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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Quarry ops sa Rizal paiimbestigahan ng DENR



December 12, 2020 @ 11:07 AM 20 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nakatakdang paimbestigahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang quarry operations sa Rizal na posibleng nagdulot ng malawakang pagbaha maging sa Marikina City sa pananalasa ng bagyong Ulysses.

Sinabi ng DENR na ang kanilang regional office sa Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Quezon) ay bumuo na ng apat na composite teams para sa imbestigasyon.

“The DENR has to reevaluate the operation of all mining companies in the area so we can find out whether they contributed to the massive flooding during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses,” ani Environment Undersecretary Jim Sampulna. RNT/FGDC



Thoroughly probe quarrying — Go

If the findings warrant it, stop all operations. If not and people are benefiting from it, then allow it



Published 4 hours ago
on December 13, 2020 03:30 AM
By [TDT @tribunephil](#)



Government should halt destructive quarrying activities if the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) pinpoints it as the cause of recent massive flooding in some parts of Luzon, Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go said.

The results of the DENR investigation should consider the importance of the lives of each Filipino.

In an interview after he attended the launching of the country’s 95th Malasakit Center in Marikina City, Go recounted the complaints raised by citizens when he and President Rodrigo Duterte visited typhoon victims in Albay.

“When we landed in Guinobatan, Albay, that was the pleas that greeted us. “Mr. President, let us suspend it, stop quarrying activities,”” Go said.

“If that is the real source of the problem, we should stop it. So, let’s wait for the result of the DENR investigation to know if quarrying is indeed the culprit,” he added.

“If the findings warrant it, stop all operations. If not and people are benefiting from it, then allow it,” he stressed.

Destructive floods

Go also reiterated that only the DENR can determine if there is a need for stricter regulations on the quarrying industry.

“The results of the DENR investigation should consider the importance of the lives of each Filipino,” he noted.

Go, then, stressed the impact of environmental disasters and climate change to the lives of the people.



Thoroughly probe quarrying — Go

“We have seen the difficult situation of our countrymen as a result of the massive flooding. It was an ordeal, some even had nowhere to return to since their houses were destroyed,” he said.

“All of their belongings and merchandise were lost. Somebody approached me pleading that he lost everything,” he narrated.

The DENR has recently launched an investigation into the quarry operations in Rizal after heavy flooding affected the province and city of Marikina when typhoon “Ulysses” hit last month.



Environmentally destructive activities must be stopped — Go

[Sunday, December 13, 2020](#) [People's Journal](#)



Christopher "Bong" Go

SENATOR [Christopher "Bong" Go](#) said that government should crack down on unsanctioned and destructive quarrying activities in the country, especially once the investigation being carried out by the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources \(DENR\)](#) proves that it is the reason for the recent massive flooding in some parts of Luzon.

In an interview after he attended the launching of the country's 95th [Malasakit Center](#) in Marikina City, Go recounted the complaints raised by affected citizens when he and President Rodrigo Duterte visited typhoon victims in Albay.

"Nung nag-landing nga po kami ni Pangulong Duterte sa Guinobatan, Albay, 'yun ang reklamo ng mga tao. Nagsisigawan, 'Mr. President, ipa-suspinde n'yo na po ito, ipatigil n'yo po ang quarrying dito,'" Go said,

"Eh, kung 'yun po ang dahilan ay dapat itigil. So, hintayin natin ang resulta ng imbestigasyon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources kung may kinalaman talaga ang quarrying," he added.

"Kung may kinalaman, itigil. Pero kung wala at makakatulong naman sa trabaho, ibalik," he stressed.

Go also reiterated that only the DENR can determine if there is a need for stricter regulations on the quarrying industry.

"Depende na po sa kalalabasan ng imbestigasyon ng DENR kung 'yun talaga ang dahilan. Pero kung 'yun ang dahilan, wala na pong dapat pang dahilan na hindi itigil ito dahil importante sa amin ang buhay ng bawat Pilipino," explained Go.

Go, then, stressed the impact of environmental disasters and climate change to the lives of the people.



Environmentally destructive activities must be stopped — Go

“Kita n’yo ang pagdurusa ng ating mga kababayan dahil sa baha. Hirap talaga, ang iba nga d’yan, ‘di pa nakakauwi dahil nasiraan talaga ng bahay,” Go said.

“Mga gamit nila, paninda nila, ubos. May lumapit sa akin kanina, nakikiusap, sira ang bahay, ubos paninda, ubos gamit. Kawawa ang Pilipino,” he narrated.

The DENR has recently launched an investigation into the quarry operations in Rizal after heavy flooding affected the province and city of Marikina when typhoon Ulysses hit the Philippines last month.



Bong Go: Quarrying na nakasisira sa kalikasan, buwagin!

[NATIONALNEWS](#)

On Dec 12, 2020



DAPAT na ipatigil at buwagin ng pamahalaan, ayon kay Senator Christopher “Bong” Go, ang mga “unsanctioned” o nakasisira sa kalikasan na quarrying activities sa bansa.

Sinabi ni Sen. Go na kapag napatunayan sa isinasagawang imbestigasyon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ang mga quarrying ang dahilan ng malawakang pagbaha sa ilang bahagi ng Luzon ay isa siya sa mangunguna upang ipatigil ang mga ito.

Sa panayam sa kanya matapos pangunahan ang pagbubukas ng ika-95 Malasakit Center sa Marikina City, sinabi ni Go na marami siyang natanggap na reklamo hinggil sa illegal quarrying matapos nilang bisitahin ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang typhoon victims sa Albay.

