes on biodiversity conservation, attended the virtual Senate hearing of the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change on 10 December 2020, joining other officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) led by Secretary Roy Cimatu, and representatives from the local government units of Cagayan, Isabela, and Marikina, and from private sector, including the Masungi Georeserve in Marikina.

The Senate hearing, held jointly with the Committee on Public Works, sought to discuss various proposed legislations such as the Philippine Senate Resolution No. 581, which looks into "the alleged denuded state of forests and watersheds as well as the apparent heavy siltation on rivers and tributaries."

According to Senator Villar, the resolution's author and chair of the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, the country's forests and watersheds, specifically the Sierra Madre Mountain Range and the Marikina River Basin, is now unable to retain rainwater and prevent erosion that caused massive flooding and landslides during the recent strong typhoons. Quoting the ACB, she further stated that deforestation is a major problem, and that the "...restoration and conservation of the Philippines' existing forests from rainforests to mangrove forests should be at the core of the country's disaster risk reduction plans."

"Protected areas such as the Sierra Madre Mountain range not only serve as Luzon's buffers from the harsh winds of typhoons that come from the Pacific Ocean, but its diverse ecosystems could also regulate the surge of large amounts of rainwater that cause flooding," ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim said in her message delivered by Mary Kristerie A. Baleva, ACB external relations and policy specialist. "These ecologically important areas are our sanctuaries in the face of disasters, the impacts of climate change, and even pandemics caused by zoonosis," she said.

DENR Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna presented their assessment of the typhoon-affected areas, and the environmental actions and rehabilitation measures to be implemented, including reforestation activities through the National Greening Program (NGP) and the formation of the Build Back Better Task Force.

Committee members, emphasised further that programs must be sustainable, and encouraged the restoration of mangroves and propagation of locally-adapted trees and plants such as giant bamboos.

Sen. Imee Marcos pointed out that bamboos, mangroves, and other wetland plants are effective flood control barriers and protection against tsunamis as proven in the experiences of the coastal areas of Leyte, as well as in Phuket, Thailand. Sen. Risa Hontiveros, added that intercropping and diversification practices can both address the need for hardwoods, bamboos and mangroves and to have better impacts on biodiversity.



Representatives from the local governments of Cagayan, Isabela and Marikina appealed to the national government to prioritise environmental conservation to reduce the climate impacts in their areas.

“A whole-of-society approach is necessary to keep our protected areas healthy and thriving,” Lim said. “Integrated planning and implementation among national government agencies, LGUs, the Protected Area Management Boards, as well as taking into account biodiversity considerations in the Environment Impact Assessment process, development interventions, and national disaster risk reduction and management strategies are essential in the efforts for conservation and restoration of our essential forests.”

“The ACB is ready to support the Philippines and all ASEAN Member States in promoting and mainstreaming biodiversity as part of their efforts to prevent calamities, and address and reduce their impacts,” Lim said. (ACB)



Agreement signed to dredge Cagayan River

Published December 11, 2020, 8:47 AM

by [Liezle Basa Iñigo](#)

CAGAYAN – A memorandum of agreement (MOA) has been signed between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), a provincial inter-agency committee on the rehabilitation of Cagayan River, and two private parties to dredge the longest river in the Philippines.



A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Cagayan River Restoration project has been formally signed between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Great River North Consortium, Inc. and Riverfront Construction Inc. at the conference hall DENR Region 2 Tuguegarao City. (CPIO / MANILA BULLETIN)

The MOA for the Cagayan River Restoration Project (CRRP) was signed on Thursday, December 10, in Tuguegarao City by DENR Cagayan Valley Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn C. Bambalan, Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba, as chairperson of the inter-agency committee on the CRRP, and officials of Great River North Consortium Inc., and Riverfront Construction Inc.

The signing of the MOA comes nearly a month after 13 persons were killed, and billions of pesos in property were lost after the Cagayan River burst its banks in the aftermath of typhoon Ulysses.

“This is a dream come true for our province. Matagal na nating pangarap ito (We have hoped for this for a long time). We need to dredge the Cagayan river to mitigate the flooding in our region. We also need to dredge Cagayan river to cope up our port of Aparri. It was closed because of the heavy siltation of the Cagayan river. Napakalaking tulong at oportunidad ito para sa ating lahat (This is a huge help and would provide opportunity for all of us). I can't only imagine if we are inter-connected to our neighbours up north that became economic tigers in Asia and in the world because we need them and they also need us. We are never really connected to them,” Mamba said.

Under the MOA, the DENR shall conduct survey of non-metallic and metallic resources in the River Dredging Zone to determine metallic and other valuable materials in economic quantities. It shall also monitor the operation of the operator-dredger to ensure faithful compliance with applicable environmental laws, rules, and regulations.

The dredging companies shall undertake the project without any funding from the government, and they would bear the full cost of the project, including the disposal of the dredged materials. They shall also be barred from processing the dredged materials in the Philippines, and shall dispose these outside the country's territorial jurisdiction.

They shall also report to the DENR all findings of precious metals or objects which they may inadvertently come across, which may be of local or national interest.



During the MOA signing, Mines and Geosciences Bureau Regional Head Mario Ancheta issued the certificate of accreditation to the two companies as dealers, traders, and/ or retailers of minerals/mineral products and/or by-products.

The accreditation is solely for Cagayan River Restoration via dredging and shall be valid for two years. (With a report from PNA)



DENR, kinastigo nina Senator Villar at Hontiveros sa pagdinig ng Senado

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) -Dec. 11, 2020 at 11:31am



Ikinabwisit ni Committee on Environment Chairperson Senator Cynthia Villar ang sinabi ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mangyayari pa rin ang pagbaha noong manalasa ang Bagyong Ulysses kahit itinigil ang urban development at quarrying sa Marikina watershed at kahit tinaniman ito ng mga 10-taong gulang na puno.

Nairita rin si Villar sa katwiran ng DENR na siyam na Marikina watershed ang kailangan para ma-absorb ang lahat ng ulan na dinala ng Bagyong Ulysses.

Dismayado naman si Senator Risa Hontiveros na parang gustong isakripisyo ng DENR ang watershed para lang sa development projects na pinabulaanan ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

Pinuna rin ni Senator Hontiveros ang pagkunsinti ng DENR sa land-grabbing activities na hinihinalang dahilan ng malawakang pagbaha kamakailan.

Partikular na kinwestyon ni Hontiveros ang pagbibigay ng permit ng DENR sa mga quarry firms na Rapid City Realty and Development, Co. at Quarry Rock Group, Inc.

Sa Senate hearing ay inihayag naman ng DENR ang pagsuspende sa operasyon ng 11 kompanya na may quarrying at crushing plant operations sa lalawigan ng Rizal.

Ayon kay Cimatu, mananatiling suspendido ang kanilang permit hanggang hindi natatapos ng DENR ang assessment at imbestigasyon sa matinding pagbaha sa Marikina gayundin sa San Mateo at Rodriguez sa Rizal nang humagupit ang Bagyong Ulysses.

Source: https://rmn.ph/denr-kinastigo-nina-senator-villar-at-hontiveros-sa-pagdinig-ng-senado/?fbclid=IwAR15tDZZZvawahIlck29AcX1JYuG82CPTZjXPsobgd8yQGwGA_AsVParaa4



DENR seeks support to protect wetlands

By Perla Lena December 11, 2020, 3:45 pm



MIGRATORY BIRD. The migratory bird Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) (right) was documented at the Hinactacan wetlands in La Paz district on Nov. 29, 2020. The DENR is urging the public to protect the wetlands where migratory birds thrive. *(Photo courtesy of Rachel A. Casio/ DENR Conservation and Development Division)*

ILOILO CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here is asking for public support, especially those communities near wetlands, to help in the preservation of areas where migratory birds thrive.

DENR assistant regional director Livino Duran said on Thursday there are wetlands in the Western Visayas serving as destinations for migratory birds.

“We have a continuous monitoring of our wetlands because other migratory birds already become residents of Western Visayas,” he said in an interview.

One of the latest migratory birds documented was the Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) in the wetlands of Hinactacan, La Paz district on Nov. 29, 2020. It was captured by the camera lens of Rachel Casio of the DENR Conservation and Development Division.

“After three years, another first sighting of a rarely seen migratory bird in the country was recorded in Hinactacan wetlands,” the DENR in a press statement said.

The Glossy ibis is a wading bird with a global range and is the most widespread of all ibis species, but very rarely observed in the Philippines.

At a distance, the Glossy ibis may seem dark. A closer look and good lighting, however, would reveal stunning colors of deep maroon, emerald, bronze, and violet, the statement added.

Since these birds are long-legged with long bills, these are sometimes mistaken as Eastern curlew. They also forage quite close together in open fresh marshes but are also seen in brackish and saltwater marshes, mudflats, mangrove swamps, wet agricultural fields, lakes, shallow rivers, and pond edges.