“Nung nag-landing nga po kami ni Pangulong Duterte sa Guinobatan, Albay, ‘yun ang reklamo ng mga tao. Nagsisigawan, ‘Mr. President, ipasuspinde n’yo na po ito, ipatigil n’yo po ang quarrying dito,’” ani Go.

“Eh, kung ‘yun po ang dahilan ay dapat itigil. So, hintayin natin ang resulta ng imbestigasyon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources kung may kinalaman talaga ang quarrying,” aniya.

“Kung may kinalaman, itigil. Pero kung wala at makakatulong naman sa trabaho, ibalik,” anang senador.

Iginiit ni Go na tanging ang DENR ang makapagsasabi o makapagdedetermina kung kinakailangan ng estriktong regulasyon sa quarrying industry.

“Depende na po sa kalalabasan ng imbestigasyon ng DENR kung ‘yun talaga ang dahilan. Pero kung ‘yun ang dahilan, wala na pong dapat pang dahilan na hindi itigil ito dahil importante sa amin ang buhay ng bawat Pilipino,” paliwanag ng mambabatas.

Muling idiniin ni Go ang malaking epekto ng pagkawasak ng kalikasan sa climate change at sa buhay ng mga tao.

“Kita n’yo ang pagdurusa ng ating mga kababayan dahil sa baha. Hirap talaga, ang iba nga d’yan, ‘di pa nakakauwi dahil nasiraan talaga ng bahay,” ani Go.



Bong Go: Quarrying na nakasisira sa kalikasan, buwagin!

“Mga gamit nila, paninda nila, ubos. May lumapit sa akin kanina, nakikiusap, sira ang bahay, ubos paninda, ubos gamit. Kawawa ang Pilipino,” ang malungkot na sabi ng senador.

Kamakailan ay sinimulan na ng DENR ang imbestigasyon nito sa quarry operations sa Rizal matapos ang nangyaring malaking pagbaha na nakaapekto sa mga residente ng Marikina nang manalasa ang bagyong Ulysses. (PFT Team)



Quarry operations sa Marikina at Rizal, bubusisiin

[Angie dela Cruz](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - December 13, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Bumuo ng apat na composite team ang Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR) sa pamamagitan ng kanilang regional office sa CALABARZON para imbestigahan ang quarry operations sa Rizal na sinasabing ugat ng matinding pagbaha sa lalawigan at sa Marikina City nang nanalasa ang bagyong Ulysses noong nagdaang buwan.

Gamit ang aerial mapping drones, bubusisiin ng grupo ang quarry operations sa may Marikina River Basin na inerereklamo ng mga residente roon na sinasabing dahilan o ugat sa matinding pagbaha.

Una nang nasuspinde ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) sa Region 4A ang may 11 quarry at crushing plant operators sa may river basin na ang tubig dito ay napupunta sa Marikina River.

Ang bawat composite team ay mga tauhan mula sa DENR-CALABARZON, central at regional offices ng MGB, Environmental Management Bureau at Biodiversity Management Bureau.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Enforcement, Mining, and Muslim Affairs Jim Sampulna na muling susuriin ng DENR ang operasyon ng lahat ng mining companies sa lugar para matiyak ang mga minahan na nagdulot ng baha sa nagdaang kalamidad.



Tribal Mining starts commercial production of gold, silver

12 hours ago



Photo courtesy of facebook.com/magdrillsperegrinecorp

Tribal Mining Corp. has started commercial production at its Kematu Gold-Silver Project located at T'boli South Cotabato in Region 12.

Tribal Mining Corp. has started commercial production at its Kematu Gold-Silver Project located at T'boli South Cotabato in Region 12.

Latest data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) showed that Tribal Mining first reported production in May this year and that during its five-month production, it already extracted P87 million worth of gold and silver from the mine.

MGB described this as a “positive development” in the entire mining sector.

However, the agency said the entry of Tribal Mining into the production-stream was still not enough to fill the void left by OceanaGold Philippines. Inc. in Region 2.

The Office of the President has yet to act on OceanaGold’s application for renewal of its financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA), which expired last year.

The FTAA would have allowed to re-open its Didipio underground gold and copper mine project in Nueva Vizcaya.

Overall, the Philippines booked lower copper and gold production during the first nine months of the year.

[Didipio financial and technical assistance agreement](#) [Mines and Geosciences Bureau](#) [OceanaGold Philippines](#) [Tribal Mining Corp](#)



Mining in NoCot town ordered stopped

By Edwin Fernandez December 12, 2020, 5:36 pm



Google map of Magpet, North Cotabato.

COTABATO CITY – North Cotabato Governor Nancy Catamco and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) 12 (Soccksargen) Director Felizardo Gacad Jr. on Friday afternoon issued a cease and desist order (CDO) against illegal mining activity in Barangay Don Panaca, Magpet, North Cotabato.

Both officials signed the joint order following the discovery of illegal mining activity inside the Mt. Apo protected area last week.

Catamco said an investigation being carried out by the provincial government, the MGB-12, and the local environment office of Magpet seeks to find answers on the mining tunnel discovered in Don Panaca.

“Caring for our environment is everyone’s business. We all know that this is a shared responsibility,” she said.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier directed the MGB-12 to seize "tools and equipment, the mined mineral, and equipment at the mining site" but no operator or miner was found when environment officials raided the area last December 8.

At least 28 sacks of ore were recovered.

The MGB and provincial officials noted that no license has been issued allowing the “Minahang Bayan” or Small-Scale Mining Contract anywhere in Magpet. *(PNA)*

Biodiversity conservation is key to disaster risk reduction says ACB at Senate hearing

By Ma. Alaine P. Allanigue Published on December 12, 2020

QUEZON CITY, Dec. 12 (PIA) -- The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) has provided its inputs to the Philippine Senate's recent 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 Thursday, Dec. 10, 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 Cynthia 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, emphasized further that programs must be sustainable, and encouraged the restoration of mangroves and propagation of locally-adapted trees and plants such as giant bamboos.

Senator 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.



Biodiversity conservation is key to disaster risk reduction says ACB at Senate hearing

Senator 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 prioritize 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,” she added.

“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 furthered. (PIA NCR)



Asean's 'best of the best' of protected areas

Asean Heritage Parks Programme

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

December 13, 2020



Tubbataha Reef in the Philippines

Highlighting the “best of the best” of protected areas in Asean, the Asean Heritage Parks (AHP) Programme, even in the midst of the pandemic, offers an opportunity to strengthen biodiversity protection and conservation measure through protected area management.

Asean comprises 3 percent of the world's total land area, but it is home to 18 percent of known plants and animals.



Khao Sok National Park in Thailand



Asean's 'best of the best' of protected areas

Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are three of the 17 megadiverse countries in the world.

The Asean boasts of 34 percent of the world's 284,000 square kilometers of coral reefs.

The Coral Triangle is found in the Asean, a region hosting the world's center for marine biodiversity and has the most extensive and diverse corals in the world.

The regional group is composed of Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.



Participants to the Sixth Asean Heritage Parks Conference in Pakse, Lao PDR, in October 2019.

AHP Programme

The Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), which works with the Asean Secretariat, implements the AHP Programme that marked its 36th anniversary on November 29.

It takes pride in claiming to be Asean's best response to the challenge of biodiversity loss.

From the 11 original protected areas upon its inception on November 29, 1984, there are now a total of 49 AHPs which represent what can be considered as the "cream of the crop" of protected areas in the Asean.

These are in Brunei Darussalam, 1; Cambodia, 2; Indonesia, 7; Lao PDR, 1; Malaysia, 3; Myanmar, 8; Philippines, 9; Singapore, 2; Thailand, 6; Vietnam, 10.

ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim said there are more protected areas that may soon earn the distinction of being an AHP.

These include a national park in Thailand, which is awaiting the approval of the Asean Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME).



Asean's 'best of the best' of protected areas

"We will issue an announcement once the nomination has been approved by AMME," Lim told the BusinessMirror via e-mail on December 8.

Moreover, Thailand and Myanmar are finalizing the boundary coordinates of their nominated protected areas.

Two nominated sites from Lao PDR are finalizing their requirements, such as the protected areas management plans.

On the other hand, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam have also signified their intentions to submit nominations next year.

AHP management

According to Lim, most AHPs are run by management teams guided by their respective government bodies, which provide funding allocations, technical assistance, sectoral coordination, and regular capacity building activities.

"They are administered through their respective management plans, which are one of the requirements in AHP nominations criteria," she said.

There is also the AHP Regional Action Plan, that was formulated according to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which is undergoing a review in order to cater to the needs and issues of the AHPs, Lim added.

Lim said that most of the AHPs operate on the budget coming from revenues earned in tourism operations.

Unfortunately, with the current Covid-19 pandemic, most AHPs are suffering from the lack or absence of funds.

"Hence, the management activities such as patrolling and law enforcement may be affected, not to mention the increasing pressure from various threats such as climate-change impacts, encroachment, illegal wildlife trade, and others," she said.

Nevertheless, Lim, a former director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said AHPs are finding solutions to overcome such challenges with the help of stakeholders and communities in their respective areas.

Importance of AHPs

AHPs help ensure the maintenance of the essential ecological processes and life-support systems, preservation of genetic diversity and maintenance of species diversity of flora and fauna. These services contribute to the socioeconomic well-being of the people.

AHPs also promote regional cooperation among the Asean member states to ensure the protection and management of the natural resources in the Asean region.



Asean's 'best of the best' of protected areas

These AHPs also play an important role in wildlife conservation as they provide crucial habitats for many wildlife species.

Asked how are these AHPs help promote the protected area management system in the Asean, Lim said the regional cooperation among Asean countries provides a venue to enable AHP management teams to improve their management systems.

"It also promotes opportunities for various activities, such as responsible tourism, education and research," she said.

In addition, the stakeholder ownership, and pride among the communities, who take part in managing the AHPs, enhance their willingness to contribute more in the management of the protected areas in the region, Lim added.

The ACB believes that the conservation of the biological resources are important to maintain a well-balanced ecosystem that helps provide people and communities with various environmental services, such as water, clean air, health benefits, disaster resilience, agricultural production, and many more.

Haven for unique plants, animals

Moreover, AHPs are home to many endemic and other endangered species.

The endangered Sumatran elephants, tigers and rhinos are found in Way Kambas National Park in Indonesia

On the other hand, the Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park in Vietnam hosts the globally-endangered red-cheeked gibbon, an endemic primate species in south Indochina.

Meanwhile, endangered plants are found in several AHPs including Mount Kitanglad Range Natural Park in the Philippines, the Vu Quang National Park of Vietnam and Virachey National Park in Cambodia.

Moreover, the endangered species of seagrass, turtles and megafauna species are found in various marine AHPs, such as Hat Chao Mai National Park and Mu Ko Libong Non-hunting Area of Thailand, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park in the Philippines and Kepulauan Seribu National Park in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, rare bird species are found in a lot of the terrestrial AHPs, such as Tasek Merimbun Heritage Park in Brunei Darussalam, Nam Ha National Protected Area in Lao PDR, Mount Apo Natural Park of the Philippines, and Mu Ko Ang Thong National Park in Thailand.