One amusing behavior of the Glossy ibis is that during courtship, it was observed bowing to one another, preening each other (called allopreening), and touching their bills together, rattling them quickly while cooing.

Glossy ibis is known to breed in scattered sites in warm regions of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Atlantic and Caribbean regions of the Americas.

Duran said some migratory birds opted to stay because they have already adopted the habitat and food is sufficient in the community.

Also the awareness of the public not harming them is already high, thus the migratory birds already mingle within the community.

“Most of our wetlands are near the community. If they (migratory birds) are left unharmed, more or less they will just adapt to the situation,” he added.



He added that apart from migratory birds, they are also looking at bird species endemic in Western Visayas.

Once their study on protected areas suitability management for the central Panay mountain range is released, then they would know the species available on the island.

“Each species is important in our lives. They form part of what we call an equally important member of our ecosystem. We must protect and take care of them because in the future they can be our pride. They can form part of our heritage,” he added. **(PNA)**



Environmental group restores coral reefs in Camiguin

By Nef Luczon December 11, 2020, 7:03 pm



Google map of Camiguin Island province.

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY--Environmental group Sangkalikasan Producers Cooperative (SPC) said Friday that it managed to restore a portion of coral reefs within the bay area of Camiguin province.

Alexandra Hill, a British marine biologist for SPC who managed the project, said the privately-funded initiative started in October last year.

The group said it employed a new technology to accelerate coral restoration in the area, producing results within months instead of the normal process that could take years.

"It involves the process of micro-fragmentation and colony fusion of coral fragments. It was pioneered by Dr. Vaughn of Mote Marine Laboratory, Florida (USA)," Hill said.

The experiment took place in Cabuan Marine Protected Area in Camiguin Province with the help of volunteers from Camiguin Polytechnic State College.

"Micro-fragmentation and colony fusion differs from more common coral restoration methods, which largely focus on branching species. Micro-fragmentation is used on slower-growing massive coral species. Colony fusion occurs when growing fragments from the same donor colony touch and fuse together to become one, increasing their overall surface area and consequently increasing their chances of survival," Hill explained.

He said the initiative "has the power to vastly improve coral restoration efforts in the Philippines," and in maintaining coral biodiversity that would result in "reef resilience."

The group said that climate change remains "the most imminent threat" to coral reefs, along with man-made actions such as dynamite fishing, oxybenzone sunscreens, nutrient runoff, and damage from natural calamities, such as typhoons.

"SPC is hoping that our work in coral restoration can mitigate not only the damage from some of these threats but also raise awareness surrounding the importance of our coral reefs," Hill said.

Fannie Guanzon, SPC chair, said the project's success inspired them to propagate another one million corals next year.

The SPC reports it has already propagated its first million corals in the countryside in previous years.

"We are all excited about this. This is what I've been waiting for to develop something new that has an impact," Guanzon said.

Prior to the SPC's initiative in Camiguin, the group has also conducted other coral restoration projects in Boracay Island in Aklan, Antique, and Zamboanga, and in other parts of the country. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1124515>



139 sea turtle eggs secured in Pagudpud

Published December 11, 2020, 7:13 AM

by [Philippine News Agency](#)

LAOAG CITY – At least 139 sea turtle eggs were relocated on Thursday from the shoreline of Saud, Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte to “pawikan” hatchery to keep them safe during high tide and protected from predators.



Pagudpud Pawikan Conservation Group / PNA / MANILA BULLETIN

A team from the Pagudpud Pawikan Conservation Group (PPCG), which is composed of public and private stakeholders, patrols the Pagudpud shoreline, a favorite nesting ground of marine turtles.

The turtle eggs are expected to hatch in the second or third week of January next year after a female green sea turtle was spotted in the area last November 24.

Roehl Tamargo, an active member of the Pagudpud Lifeguards Association and a trained PPCG responder, said Thursday they needed to relocate the sea turtle eggs as they expect them to be threatened when the tide rises, and by predators, as crabs and dogs.

Pending the passage of a proposed ordinance creating a portion of the coastal villages of Saud and Caparispisan as a pawikan sanctuary, a guarded hatchery was temporarily installed at the municipal beach park to host endangered species.

All year round, local environment officials have been monitoring the stretch of Ilocos Norte's shorelines from Badoc to Pagudpud towns for sea turtle nesting areas.

The provincial fishery division of the Ilocos Norte government and local government units have included in their information campaigns the conservation and protection of the endangered marine turtles.

In Pagudpud, Tamargo, they are monitoring and guarding at least three sea turtle nests at the Saud shoreline where they installed nets with an enclosure to protect the eggs before they hatch and find their way back to the sea.

In all, Tamargo's group is expecting nearly 400 baby sea turtles once they hatch in January next year.

Marine sea turtles often lay their eggs from dusk till dawn and the peak season is from November to March.

There had been reports that egg sales and consumption continue in the province but concerned authorities and support groups are actively campaigning for the conservation and protection of the endangered species.



“After we were trained about wildlife conservation, courtesy of the North Luzon Renewable Energy Corp., we are thankful that more people in Pagudpud are now aware of the value of this wildlife and they help us in our efforts to conserve them,” Tamargo said in a phone interview.

Local officials said at least three types of sea turtles are often spotted in the Ilocos shoreline – the olive ridley, hawksbill, and green sea turtles.



9h · 🌐

Nasa 180 piraso ng mga itlog ng pawikan ang nasagip sa tulong ng mga Bantay Dagat mula sa dalampasigan ng Barangay Panan, Botolan sa Zambales.

Kaagad nilang ipinagbigay alam ito sa tanggapan ng Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office upang dalhin sa pawikan hatchery sa Barangay Danabunga. | via Roel Tarayao



👍❤️👏 282

12 Comments 10 Shares



Aprubado na sa final reading ng Kamara ang House Bill No. 7987 na inakda ni Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez para maprotektahan ang puno at mapayabong ang turismo sa paligid nito.



927

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Itogon folk asserts opposition to TSF2



OPPOSED. Residents from Barangays Poblacion, Dalupirip, and Tinongdan in Itogon, Benguet join the ecumenical mass near the opposed Tailings Storage Facility Dam 2 of Benguet Corporation. These lower downstream communities opposed the plans of the mining firm to raise the level of the dam. (Lauren Alimondo)

LAUREN ALIMONDO

December 11, 2020

POBLACION, Itogon -- Stakeholders of Barangays Dalupirip, Poblacion, Tinongdan in Itogon, Benguet continue to fight against Benguet Corporation's plan to raise the level of its Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) 2.

It was in 2002 when the mining firm's current operation, the Acupan Contract Mining Project (ACMP), was conceptualized and the TSF 2 was utilized as the project's tailings disposal.

Barangay Tinongdan Captain Edwin Atumpag said residents fear that once the dam collapse, those in the downstream will be affected.

Barangay Poblacion Captain Albert Carantes Jr. added there were several negotiations conducted in the past but downstream communities still oppose the project.

In a manifesto, residents and elders signed their stand against the plan of the mining firm.

"We Indigenous Peoples of Itogon and representatives from various sectors reiterate and manifest our extreme concern and opposition to the implementation of the tailings dam 2 raising project of Benguet Corporation within the context of blatant disregard for Indigenous Human Rights and Environmental Protection," the manifesto read.

Stakeholders said in spite of the absence of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) and the continued consistent opposition of the lower downstream Indigenous Peoples of Itogon, the regional offices of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Environment Management Bureau (EMB) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) issued orders and legal opinions interposing no objection to the project.

"These are blatant display of inadequate evaluation with regard to key issues as well as irregularities in the environmental licensing associated with company influence which has resulted in illegal approval paving for the company to resume its dumping and earth moving activities in TSF 2," the manifesto added.

The communities asked for the immediate suspension and nullification of environment licenses for the project, conduct of an FPIC, investigation of the irregularities in the issuance of licenses, compliance in securing other permits or clearances such as barangay, municipal and provincial government endorsement.



The mining firm is also asked to secure Protected Area and Management Board clearance, building permit, quarry permit, comply to prior commitments and environmental responsibilities, complete the dam 2 spillway, enhance and maintain the old and new diversion tunnels, pay the unpaid claims affected by the dam construction, implement the Social Development Management Programs and pay natural wealth share to the localities.

Vice Governor Johnny Waguis, Board Members Robert Namoro and Alexander Fianza, meanwhile, backed residents of Itogon against the project.

"We in the Provincial Government together with the Provincial Board members is one in your call to stop the raising of the dam and for the company to look for other alternative in order for them to continue their operation," Waguis added.

Fianza said they sympathize with the problem of lower downstream communities opposing the TSF Dam 2 to be raised citing the fear of the people.

"Once the dam will be damage due to typhoon, mud will be directly going to the downstream communities and destroy their farms, houses, and livestock," added Fianza.

Namoro said mining serves as livelihood but this should be balanced.

"The call is not to stop the operation of the mines but for an alternative in order for the downstream not to vanish. When it comes to legality, it might be legal but is it moral?" Namoro said.



Customs condemns 4.28 tons of unregistered, hazardous goods

Robie de Guzman • December 11, 2020



MANILA, Philippines – The Bureau of Customs (BOC)-Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on Friday said it has condemned a total of 4.28 tons of unregistered and hazardous goods it seized from various operations.

The BOC said the items were destroyed last December 7 in a facility in Trece Martires, Cavite.

The goods were condemned using the Thermal Decomposer (Pyrolysis) Facility of the Integrated Waste Management Inc. (IWMI) to “ensure that these items will not be sold or made available in the market,” it added.

The bureau said the condemnation of unregistered cosmetics and food products is part of its border protection initiatives to protect the public against unsafe and hazardous consumer products.

“This is also in compliance with Commissioner Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero’s directive to decongest all ports and warehouses,” it added.

For the year 2020, the BOC said its Port of NAIA has already condemned a total of 371.42 tons of unregistered and hazardous goods.

DepEd, CCC conduct webinar on climate education for secondary teachers

By DepEdPublished on December 11, 2020



DepEd, CCC conduct webinar on climate education for secondary teachers

DepEd, through its Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) and the Climate Change Commission (CCC), marked another milestone as they conducted the first free webinar for secondary teachers to advance climate education in the entire country.

The National Panel of Technical Experts lectured and discussed to the high school teachers knowledge on DRRM and climate education to promote climate action.

IN THE NEWS

DepED
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

QUEZON CITY, Dec. 11 -- The Department of Education (DepEd), through the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS), and the Climate Change Commission (CCC), marked another milestone as they conducted the first free webinar for secondary teachers to advance climate education in the entire country.

A handful of renowned people in the field of climate action graced the “Climate Science Master Class for High School Teachers” to share about climate education via Zoom and Facebook Live last November 24, 2020, as part of the activities for the 4th National Climate Change Conference (NCCC) and the 13th Annual Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week.

The Master Class featured lectures and discussion by the National Panel of Technical Experts, the government’s lead technical advisory body on climate science and technology, and oriented the high school teachers on the knowledge materials that DepEd-DRRMS and its partners are developing to help teachers effectively unpack learning competencies on climate change and promote climate action.

Mr. Jerome E. Ilagan, Chief of the Policy Research and Development Division of the CCC, affirmed that the idea of making climate education accessible to more students across the country is a priority.

With this in mind, they organized the said webinar to integrate climate education in many basic learning areas like Math, English, Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, and others.



One of the key speakers, DepEd-DRRMS Dir. Ronilda R. Co, informed the participants that they have plotted three ways to make climate education happen with the means of references such as creating a Microsite on Curated Resources for Teaching Climate Change as an online website, developing handbooks and self-learning modules, and producing the KALIKHASAN: Likha at Lakas ng Kabataan Para sa Kalikasan: a creative sourcebook on using theater for climate change education and action.

“[By means of this,] we want to generate the best from the youth, we want to hear their critiques,” she stated, remarking how the youth are engaging efforts to make a difference in these trying times.

Furthermore, the proposed handbooks consist of the following topics: The Science of Climate Change, Climate and Disaster Risk, Impacts of Climate Change on Human Beings, and Solutions to Climate Change.

The teacher-participants were also exposed to informative topics like the roles of greenhouse gases in global warming, ocean acidification, mitigation and adaptation, climate change on the health, responsibilities in climate change, biodiversity as well as other topics to consider.

Meanwhile, a total number of 1,100 participants joined the Zoom session while its Facebook streaming garnered 46,800 viewers.

The CCC Vice-Chairperson and Executive Director Emmanuel M. De Guzman expressed his high hopes for the project that is about to materialize.

“Together, let us pave the way for a new generation of Filipinos fully aware and knowledgeable of the various dimensions of the climate emergency and fully committed to usher[ing] a brighter, safer, and more secure future for the Filipino nation,” he remarked.

This Master Class is part of the activities of the Department’s celebration of the 4th NCCC which went full-digital this year. More information about the conference can be found on <https://bit.ly/4thNCCC>. (DepEd)

Note: This article was written and prepared by Erin Consebido (Student-Journalist) and Abigail Mirabel-Agapay (School Paper Adviser) from Liliw National High School, Division of Laguna who are graduates of DepEd-DRRMS and AYEJ.org’s Green Beat Initiative: An Online Environmental Journalism Training.



DOT, PCEPSDI hold webinar on plastic upcycling and Waste Management

Published December 11, 2020, 1:11 PM

by [Hanah Tabios](#)

The Department of Tourism (DOT) has collaborated with the Philippine Center for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, Inc. (PCEPSDI) in holding a webinar training program for the hospitality sector to reduce single-use plastics while keeping in mind health and safety protocols.



[REGISTRATION] Responsible Tourism through Plastic Upcycling and Waste Management

In support for a better and new normal towards a green recovery of the Philippine tourism industry, the Transforming Tourism Value Chains to Accelerate More Resource Efficient, Low Carbon Development Project, in partnership with Clean Our Oceans Project, with guest speakers from the World Wide Fund for Nature - Philippines, presents its third, FREE training: Responsible Tourism through Plastic Upcycling and Waste Management, happening on December 15, 2020 at 1:30-4:30pm.

This training aims for participants to learn how their tourism businesses can minimize unnecessary usage of plastic packaging given the threats to marine biodiversity and from the COVID-19 pandemic. The training also supports the implementation of the Roadmap for Low-Carbon and Resource-Efficient Tourism in the Philippines, particularly in improving solid waste management and eliminating the use of single use plastic items in the hospitality sector.

Hotels, resorts, and other enterprises are encouraged to attend the webinar training entitled “Responsible Tourism through Plastic Upcycling and Waste Management” on Dec. 15 at 1:30p.m. This aims to educate the hospitality sector on how to reduce plastic usage to help save marine life and from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The training is organized by the Transforming Tourism Value Chains (TVC) project, in cooperation with United Nations Environment (UNEP) and Clean our Oceans Project (CoOp), with guest speakers from World Wide Fund for Nature – Philippines (WWF).

The initiative is part of DOT’s Save Our Spots campaign to unite the tourism sector in addressing the causes of plastic pollution by enabling stakeholders to reduce plastic usage and encourage their guests to take part in the change. The campaign directly supports the Roadmap for Low-Carbon and Resource-Efficient Tourism in the Philippines, a strategic document that pushes for sustainability and growth by protecting the natural beauty of the Philippines.

According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development, plastic waste worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the increase in the usage of single-use plastic for hygienic purposes.

The UNEP added that the plastics are being washed into the world’s ocean every year, affecting marine biodiversity. Meanwhile, One Planet Network also stated that tourism is affected by plastic pollution since 80 percent of destinations are located in coastal areas. Other organizations taking part in the campaign include Reef World Foundation and Philippine Hotel Owners Association, Inc.

Interested participants can register through this link:
<https://bit.ly/PlasticUpcyclingWasteManagementReg>

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/11/dot-pcepsdi-hold-webinar-on-plastic-upcycling-and-waste-management/>



BFP-Pangasinan eyes planting 5K trees

By Ahikam Pasion December 11, 2020, 12:55 pm



COMMUNI-TREE. Personnel of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) - Pangasinan plant 200 Narra tree seedlings along the Camp 4 Villa Verde Trail in San Nicolas town in this photo taken a few weeks ago. The program is part of the "Green Revolution Reloaded" project of the BFP 1 (Ilocos region). *(Photo courtesy of BFP-Pangasinan Headquarters/Jerick James Pasillao)*

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan – The Bureau of Fire Protection's (BFP) office in Pangasinan is targeting to plant 5,000 tree seedlings in selected areas across the province through its CommuniTREE program.

"*Nakapagtanim na kami ng 2,500 seedlings (We have planted 2,500 seedlings),*" Georgian Pascua, BFP-Pangasinan director and fire chief inspector, said in an interview on Friday.

Pascua said they are set to return to Mangatarem town to plant more tree seedlings.

"Previously, we went to San Nicolas town and planted 250 tree seedlings," he added.

Pascua said the fire marshal in the area has been directed to coordinate with the local government to hasten the completion of the project by inviting participants to plant.

He said the project also aims to protect, take care of, and beautify the environment by planting more trees.

The CommuniTREE project was launched at the Daang Kalikasan in Mangatarem in September last year.

Meanwhile, Pascua said the BFP has completed the inspection of all business establishments in the province for fire safety.

"*Nasa 100 percent na po tayo. Lahat po ng establishments ay na-issue-han na po natin ng fire safety permit and certificate (We are at 100 percent. All establishments have been issued fire safety permits and certificates),*" he said.

The BFP-Pangasinan's fire safety inspection came to a halt when the province was locked down due to the pandemic.