Asean body

ACB is in the position to coordinate biodiversity conservation and protection programs in the Asean, Lim told the BusinessMirror in an interview via Messenger on December 8.



Asean's 'best of the best' of protected areas

After all, that was the basis for the creation of ACB—to facilitate the meeting of global objectives for biodiversity at the regional level.

“It was the 10 Asean member-states who established the ACB for the purpose of coordinating action in the region to address biodiversity loss. We draw our main mandate from the establishment agreement adopted and ratified by all the 10 member states,” Lim said.

“We work closely with the Asean Secretariat to make sure that we align with the priorities and protocols promulgated by Asean leadership,” she said.

What has been ACB's significant accomplishment so far?

Significant feat

The implementation of the AHP, Lim said, is the ACB's most significant accomplishment so far.

“The program has gained some attention from development partners. The Asean member -states are now seeing the value of having their national parks recognized as AHPs,” she said, adding, “we have also initiated some activities that reach out to other sectors, under our program on mainstream biodiversity.”

Lim said even before the Covid-19 pandemic, the ACB co-organized a meeting with the United Nations University, hosted by the Philippines, on the interlinkages of biodiversity and public health.

“We also facilitated a meeting between government focal points responsible for biodiversity and nature conservation, and those responsible for climate-change,” she added.

Lim said the ACB continues to support the Asean Secretariat's direction to promote cross-sectoral coordination to promote biodiversity protection and conservation in the region.

“We hope to be able to help better address the needs of the Asean region in taking into account biodiversity and nature in their disaster and pandemic response and prevention, in their climate action, in their infrastructure planning and economic development processes,” she said.

“We hope to continuously promote biodiversity in Asean, not just as a concern purely of the nature conservation sector, but of everyone, because of the recognition that the richness of our biodiversity and living in harmony with it may be the answer to most of the crises and challenges that can affect us all,” she said.

LOOK: Pinoy biologists discover new butterfly subspecies in Panay

Job Manahan, ABS-CBN News
Posted at Dec 12 2020 07:40 PM



*The *Ptychandra negrosensis angelalcalai*, named after national scientist Dr. Angel Alcalá, has narrower, shiny white band on the margin of its wings. Photo from Jade Badon and Nachrichten des Entomologischen Vereins Apollo.*

MANILA — Two Filipino biologists have discovered a new butterfly subspecies in Panay — the *Ptychandra negrosensis angelalcalai*.

In an interview with ABS-CBN News, Jade Badon, a biologist and instructor at Silliman University in Dumaguete City, said he and butterfly taxonomist Justin Nuyda discovered the subspecies upon reviewing the latter's butterfly collection.

"We checked his collections and then found out that the specimens from Panay are different from the ones in Negros Island," Badon said on Saturday.

Nuyda collected the specimen on Mount Madja-as some time during the 1980s, he added.

The biologist pointed out that the discovery proved that each island in the country could have unique species or subspecies.

"The subspecies in Panay has narrower shiny white band sa margin ng wings, while mas malapad and diagonal ang sa Negros Island."

The new subspecies was named after Dr. Angel C. Alcalá, a national scientist.

The discovery was [published](#) On *Nachrichten des Entomologischen Vereins Apollo* (NEVA), an entomological journal, for the month of December.

In June, Badon also discovered new butterfly subspecies *Appias phoebe nuydai* on a volcano in Negros Oriental.

He said the *Appias* subspecies, named after Nuyda, is the sixth of its kind found in the country.

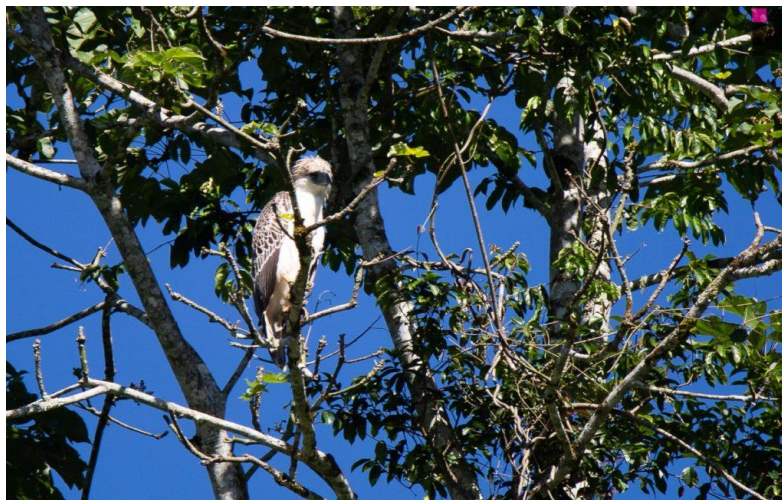


Family of PH eagles sighted in Davao Oriental town

Published December 12, 2020, 1:15 PM

by [Zea Capistrano](#)

DAVAO CITY – The provincial government of Davao Oriental on Friday said a family of the critically-endangered Philippine eagles was spotted in Lupon town.



The provincial government of Davao Oriental on Friday said a family of the critically-endangered Philippine eagles was spotted in Lupon town. (Photo by Eden Jhan Licayan of the Provincial Information Office of Davao Oriental / MANILA BULLETIN)

According to a report published on the provincial government's official website, Eden Jhan Licayan, a photographer of the Provincial Information Office (PIO), was able to take photos and some video footage of three Philippine eagles, while they were holding a four-day assessment of potential tourism sites in the area from December 7 to 10.