It resumed inspections as soon as the province was placed under modified general community quarantine and restrictions were eased.

Pascua assured that the fire safety inspection was done properly. **(PNA)**



Parañaque to ban plastics starting January

Published December 11, 2020, 5:09 PM
by [Jean Fernando](#)

The Parañaque City government announced the banning of single-use plastics for all dry goods which was supposed to be implemented last June and will start in January 2021.

Mayor Edwin Olivarez said the implementation of City Ordinance No. 18-40 regulating the use, provision, and sale of Styrofoam, plastic bags and plastic for prepared food and beverage containers was supposed to start last June but because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the prohibition will start on January 2021.

Olivarez said that Parañaque followed Makati, Pasig, Muntinlupa, Pasay, and Quezon City in banning or regulating single-use plastics.

According to the city ordinance, no business establishment such as shops, restaurants, hotel, fast food chains, bars, food stalls, mobile food carts, food caterings, and others shall use Styrofoam, plastic bags and single-use plastic containers including straw and stirrers for their food and beverages.

The mayor said the banning of single-use plastics will help alleviate the problem of plastic wastes always ending up in drainage systems, waterways, and rivers.

Under the measure, Olivarez also said that only manufacturers in the city will be allowed to use plastics for packaging, but supermarkets and public market vendors will be asked to use biodegradable plastic.

Violators will be fined P5,000 for the first and second offense. For the third offense, violators will also have to pay P5,000 plus cancellation of their business permit and closure of their business establishments.



Here's how you can be more eco-friendly during the new normal

Published December 11, 2020 3:50pm

Presented by: NutriAsia

It's a typical work-from-home day. You crave for your favorite comfort food and have it delivered. After enjoying your meal and satisfying your craving, you notice all the used food containers, plastic bags, and disposable utensils. Then you wonder: "Where do all these garbage end up?"

Due to the pandemic, [more Filipinos have opted for food delivery services](#) instead of dining out to practice social distancing and minimize their time outside. Unfortunately, one of its drawbacks is the increased usage of plastic bags, single-use sachets, and disposable food containers and utensils, which can further worsen the country's growing waste management problem.

[According to the Philippine Senate Energy Committee](#), the country is projected to produce 16.63 million metric tons of waste in 2020. To put it into perspective, that amount of waste is enough to fill 23,279 Olympic-sized swimming pools or 99 Philippine Arenas.

So, what can you do that will help in reducing all these wastes? Start thinking green and educate yourself about sustainability. Take one small step at a time and make it a habit. Here are a few things that you can do today to get you started on a zero-waste lifestyle.

Only get what you need

When having food delivered, request the restaurant not to include plastic straws and utensils and use your reusable ones at home instead. You can also ask for the right amount of napkins and condiments packed in sachets like catsup or sauce. Oftentimes, restaurants provide more than what you really need.

Shop wisely

When shopping for essentials, buy products with the least amount of unnecessary packaging to prevent wastage. If your budget permits, consider buying in bulk to minimize single-use sachet consumption and prevent frequent market or grocery trips.



Reuse containers

Reuse or repurpose plastic food containers so they won't end up in landfills. Some plastic containers are made durable enough to be reused [up to 25 times](#). As for single-use plastic containers, upcycle them by converting them into pencil or crayon cases, organizers, or small plant pots. Reusing them is one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to reduce their environmental impact.

One notable campaign in reusing food containers is NutriAsia's BYOB (Bring Your Own Bote) Store in Bonifacio Global City which was launched in July 2019. It's a zero-waste store where people can refill their own reusable containers with their favorite products like Datu Puti condiments, Golden Fiesta Oil, and more.



The physical store, which is itself made out of eco-bricks, also serves as a drop-off point for plastic materials to be repurposed into school furnishings for Gat Andres Bonifacio High School in Taguig City. Because of this innovative idea, the campaign bagged the Bronze Stevie® Award for Corporate Responsibility Communications at the 17th Annual International Business Awards. The premier business awards program received entries from organizations in 63 nations and territories.

The BYOB Store reopened last August 2020 after the lifting of the Enhanced Community Quarantine. To ensure the well-being of both their staff and customers, they modified and improved their service by adhering to stricter health and safety measures. This includes the use of an Ultra Violet cabinet on-site for bottle sterilization to make sure that they are germ-free before refills.





To enjoy more #MasarapMasaya meals and have your containers refilled, fill out [BYOB Store's online order form](#). For more information on the BYOB store, visit their [official webpage](#) or follow [NutriAsia on Facebook](#).

The road to a clean, unpolluted Philippines may be long but a good number of individuals, organizations and institutions have already taken the first crucial steps. For our part, each of us needs to start playing our role to move closer toward sustainability. As the BYOB Store says, *"We can help the Earth and build a sustainable zero-waste community one refill at a time."*

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/767657/here-s-how-you-can-be-more-eco-friendly-during-the-new-normal/story/?fbclid=IwAR0Y8ybMSOssGSVMdrr3tyXQne7MJP5BfTq8WdNNZ6p9M_Ojf65R1SMD-co



#BattleForManilaBay #BeachNourishment #TatakDuterte

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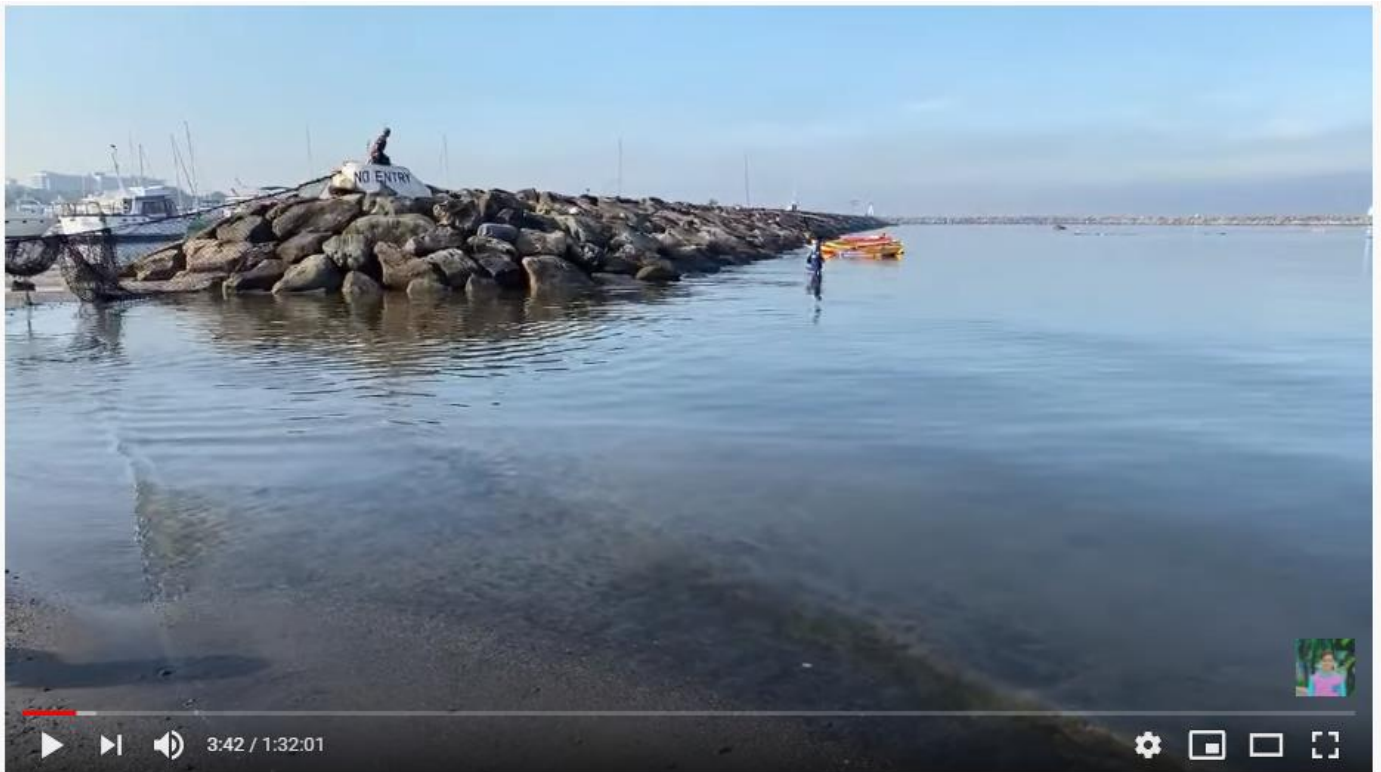
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SHOW CHAT REPLAY

MANILA BAY SOBRANG GANDA! ASUL NA ASUL MULI ANG DAGAT!