The provincial government said the event was aimed at assessing the potential for tourism of the area as part of its localized implementation of President Duterte's Executive Order 70 or Whole-of-Nation Approach to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC).

"Mr. Licayan said he first spotted a young Philippine Eagle perched on a tree near its nest while emitting a powerful call. The following day, Licayan and his team were surprised to spot two more



Family of PH eagles sighted in Davao Oriental town

eagles flying over the forest canopy which were much bigger than the first one they sighted,” it said.

The provincial government also said Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) Head for Research and Development, Dr. Jason Ibanez confirmed that the birds they saw were Philippine eagles.

Ibanez was quoted as saying that based on appearance and “nature of its feathers” the first bird Licayan sighted bird was a juvenile Philippine eagle.

He added that the juvenile could be about a year old, and that the two other bigger eagles could be “possibly an eagle couple.”

According to him, based on the location of the photos, the eagles were spotted “within the Mount Kampalili-Puting Bato Key Biodiversity Area of Davao Oriental” which was among the few large habitats of the Philippine eagles in Mindanao.

Ibanez also said that an expedition to “further document the eagle pair and their young is highly recommended”.

It can be recalled that a rescued Philippine eagle was released in Caraga town in Davao Oriental last September.

The provincial government is now eyeing the potential of hosting bird watching activities in the area because of the presence of the Philippine eagles and other bird species.

Provincial Governor Nelson Dayanghirang said “it’s like hitting two birds with one stone” as the activity will have both economic and conservation potentials.

“It will not only help people become more responsible for their forests but will also introduce economic opportunities to end the cycle of poverty, thus, ending NPA recruitment as the people will become more focused on their new livelihood and conservation efforts,” he added.



News5

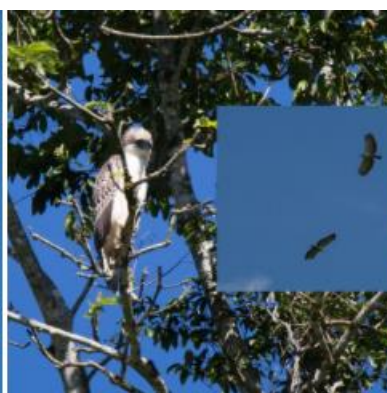
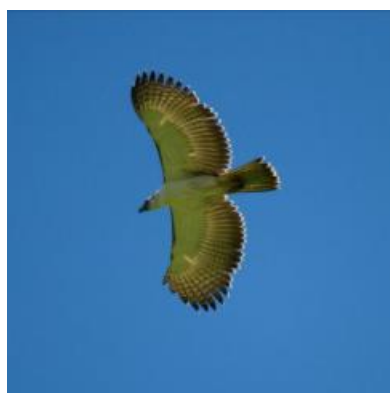
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Isang pamilya ng Philippine Eagle ang namataan sa kagubatan ng Lupon, Davao Oriental matapos ang isinagawang tourism site assessment sa lugar noong Dec. 7-10.

Ayon kay Eden Jhan Licayan, nakakita siya ng isang batang Philippine Eagle na nakadapo sa mataas na puno sa unang araw ng kanilang assessment. Dalawang mas malaking Philippine Eagle naman ang namataan niyang lumilipad sa kagubatan nang sumunod na araw.

: Eden Jhan Licayan





15 fish species endemic to Lake Lanao now extinct

Published December 12, 2020, 11:07 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Fifteen freshwater fish species endemic to Lake Lanao are now extinct in the wild, while two species could also be possibly extinct, according to the latest International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.



(DA / MANILA BULLETIN)

The extinct species of freshwater fish in Lake Lanao in the Red List are *Barbodes amarus*, *Barbodes baoulan*, *Barbodes clemensi*, *Barbodes disa*, *Barbodes flavifuscus*, *Barbodes herrei*, *Barbodes katolo*, *Barbodes lanaoensis*, *Barbodes manalak*, *Barbodes pachycheilus*, *Barbodes palaemophagus*, *Barbodes palata*, *Barbodes resimus*, *Barbodes tras*, and *Barbodes truncatalus*.

Those that are possibly extinct or critically endangered are *Barbodes lindog* and *Barbodes sirang*. The IUCN said confirmation is required, such as through more extensive surveys, to determine if they are in all probability already extinct.

The IUCN attributed the extinction of the Lake Lanao endemic fish species to the introduction of predatory species, compounded by overharvesting and destructive fishing methods.

Lanao Lake, which has a surface area of about 36,000 hectares, is located in Lanao del Sur, and was proclaimed a watershed reserve by virtue of Proclamation No. 871 on February 26, 1992.

It is the largest lake in Mindanao, the second largest in the Philippines, and is considered as one of the 15 ancient lakes in the world.

Scientists believe that it was formed millions of years ago as a result of volcanic activities and tectonic movements.

The latest IUCN report also revealed the extinction of three Central American frog species, in addition to 22 frog species across Central and South America that were listed as critically endangered or possibly extinct.

The lost shark or *Carcharhinus obsoletus*, which was only formally described last year, also entered the Red List as critically endangered or possibly extinct.



15 fish species endemic to Lake Lanao now extinct

In a statement, IUCN Director General Dr. Bruno Oberle said “the growing list of extinct species is a stark reminder that conservation efforts must urgently expand.”