7,106 views • Streamed live 22 hours ago

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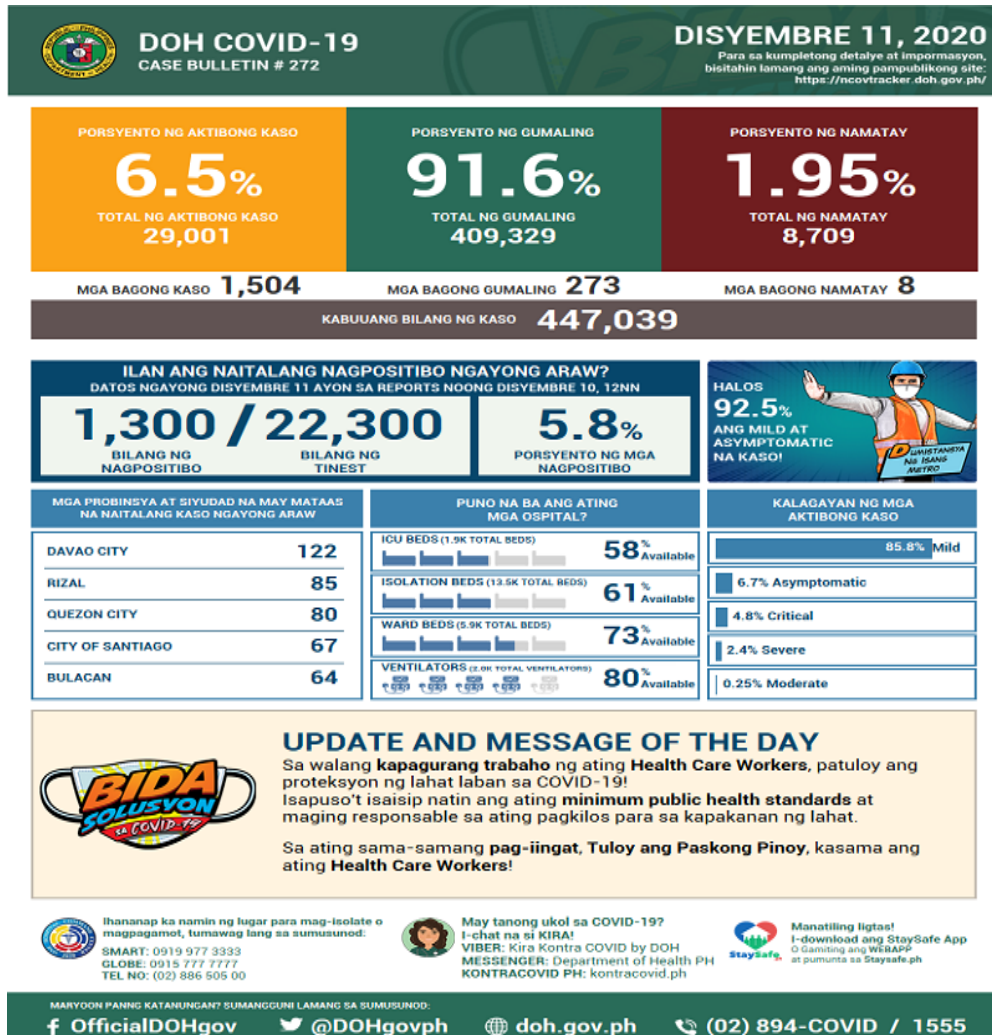
Source:

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BREAKING: Bilang ng mga tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, nasa 447,039 na

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo December 11, 2020 - 04:06 PM



Mahigit 1,500 ang panibagong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 na naitala sa bansa.

Sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) araw ng Biyernes (December 11), umabot na sa 447,039 na ang confirmed cases ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 29,001 o 6.5 porsyento ang aktibong kaso.

Sinabi ng kagawaran na 1,504 ang bagong napaulat na kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

85.8 porsyento sa active COVID-19 cases ang mild; 6.7 porsyento ang asymptomatic; 0.25 porsyento ang moderate; 2.4 porsyento ang severe habang 4.8 porsyento ang nasa kritikal na kondisyon.

8 naman ang napaulat na dagdag na nasawi.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 8,709 o 1.95 porsyento ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa.

Ayon pa sa DOH, 273 naman ang gumaling pa sa COVID-19.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 409,329 o 91.6 porsyento ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Source: <https://radio.inquirer.net/279359/breaking-bilang-ng-mga-tinamaan-ng-covid-19-sa-pilipinas-nasa-447039-na>



PH plans to put up cold storage rooms in Metro Manila for COVID-19 vaccines

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 11, 2020 3:26:41 PM



FILE PHOTO

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 11) — Metro Manila will serve as the central hub for all COVID-19 vaccines — with other cold chain hubs strategically located nationwide for easier distribution, Health Department spokesperson Maria Rosario Vergeire said on Friday.

The government is in talks with the private sector to establish cold storage rooms and walk-in freezers to keep vaccines, including those requiring ultra-cold storage, such as Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine.

“Sa ngayon ang ating plano ay magkaroon tayo ng apat na cold storage rooms at dalawang walk-in freezers sa Metro Manila because this will be the central hub of all vaccines,” Vergeire said in a forum.

[Translation: The plan is to have 4 cold storage rooms and 2 walk-in freezers in Metro Manila because this will be the central hub of all vaccines.]

The Philippines has secured vaccine doses from Pfizer-BioNTech, Sinovac, and AstraZeneca, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said. Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccines need storage temperatures of up to -70°C . Other vaccines, such as those manufactured by Sinovac and AstraZeneca, may be stored in regular freezers with temperatures ranging from 2°C to 8°C .

The government will also put up cold chain hubs in Bicol, Cebu, and Zamboanga for easier distribution in the regions.

Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez said vaccines that require ultra-cold storage may be distributed to Metro Manila, Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro, while rural areas may receive those made by Sinovac and AstraZeneca.



Commuters are seen queueing in this October 1, 2020 photo.
The STAR/Edd Gumban

OCTA Research: Coronavirus infections in the Philippines could reach 480K by yearend

(Philstar.com) - December 11, 2020 - 11:10am

MANILA, Philippines — Coronavirus infections may stay well below half a million by the end of 2020, the OCTA Research Group said Friday.

"Right now, actually, we are projected to reach the lower end of our projection, which is closer to 470,000. It looks like we're going to reach something like 475,000 to 480,000 but that is with the current trajectory," University of the Philippines mathematics professor Guido David told ANC's "Headstart."

The group, composed of academic experts from UP and the University of Santo Tomas and that presidential spokesperson Harry Roque warned against making recommendations in public, earlier projected that the number of cases in the country may reach between 470,000 and 500,000 by the end of the month.

"If the situation worsens a little bit, we might get closer to 500,000. But right now, that is not the case," David said.

Earlier this month, he warned that overcrowding in public places may lead to a surge in cases, telling One News' "The Chiefs" that hitting the 500,000 mark would mean that the "curve is already unflattening and we're starting on an upward trend" once more.

"We don't have the full details yet because these are just indicators... but we would know more by next week if the uptick is continuing to grow. In that case, a surge or at least an uptick might happen in Metro Manila," he said Friday.

'Hard lockdown not necessary yet'

Despite their fears of a surge, considering what he characterized as the vastly improved situation in the capital region, Guido said the OCTA group would not be pushing for a hard lockdown just yet.

"We would not recommend a hard lockdown as of the moment because, these indicators, while they suggest an uptick or high hospital occupancy, but the situation right now in Metro Manila is the best it has been for like three months since early August."



"So, the situation has improved a lot [and] we're not yet at that state where we would need lockdown," he added.

Guido noted a surge in cases in Cagayan and Isabela, provinces severely hit and forced to declare a state of calamity due to the recent onslaught of typhoons, as well as the municipality of Mankayan in Benguet. He added that the OCTA group would be monitoring these areas to see if the surge in cases would continue.

READ: [Gov't urged to prevent COVID-19 'superspreading' at evacuation centers](#)

As of this writing, the national coronavirus caseload stands at 445,540 and deaths are at a grim 8,701. It has been 171 days since parts of the country was first placed under lockdown, marking the longest community quarantine period in the world.

— **Bella Perez-Rubio**



Vigilance

[FIRST PERSON](#) - [Alex Magno](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 12, 2020 - 12:00am

In this season, the biggest threats to public health are our own cherished traditions. Such is the nature of this horrible year.

Health authorities cannot warn us enough. We need to forego the usual things we do during this time of the year to avert a dangerous surge in infections. This means we should avoid family get-togethers and the boisterous Christmas parties that used to happen as a matter of course.

We all look forward to seeing our loved ones and our dear friends this season. But given the circumstances, carrying on as usual will be reckless behavior punishable by a wide range of ordinances.

Learn from what happened in the US. All the major surges in infections came in the wake of public holidays, the last one being Thanksgiving Day.

The other day, over 3,100 Americans died from COVID-19 in a single 24-hour period. This is just the beginning of the post-Thanksgiving Day surge experts have warned against. Despite those warnings, millions of Americans chose to defy the odds and traveled to be with their families on the day traditionally reserved for such gatherings. The sharp spike in hospitalizations attests to that.