“To tackle global threats such as unsustainable fisheries, land clearing for agriculture, and invasive species, conservation needs to happen around the world and be incorporated into all sectors of the economy,” Oberle stressed.

Dr. Andrew Terry, Director of Conservation and Policy at the Zoological Society of London, also pointed out that “seeing so many species joining the extinct category, many of which have only just been discovered, is heart-breaking.”

“The Red List is a vital tool that helps us understand the pressures facing the diversity of life and therefore the conservation responses needed. A healthy natural world is vital to our wellbeing — we now need to see a clear focus placed on the recovery of species and the maintenance of diversity within the new Global Biodiversity Framework,” Terry added.



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Mindanao River Basin Authority bill hurdles House panel

Published December 12, 2020, 3:35 PM

by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

A bill seeking to create the Mindanao River Basin Rehabilitation and Development Authority (MRBRDA) to ensure the rehabilitation, protection, and development of the major rivers in the country's second largest river system has hurdled the House Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization.

The House panel, chaired by Parañaque City Rep. Eric Olivarez, approved House Bill No. 1390, principally authored by North Cotabato Rep. Joselito "Joel" Sacdalan.

"There is a need for a body clothed with separate and distinct authority to manage and coordinate all efforts to address the problematic situation of the Mindanao River Basin because its solution requires a multi-disciplinary approach, to include, environmental, social, political or legal, and economic interventions," he said.

He said the proposed MRBRDA is expected to provide the overall planning, management, and coordinative services needed in the rehabilitation, development, and protection of the major rivers in the basin, which is the largest rivers system in the southern part of Mindanao encompassing for regions.

HB 1390 mandates the new body to implement the Mindanao River Basin Rehabilitation and Development Program, which was initially contained in the 2012 MRB Integrated Management and Development Master Plan.

Under the bill, the MRBDA shall be attached to the Office of the President.

Among the MRBDA's powers, functions, and scope of services are:

- Prepare or update the master plan to focus on the rehabilitation of the silted major rivers, develop flood control master plan in the medium and long term, and intervene for watershed protection and management.
- Conduct or cause the conduct of engineering surveys, extent, or level of siltation and watershed condition of the major rivers and its river system and tributaries for benchmarking purposes.
- Assess and monitor the environment or ecological condition of the MRB.
- Provide overall management of all programs and projects and such as other interventions for the rehabilitation, protection, development, and sustainability of the MRB.

HB 1390 proposes a P500-million funding for the initial operation of the new Authority, which shall have its office in Koronadal City in South Cotabato.



Lapid files bill requiring vehicle dealers to plant trees for every unit sold

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:21 PM December 12, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Lito Lapid has filed a bill requiring all dealers, retailers, and other entities engaged in motor vehicle sales to plant at least 10 trees for every unit sold.

The planting of trees, according to Lapid in a statement on Saturday, shall be accomplished within six months from the date of the sale.

Lapid said Senate Bill No. 1938 seeks to “contribute to the reforestation efforts of the government.”

The senator also cited that the emission produced by motor vehicles contributes not only to air pollution but also to the environment’s destruction.

“Hindi naman lingid sa ating kaalaman na kabilang sa nagpapadumi ng ating hangin at kasama na rin sa dahilan ng pagkasira ng ating kalikasan ay ang mga sasakyan at ang ibinubuga nitong usok,” Lapid said.

(It’s not new to everyone that among the smoke coming from cars no only our air, but is also the reason why our environment is slowly being destroyed.)

“Ngayon ramdam na natin ang tindi ng galit ng kalikasan lalo na sa panahon ng mga sakuna gaya ng bagyo kaya ngayon na rin ang tamang panahon na sa tingin ko ay dapat na aksyunan natin ang problemang ito,” he added, citing the three consecutive typhoons the country faced, namely Typhoon Quinta, Super Typhoon Rolly, and Typhoon Ulysses.

(Now we face mother nature’s wrath, most especially in times of crisis such as typhoons, that is why it is the right time to act on this.)

In Lapid’s bill, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) “shall be tasked with the enforcement and monitoring of obligations imposed under this measure.”

Those who fail to meet the tree planting requirement shall be made to pay a fine not exceeding P10,000 for every tree not planted, Lapid said.

Repeated non-compliance for two years within a five year period shall result in a fine not exceeding P20,000 for the outstanding number of trees not planted within the said period, while repeated non-compliance for three or more years within a five-year period shall result in the closure of the business, and be fined not exceeding P30,000 for the outstanding number of trees not planted within the said period.



Forest product Oct. exports receipts up

[December 11, 2020](#) 2 min read

MANILA – October receipts from Philippine forest product exports exceeded this year what these outbound shipments generated during the same month in 2019.

Such exports' 2020 free-on-board (FOB) receipts totaled USD36.83 million, reflecting a 22.9 percent increase from last year's USD29.96 million, showed data released by Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) this week.

This year's receipts covered lumber (USD19.50 million), plywood (USD9.93 million) and others (USD7.40 million).

Corresponding receipts in 2019 were lower at USD18.52 million, USD8.28 million, and USD3.17 million, respectively, but PSA reported no export data for logs and veneer sheets/core stocks exported during both reference years.

Forest products accounted for some 0.6 percent of all October 2020 Philippine exports totaling USD6.20 billion.

Such total is 2.2 percent lower than the USD6.34 billion which the country's exports generated last year.

As such, total January-October receipts from Philippine exportation of forest products decreased by 19.6 percent this year from what these outbound shipments collectively generated during the same period in 2019.

FOB 2020 receipts from such exports totaled USD243.45 million — lower than the corresponding USD302.95 million last year, PSA data further showed.