In our case, the week from Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve has traditionally been the time for families to get together, indulge in good food and long bouts of laughter. We will have to avoid all that this year.

There is no substitute for vigilance in the midst of a relentless pandemic. If we let down our guard, yield to what we traditionally do this time of the year, the penalties will be severe.

Surges become evident about two weeks after a holiday. In our case, we will either reap the fruits of our vigilance or the pains of our folly by mid-January. We will either continue with the long and slow descent in infections we worked hard to achieve or suffer the consequences of a major surge of the pandemic.

One consequence of a major surge in infections is the return to tighter restrictions. In turn, this will result in further damage to our economy, already badly scarred this year.

Our experience so far, in the ten months we have been battling the pandemic, shows we are a compliant and cooperative people. Mask wearing is nearly universal. Contrast this with the sporadic demonstrations in the US and Europe where some saw public health protocols a threat to their liberties.

The compliance and cooperation had been abetted by comprehensive protocols. One could not board a bus or enter a mall without wearing both mask and face shield. One could not drive off to a beach without observing the protocols required to do so.

The IATF has been relentless in carefully calibrating all the protocols for everything, from regulations for dining-in to prescribed bubbles for sports events. The retired military officers charged with managing this public health crisis ought to be given the credit they deserve for being so obsessive with these protocols. They are a major reason government's handling of the emergency received sky-high approval ratings.



It is fortunate that our well developed protest industry, a networked skilled in mobilizing every grievance into a political force, had not managed to win any traction through the long and hard days of community quarantine. This is not for want of trying.

At the start of April, militants from a leftist urban poor stronghold in Quezon City attempted to march out to EDSA to protest lockdown restrictions. The police responded quickly and firmly, pushing the march back to the innards of the slum and arresting the most vociferous participants.

This was a decisive moment. Had this horde managed to stage their demonstration and block traffic along EDSA, the protest industry could have won a foothold against the necessary restrictions. The dark days of quarantine could have been marred by street fighting, aggravating all the pain our citizens had to endure.

The firm police response sent a clear message: no group will be allowed to mess with the state response to the pandemic. The best thing to do in the face of this severe public health emergency is to don a mask and comply with all the protocols.

After that decisive skirmish, the leftist groups were pushed to the margins. The Left was not going to dictate the public health agenda.

Obsessed as they were with high profile street actions, they could not indulge in that pointless activity in the busy avenues. They could only assemble in the idle streets of the UP campus and even then must don masks and observe social distancing.

Still, we face difficult days ahead. It is tough to ask a country obsessed with food and laughter to stay apart during the holidays.

We saw how crowds tightly massed at Divisoria. This was a perfect setting for super spreading the virus. Policemen armed with rattan batons had to be sent in to ensure proper social distancing.

The joyless human rights advocates tried to make an issue of policemen walking around with sticks. But then it turns out the stick was long part of the standard uniform and the mere sight of the batons caused clusters of people to instinctively spread out according to health protocols.

We will have to live with these health protocols for months, maybe years, ahead. The vaccines are coming by the second quarter. But they will require years to be administered widely.

In the meantime, every citizen must be a frontliner in building a culture of vigilance.



Amihan magpapaulan sa Batanes, Babuyan Island



December 11, 2020 @ 7:10 PM 11 hours ago
Views: 128

Manila, Philippines – Inaasahang magpapaulan ang hanging Amihan sa Batanes at Babuyan Islands ngayong Biyernes, batay sa PAGASA.

Sa 24-hour forecast, posible ang pagbaha o pagguho ng lupa sa kasagsagan ng buhos ng ulan, kulog, at kidlat.

Makaaapekto naman ang Easterlies mula sa Pacific Ocean sa Metro Manila at nalalabing bahagi ng bansa.

“All are advised to take precautionary measures against the impacts associated with these hazards which include flash floods and landslides,” lahad ng PAGASA. **RNT/FGDC**



View of lighters belonging to Chinese oil company PetroOriental near the Miwuaguno village, Orellana province, Ecuador, on December 10, 2020. The Waorani indigenous people filed a climate change lawsuit against Chinese oil company PetroOriental to extinguish oil lighters within their territories in the Amazon.

Cristina Vega Rhor / AFP

Emissions fell record 7 percent in 2020: study

[Patrick Galey](#) (Agence France-Presse) - December 11, 2020 - 10:00am

PARIS, France — Carbon emissions fell a record seven percent in 2020 as countries imposed lockdowns and restrictions on movement during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Carbon Project said Friday in its annual assessment.

The fall of an estimated 2.4 billion tonnes is considerably larger than previous annual record declines, such as 0.9 billion tonnes at the end of World War II or 0.5 billion tonnes in 2009 at the height of the financial crisis.

The international team of researchers behind the report said emissions from fossil fuels and industry would be around 34 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent this year -- still a significant chunk of Earth's remaining "carbon budget".

Emissions reductions were most pronounced in the United States (down 12 percent) and the European Union (down 11 percent), the Global Carbon Project said.

In China, however, it said emissions would likely fall in 2020 just 1.7 percent as Beijing superpowered its economic recovery.

By sector, emissions from transport accounted for the largest share of the global decrease, with emissions from car journeys falling by roughly half at the peak of the first Covid-19 wave in April.

By December emissions from road transport had fallen 10 percent year-on-year and emissions from aviation were down 40 percent.

Emissions from industry -- 22 percent of the global total -- were down 30 percent in some countries with the strongest lockdown measures.

The research, normally presented during United Nations climate talks which were delayed this year until 2021 due to the pandemic, said growth in global carbon emissions had started to falter.

'Emissions edging back'

Experts warned however that it was too early to say how quickly emissions will rebound in 2021 and beyond.



Long-term emissions trends would be heavily influenced by how countries power their COVID-19 recovery plans, they said.

"All elements are not yet in place for sustained decreases in global emissions, and emissions are slowly edging back to 2019 levels," said Corinne Le Quere, a climatologist at Britain's University of East Anglia.

Under the Paris climate deal, struck among nations five years ago to the day, emissions cuts of around 1 to 2 billion tonnes are needed annually this decade to limit temperature rises to "well below" 2C (3.6 Fahrenheit).

The UN warned this week that 2020's unprecedented emissions falls would have a "negligible" effect on long-term warming trends without a global switch to green energy.

Philippe Ciais, a researcher at France's Laboratory of Climate and Environment Sciences, said that without the pandemic it is likely that the carbon footprint of big emitters such as China would have continued to grow in 2020.

"It's a temporary respite," he told reporters via video-link.

"The way to mitigate climate change is not to stop activity but rather to speed up the transition to low-carbon energy."

And 2020's emissions fall has not translated into a reduction in the levels of carbon pollution in Earth's atmosphere, Ciais added.

"What we really need to know is if investments linked to economic recoveries are going to create proper growth in low-carbon technologies and a tangible fall in emissions."

Earth's remaining carbon budget is the estimated amount of emissions the atmosphere can take before the Paris climate goals are rendered obsolete.

2020 aside, emissions have grown each year since the landmark 2015 accord, and the UN says they must fall 7.6 percent annually by 2030 to reach the more ambitious Paris temperature cap of 1.5C.

"Put simply, global emissions of carbon (even this year) continue to outstrip nature's ability to lock it up," said Grant Allen, professor of Atmospheric Physics at the University of Manchester, who was not involved in Friday's research.



Emissions fell record 7 percent in 2020: study

Agence France-Presse December 11, 2020 - 08:33 AM

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– **‘Emissions edging back’** –

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Earth's remaining carbon budget is the estimated amount of emissions the atmosphere can take before the Paris climate goals are rendered obsolete.

2020 aside, emissions have grown each year since the landmark 2015 accord, and the UN says they must fall 7.6 percent annually by 2030 to reach the more ambitious Paris temperature cap of 1.5C.

"Put simply, global emissions of carbon (even this year) continue to outstrip nature's ability to lock it up," said Grant Allen, professor of Atmospheric Physics at the University of Manchester, who was not involved in Friday's research.



Carbon neutrality by 2050: The world's most urgent mission

Published December 11, 2020, 11:12 PM

by [United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres](#)



UN Secretary-General
António Guterres

As the world marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement on Climate Change, a promising movement for carbon neutrality is taking shape. By next month, countries representing more than 65 percent of harmful greenhouse gasses and more than 70 percent of the world economy will have committed to achieve net zero emissions by the middle of the century.

At the same time, the main climate indicators are worsening. While the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily reduced emissions, carbon dioxide levels are still at record highs – and rising. The past decade was the hottest on record; Arctic sea ice in October was the lowest ever, and apocalyptic fires, floods, droughts and storms are increasingly the new normal. Biodiversity is collapsing, deserts are spreading, oceans are warming and choking with plastic waste. Science tells us that unless we cut fossil fuel production by 6 percent every year between now and 2030, things will get worse. Instead, the world is on track for a 2 percent annual rise.