The exports this year were lumber (USD139.55 million), plywood (USD69.33 million), veneer sheets/corestocks (USD20,000) and others (USD34.56 million).

Receipts were higher last year at USD172.58 million, USD72.90 million, USD94,000 and USD57.38 million, respectively.

For both reference years, PSA reported no export data for logs.

All January-October Philippine exports collectively generated receipts totaling about USD52.11 billion in 2020, 12.5 percent lower than these shipments' USD59.55 billion last year. (**PNA**)

Advocates calls on public to stop plastic pollution, switch to eco-friendly alternatives

By Jerome Carlo R. PaunanPublished on December 12, 2020



CALOOCAN CITY, Dec. 12 (PIA) -- The 29th episode of “Stories for a Better Normal: Pandemic and Climate Pathways” series and part two of the topic, “Uniting Against Single-Use Plastic” featured programs and activities in government and social enterprises aimed at avoiding single-use plastics and promoting eco-friendly alternatives for a plastic-free environment in this period of pandemic and climate crisis.

Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda was joined by Mayor Josephine Alcantara-Cruz of Donsol, Sorsogon; Jamico Jamlang, Founder of The Bamboo Company; Czarina Constantino, National Lead of the “No Plastics in Nature Initiative” by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) - Philippines; and Wilma Arevalo, President of Kalipunan ng Liping Pilipina (KALIPI).

Jamlang shared the eco-friendly switch story of The Bamboo Company, which aims to introduce bamboo as an alternative to plastic to help combat global deforestation, mitigate climate change, and provide livelihood and economic opportunities. Bamboo decomposes easily, grows fast, and can be sustainably harvested. It has also been shown to be effective in sequestering carbon in the atmosphere.

“What we envision is a simple system where almost everything can be made with bamboo. Through this, we sustainably impact the people and the planet,” said Jamlang.

Constantino introduced the No Plastics in Nature Initiative which aims to stop the flow of plastics into ecosystems by mobilizing cities and tourism destinations to fight plastic pollution, pushing for national support to the global treaty on marine pollution and Extended Producers' Responsibility, working with businesses to implement public commitments to reduce or eliminate unnecessary plastics in their operations, and spark conversations and individual actions to address plastic pollution.

“With the participation of various stakeholders, local government units, the national government, legislators and policymakers, and also businesses and the general public, we can definitely achieve a vision of no plastics. So let us unite against single-use plastic,” said Constantino.

Arevalo introduced KALIPI, an organization that aims to empower women through community livelihood programs, and advocates against climate change. Their products include throw pillows,



Advocates calls on public to stop plastic pollution, switch to eco-friendly alternatives

neck pillows, center table mats, and stuffed toys made from plastic sachets, plastic labo, and styrofoam.

“Lahat kami nagkakaisa sa adbokasiya tungkol sa climate change, at mga clean and green programs especially sa barangay namin. Before tayo lumabas, sa bahay muna tayo magsimula. Tinulungan kami ng WWF at LGU na makagawa ng kakaibang proyekto na pakikinabangan ng kalikasan, at ng kababaihan na magkaroon sila ng livelihood, na 'may pera sa basura'. Hindi lang naging basura yan, mayroon iyang pagkakakitaan,” said Arevalo.

Cruz shared the initiatives of the Donsol local government unit on plastic waste reduction such as the plastic smart city initiative, NAKAMOTO program, KALUPI Donsol Entrepinay, bottles exchange to different packages, and "Goodbye plastic, Hello basket" program.

“Ang aming goal sa Donsol ay ang pag-create at pag-maintain ng eco-friendly destination not just for the Filipinos, but also for everyone. Kahit na marami na kaming nagawa, patuloy na challenge sa amin ay kung paano namin ma-e-encourage hindi lang ang mga taga-Donsol, kundi maging ang mga dadaan dito sa aming lugar na maging eco-conscious sa aming sarili, sa bahay, at sa lahat,” Cruz said.

As an online discussion to promote health, environmental consciousness, and climate-adaptive practices, "Stories for a Better Normal" aims to change the mindset of individuals, families, and communities by demonstrating ways in which a 'better normal' can be realized within our communities.

This online discussion is organized in partnership between the Office of Deputy Speaker Legarda and the Climate Change Commission, with support from the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, The Climate Reality Project-Philippines and Mother Earth Foundation. (PIA NCR)



OCTA: COVID-19 reproduction rate in Metro Manila continues to increase

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 12, 2020 7:39:26 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 12) — The coronavirus reproduction rate in Metro Manila has been at $R_0 = 0.95$ for the past seven days, the OCTA Research Team said on Saturday.

According to OCTA Research Fellow Fr. Nicanor Austriaco, some cities in the National Capital Region even exceeded $R_0 = 1$. However, he did not specify which particular cities recorded a surge.

“Particular LGUs exceeded one. In Quezon City, the R_0 is pretty much at one already. In several other LGUs in NCR, we can see a similar increase,” he told CNN Philippines Newsroom Weekend.

According to the research team, the lowest reproduction rate was at $R_0 = 0.66$, which was recorded on October 21.

“We expect that the rate will slowly keep increasing, but we are at a better position now than we were several months ago,” Austriaco said.

According to him, an example of improved contact tracing is the local government of Quezon City. He said that it is now five times more efficient than it was in August.

“Will there be a wave? It is likely that there will be a next wave. How large is that wave? It will depend upon how good our contact tracing, and quarantine, and isolation facilities are.”

Austriaco said that people and local government units need to stay vigilant in order to prevent this surge of infections, especially after Christmas time.