Pandemic recovery gives us an unexpected yet vital opportunity to attack climate change, fix our global environment, re-engineer economies, and re-imagine our future. Here is what we must do:

First, we need to build a truly global coalition for carbon neutrality by 2050.

The European Union has committed to do so. The United Kingdom, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and more than 110 countries have done the same. So, too, has the incoming United States administration. China has pledged to get there before 2060.

Every country, city, financial institution, and company should adopt plans for net zero — and act now to get on the right path to that goal, which means cutting global emissions by 45 percent by 2030 compared with 2010 levels. In advance of next November's UN Climate Conference in Glasgow, governments are obligated by the Paris Agreement to be ever more ambitious every five years and submit strengthened commitments known as Nationally Determined Contributions, and these NDCs must show true ambition for carbon neutrality.

Technology is on our side. It costs more to simply run most of today's coal plants than it does to build new renewable plants from scratch. Economic analysis confirms the wisdom of this path. According to the International Labor Organization, despite inevitable job losses, the clean energy transition will create 18 million net new jobs by 2030. But we must recognize the human costs of decarbonization, and support workers with social protection, re-skilling, and up-skilling so that the transition is just.



Second, we need to align global finance with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, the world's blueprint for a better future.

It is time to put a price on carbon; end fossil fuel subsidies and finance; stop building new coal power plants; shift the tax burden from income to carbon, from taxpayers to polluters; make climate-related financial risk disclosures mandatory; and integrate the goal of carbon neutrality into all economic and fiscal decision-making. Banks must align their lending with the net zero objective, and asset owners and managers must decarbonize their portfolios.

Third, we must secure a breakthrough on adaptation and resilience to help those already facing dire impacts of climate change.

That's not happening enough today: adaptation represents only 20 percent of climate finance. This hinders our efforts to reduce disaster risk. It also isn't smart; every \$1 invested in adaptation measures could yield almost \$4 in benefits. Adaptation and resilience are especially urgent for small island developing states, for which climate change is an existential threat.

Next year gives us a wealth of opportunities to address our planetary emergencies, through major United Nations conferences and other efforts on biodiversity, oceans, transport, energy, cities, and food systems. One of our best allies is nature itself: Nature-based solutions could provide one-third of the net reductions in greenhouse gas emissions required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. Indigenous knowledge can help to point the way. And as humankind devises strategies for preserving the environment and building a green economy, we need more women decision-makers at the table.

COVID and climate have brought us to a threshold. We cannot go back to the old normal of inequality and fragility; instead we must step towards a safer, more sustainable path. This is a complex policy test and an urgent moral test. With decisions today setting our course for decades to come, we must make pandemic recovery and climate action two sides of the same coin.



Carbon neutrality by 2050

posted December 12, 2020 at 12:20 am

By UN Secretary-General António Guterres

As the world marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change, a promising movement for carbon neutrality is taking shape. By next month, countries representing more than 65 percent of harmful greenhouse gasses and more than 70 per cent of the world economy will have committed to achieve net zero emissions by the middle of the century.

At the same time, the main climate indicators are worsening. While the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily reduced emissions, carbon dioxide levels are still at record highs – and rising. The past decade was the hottest on record; Arctic sea ice in October was the lowest ever, and apocalyptic fires, floods, droughts and storms are increasingly the new normal. Biodiversity is collapsing, deserts are spreading, oceans are warming and choking with plastic waste. Science tells us that unless we cut fossil fuel production by 6 per cent every year between now and 2030, things will get worse. Instead, the world is on track for a 2 percent annual rise.

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EU leaders spar over climate in marathon summit

Published December 11, 2020, 4:01 PM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

EU leaders debated through the night into Friday trying to agree more ambitious climate targets, despite earlier winning a victory for unity in unblocking the bloc's two trillion euro budget and recovery fund.



This picture taken with a fisheye lens shows a round table meeting during an EU summit at the European Council building in Brussels, on December 10, 2020. – European Union leaders meet for a year-end summit that will address anything from climate, sanctions against Turkey to budget and virus recovery plans. Brexit will be discussed on the sidelines. (Photo by Olivier HOSLET / POOL / AFP)

The bitter summit debate over how to fight climate change went into the early hours, as the 27 EU members disagreed over declaring a binding target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 by at least 55 percent compared to 1990 levels.

The fight is over how the cost of the effort should be shared across the countries: highly dependent on coal, Poland — allied with several Eastern European countries — fears serious economic consequences and wants details on the aid it would receive.

"I'm always optimistic. I think that leaders are determined to reach a consensus before going to bed," a European source said after seven hours of fruitless talks.

As part of its commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement, the EU has pledged to become climate-neutral by 2050, the date when it would offset or capture more greenhouse gas than it emits.

However, the current interim target for 2030 — a 40 percent reduction in CO2 emissions compared to 1990 — is not now seen as sufficient to achieve this goal.

At an October summit, the EU leaders postponed the decision on the more ambitious climate target until their next meeting, given the hesitation by the eastern member states.

– **Green new deal** –

The new climate goals are backed by big EU powers, including France and Germany, as well as many major businesses keen to access European funding to kickstart a recovery through what Brussels has taken to calling a green new deal.

The marathon row over climate targets began after the resolution of another fight, also involving Warsaw, that might have spurred optimism.

The leaders resolved a bitter dispute with Poland and Hungary and salvaged the bloc's landmark coronavirus recovery plan that the countries had vetoed.



Europe's 1.8-trillion-euro (\$2.1-trillion) budget and coronavirus recovery package had been blocked by Hungary and Poland over an attempt to link the disbursement of funds to respect for the rule of law.

The stand-off risked delaying the recovery fund well into next year, just as a second wave of the coronavirus pandemic was punishing the European economy, but on Thursday the leaders came to a compromise that allowed the package to go through.

"Today's agreement shows that insight triumphs over egoism. With this financial package, Europe can emerge powerfully from the crisis," German finance minister Olaf Scholz said in a statement.

"We have defended the interests of Hungary. D-Day was a success!" Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said.

– Brexit pushed aside –

And his Polish counterpart Mateusz Morawiecki said: "We fight for our rights. We fight for clarity, we fight for certainty of law, and we fight for the EU treaty so that they are not circumvented by the secondary law."

Under the deal, the Polish leader explained, the rule of law mechanism would be limited to ensure that EU funds are spent correctly according to precise criteria and not touch on social issues such as abortion, LGBT rights or migration policy.

Budapest and Warsaw are major recipients of EU budget cash, and their critics see the rule of law mechanism as a way to slow their alleged slide into authoritarianism.

Both governments have been accused by Brussels of rolling back democratic freedoms, notably judicial independence in Poland and press and civil society freedoms in Hungary.

Both climate and the budget succeeded in pushing failing Brexit trade negotiations to the side. The leaders were not expected to discuss the talks at length during the two-day summit, but had been due to be briefed on them.

London and Brussels have said they will decide by Sunday whether to press on with talks aimed at thrashing out a post-Brexit trade deal, after British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and EU chief Ursula von der Leyen failed to bridge "major differences".

The EU ratcheted up pressure by publishing its no-deal contingency plan to protect air and road travel and fishing rights just three weeks ahead of a year-end deadline, as negotiators from the two sides resumed talks in Brussels to find a way forward.

– Turkey sanctions –

The marathon summit also decided to draw up a list of Turkish targets for sanctions over its stand-off on energy resources with EU members Greece and Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean.



Ankara has been challenging Athens over maritime territory in the region by repeatedly sending a gas exploration vessel into Greek waters.

France, Greece, and Cyprus are pushing for action against Turkey, but other EU nations including Germany, Italy and Poland oppose slapping broad sanctions or an embargo on a fellow NATO member.

“The council adopted sanctions in the face of Turkey’s ‘unilateral actions and provocations’,” French minister for European affairs Clement Beaune tweeted.



Pounded by pandemic 'storm,' poor nations need climate finance more than ever

December 10, 2020 | 3:31 pm



Yannick Glemarec, head of the Green Climate Fund, said it was essential to align funding for COVID-19 recoveries, climate action, and international development so that the money could achieve the largest possible impact in terms of curbing global warming and tackling poverty. Image via PhilStar

BARCELONA — Many developing nations are under huge financial stress from the COVID-19 crisis, making it more important than ever that they receive the funding promised by rich nations to help them tackle climate change, said the head of the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Yannick Glemarec said the poorer countries the fund supports lack the financial means to jumpstart their economies and are struggling to access capital, while their revenues from taxes, commodity exports, and remittances have plunged.

“For a number of developing countries, it’s a perfect storm,” the executive director of the multi-billion-dollar GCF told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

As a result, it would be “dramatic” if wealthy governments backed away from providing the \$100 billion a year they promised to raise from 2020 onwards to enable vulnerable nations to grow cleanly and adapt to a warming planet, he said in an interview.

That pledge is a key pillar of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, and countries speaking at a summit to mark the pact’s fifth anniversary on Dec. 12 should reaffirm it and show how it will be met, he added.

“This commitment is critical to enable the most vulnerable to be able to achieve their climate ambition,” said Mr. Glemarec, a former senior United Nations development official.

The latest figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show that climate finance channeled to developing states rose by 11% to \$79 billion in 2018—about \$20 billion short of the 2020 flagship goal.

Donor countries should also maintain broader aid to poorer nations, despite their public finances also coming under pressure because of the pandemic, Mr. Glemarec added.

Last month, the British government said it would cut its aid spending to 0.5% of gross national income in 2021, down from a legally binding target of 0.7%, although it vowed to honor a promise to double its climate finance in the coming five years.

Mr. Glemarec also urged wealthy governments to make a far bigger effort to ensure their coronavirus stimulus spending led to greener economies—which has not been the case so far, he said.



“We are still at an early stage of the recovery, so we still have time for a course correction. But the first few steps are not in the right direction,” he said, noting some countries were doing better than others.

According to the Energy Policy Tracker, compiled by a coalition of research groups, 29 major economies have so far pledged about \$256 billion to fossil fuels in their pandemic recovery packages, or 53% of all public money for energy-intensive sectors, with only 35% earmarked for clean energy.

Mr. Glemarec said it was essential to align funding for COVID-19 recoveries, climate action, and international development so that the money could achieve the largest possible impact in terms of curbing global warming and tackling poverty.

A paper published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* in August said an economic recovery tilted towards green stimulus and reducing fossil fuel investments would make it possible to shave 0.3 degrees Celsius off future warming by 2050, he noted.

Given the accelerating pace of planetary heating, developing countries needed money now to deal with climate impacts, he added.

“Not only are we coming to a danger threshold far faster than we thought, but the danger threshold is far lower than we thought two to three decades ago—and so we have to step up effort both for (emissions) mitigation and adaptation,” he said.

LESS RISKY

To that end, the GCF has set a new goal of approving \$1 billion at each board meeting it holds— usually three per year—to drive projects in things like clean energy, forest protection, and making infrastructure and agriculture more resilient to climate change.

Since the pandemic hit, it has also provided grants to help developing nations plan green recoveries from the crisis.

A key GCF aim now, Mr. Glemarec said, was to use its resources to mobilize more money from the private sector for “blended finance” projects working with those most vulnerable to climate change, who are often perceived as too risky to invest in.

At its November board meeting, for example, the GCF approved \$150 million for a climate fund to attract private investment into cities, states, or provinces across 42 countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

The money will back projects such as renewable energy, energy-efficient construction, and solid waste management at municipal and other levels underneath central governments, working with small and medium-sized companies, Mr. Glemarec said.

While 70% of climate solutions need to take place at the “subnational” level, they suffer from chronic under-funding.

By contributing a 20% stake that will assume any losses first, the GCF hopes to smooth the way for other investors to put \$600 million into the fund, managed by asset management firm Pegasus Capital Advisors.



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The GCF has also allocated \$30 million for a debt facility—which plans to raise \$100 million overall—that will provide loans for off-grid energy companies to help them ride out the pandemic downturn, organized by Acumen, an impact investment nonprofit.

“Making blended finance work for the poor was important for us before COVID-19—now it’s critical,” Mr. Glemarec said. — **Megan Rowling/Thomson Reuters Foundation**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/pounded-by-pandemic-storm-poor-nations-need-climate-finance-more-than-ever/?fbclid=IwAR3ZJbVIG3QA4AFhNw48hxmnAuQF3quDmEFw407v9823ZGX-5xBAnbGqCO4>



Pacific island nations: Help save the planet

posted December 11, 2020 at 09:50 pm

by [AFP](#)

Pacific island nations on the frontline of climate change demanded Friday the world “get serious” about saving the planet ahead of UN-brokered talks on global warming.

The Pacific’s low-lying islands are among the countries worst affected by climate change, threatened by rising seas and increasingly extreme cyclones.

Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama told a virtual summit of the Pacific Islands Forum that progress had stalled since the Paris climate agreement was signed five years ago.

“We Pacific nations owe it to our people, and to humanity as a whole, to raise our voices more to demand that major emitters step up their climate actions and commitments,” he said.

“Without this, we will lose our homes, our way of life our wellbeing and livelihoods -- it’s past time to get serious. “We all signed the Paris agreement, now let’s insist we put it to work.”

The 18-member PIF called the summit to articulate the region’s concerns ahead of talks on Saturday—co-hosted by the United Nations, Britain and France -- to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris deal.

The landmark accord committed all nations to cap warming at two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels and encouraged them to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

But Bainimarama said the world was on track to increase temperatures by a catastrophic five degrees by 2100, with Pacific nations bearing the brunt of climate change.



Greta Thunberg: World in denial on climate action 5 years after Paris accord

Reuters

Posted at Dec 11 2020 10:25 PM



A polar bear keeps close to her young along the Beaufort Sea coast in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska in a March 6, 2007. *Susanne Miller / USFWS / Handout via Reuters*

STOCKHOLM — Five years on from the Paris Agreement on climate change, the world remains in denial over the actions needed to prevent catastrophic warming, Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg said on Friday.

The deal was adopted on Dec. 12, 2015 by 196 countries but, so far, global leaders have failed to deliver on its promises, she said in a video that urged her 10.5 million Instagram followers to #FightFor1point5.

That was a reference to the ambition set out in the accord to hold the rise in average global temperatures to 1.5 Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The video showed images of politicians and bureaucrats hugging and cheering when the Paris Agreement was signed.

Yet the five years subsequent years have been the hottest years ever recorded, Thunberg said in the video, which mixed her sober address to camera with dystopian images of fire and flooding.

Pledges so far to reduce greenhouse gas emissions put the world on track for a dire 3C or more of warming this century, with countries planning to produce double the amount of fossil fuels needed to hit the 1.5C target in the next decade alone, the United Nations and research groups said last week.

"Hypothetical targets are being set and big speeches are being given, yet when it comes to the immediate action we need, we are still in state of complete denial," Thunberg said.

"We are still speeding in the wrong direction."

Now 17, Thunberg rose to fame in 2018 when her school strike for climate change campaign became a viral sensation online, turning her lone protest into a global movement. Since then she has become a thorn in the side of the world's political elite.

She ended Friday's video on an optimistic note, saying the solution was in making people - rather than simply policymakers - aware of the extent of the climate crisis.

"Let's make this our main priority. Let's unite and spread awareness... We are the hope. We the people."

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/12/11/20/greta-thunberg-world-in-denial-on-climate-action-5-years-after-paris-accord?fbclid=IwAR0Q8x9GOaQIs7WZ1beyVML4t4kL2gKlEkmKEx9FYqeX2UqTcYkywRzeg4>



Climate change

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Carbon emissions fell a record seven percent in 2020 as countries imposed pandemic lockdowns and restrictions on movement, the Global Carbon Project says Friday in its annual assessment.

The fall of an estimated 2.4 billion tons of CO2 equivalent is considerably larger than previous annual record declines, such as 0.9 billion tons at the end of World War II or 0.5 billion tons in 2009 at the height of the financial crisis, it said. — **AFP**



Experts have been sent from Moscow to try and figure out why the Caspian seals are dying Handout North Caucasian branch of Russia's fisheries agency/AFP

Russia probes mysterious death of nearly 300 endangered seals

Published December 11, 2020 9:26pm

Russian authorities said Friday they were investigating the mysterious death of nearly 300 endangered seals that had been discovered washed up on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

Between Sunday and Thursday, 272 dead Caspian seals had been found at a number of locations in the southern region of Dagestan including its regional capital Makhachkala and Derbent, another major city, said the state fisheries agency Rosrybolovstvo.

Some of the seals were pregnant.

An agency spokeswoman told AFP that more dead seals could yet be discovered.

A team of experts arrived from Moscow to help conduct an investigation.

The fisheries agency said "infectious disease" as well as "external" reasons could be behind the mass die-off and an animal abuse probe would be launched.

The Caspian Sea, the world's largest inland body of water, is bounded by five countries: Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan.

Seals have for decades suffered from over-hunting and the effects of industrial pollution in the Caspian Sea.

Experts say there are now about 70,000 Caspian seals, down from more than one million in the early 20th century.

As well as the seals and other endemic species including the famed beluga sturgeon, the Caspian Sea boasts vast energy reserves.

Pollution from the extraction of oil and gas there, along with declining water levels due to climate change, pose a threat to many species and put the future of the sea itself at risk.

The UN Environment Programme has warned that the Caspian "suffers from an enormous burden of pollution." -**Agence France-Presse**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/767705/russia-probes-mysterious-death-of-nearly-300-endangered-seals/story/>