The country listed another 1,301 COVID-19 infections on Saturday, pushing the total to over 448,000.



1,301 new COVID-19 cases push total to over 448,000

Published December 12, 2020 4:08pm
By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday reported 1,301 new coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections, bringing the nationwide tally to 448,331, as five laboratories failed to submit data on time.

Davao del Norte recorded the highest number of new cases on Saturday with 96. This was followed by Quezon City with 76, Laguna with 59, and Rizal and Western Samar with 50, each.

The DOH also announced that total recoveries rose to 409,433 after 111 more patients recovered from the illness while 35 new fatalities brought the death toll to 8,730.

Nine duplicate cases were also removed from the total case count.

“Moreover, there were 14 cases that were previously reported as deaths but after final validation, they were recovered cases. In Addition, 4 cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified as deaths,” the DOH said.

Meanwhile, there are 30,168 active cases undergoing treatment or quarantine. Of this, 85.8 percent are mild, 7 percent are asymptomatic, 2.3 percent are severe, and 4.6 percent are in critical condition.

Based on data from the DOH, 58 percent of the country’s intensive care unit beds are available while 80 percent of the mechanical ventilators are ready for use

The OCTA Research team earlier said that the number of COVID-19 cases in the National Capital Region has been [increasing in the first part of December](#). -MDM, GMA News



Lockdown sa mining area sa Benguet na nagtala ng mataas na kaso ng COVID-19, pinalawig pa

By [Bombo Radyo Baguio](#)

-December 13, 2020 | 4:19 AM

BAGUIO CITY – Isasailalim sa mass testing ang aabot sa 4,500 na mga residente sa Mankayan, Benguet sa susunod na linggo kasabay ng patuloy na pagtaas ng kaso ng COVID-19 doon, partikular sa mining camp ng Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company.

Ayon kay Mayor Atty. Frenzel Ayong, mahigpit ang koordinasyon nila sa mga representatives ng Bases Conversion and Development Authority para sa isasagawag mass testing sa mine camp sa Barangay Paco at Sitio Marivic ng Barangay Sapid at mga kalapit na mga barangay ng Poblacion, Tabio, Cabiten at Colalo.

Puntirya aniya na maisagawa ang mass testing sa December 16 at 17.

Pinalawig din ang lockdown sa mining camp hanggang sa December 20 at posible pa aniyang mapahaba, depende sa magiging sitwasyon.

Binahagi ni Mayor Ayong na karamihan sa mga kaso nila ay mga empleyado o kapamilya ng mga empleyado ng Lepanto Mines at ang pagtaas ng kaso nila sa COVID-19 ay bunga ng agresibong contact tracing at expanded testing.

Kumalat aniya ang virus dahil ang mga bunkhouses ng mga mine workers ay common ang kitchen, common toilet at bathroom, magkakalapit ang mga silid at magkakasama ang mga mine workers pagsakay sa elevetor.

Sinabi pa ni Mayor Ayong na ginagamit na ang ilang paaralan sa kanilang bayan bilang isolation facilities dahil sa pagdami ng mga kinakailangang isailalim sa isolation.

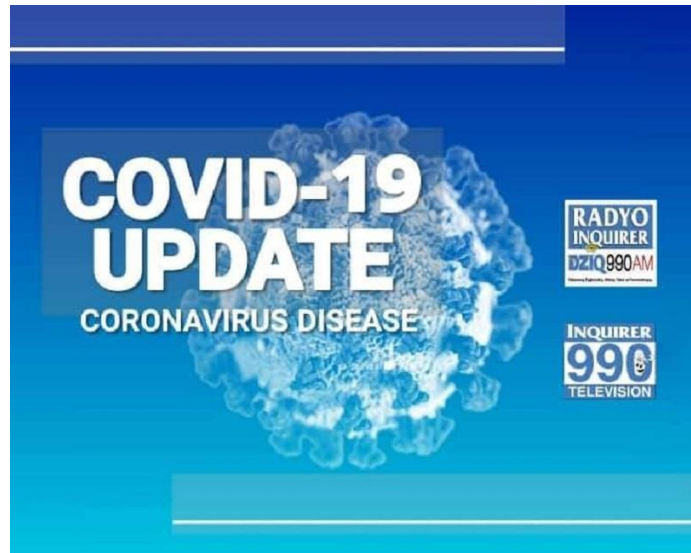
Batay sa pinakahuling datos, umaabot na sa 428 ang kabuuang kaso ng COVID-19 sa Mankayan na binubuo ng 339 na aktibong kaso, 88 na nakarekober at isang nasawi.

Maaalalang nitong nakaraang buwan ay isinagawa ang kaparehong mass testing aabot na 5,000 katao sa Baguio City at sa mga bayan ng La Trinidad, Itogon at Tuba sa Benguet dahil sa pagtaas ng kaso ng mga ito sa COVID-19.



Global death toll bunsod ng COVID-19, higit 1.6o milyon na

By Angellic Jordan December 12, 2020 - 11:17 AM



Pumalo na sa halos 1.6o milyon ang bilang ng mga nasawing COVID-19 patient sa buong mundo.

Batay sa huling tala, umakyat na sa kabuuang 1,601,088 ang nasawi sa iba't ibang bansa bunsod ng nakakahawang sakit.

Nangunguna pa rin sa may pinakamaraming naitalang nasawi dahil sa COVID-19 ang Estados Unidos na may 302,750.

Sumunod na rito ang Brazil na may 180,453 na pumanaw bunsod ng pandemiya.

Nasa 142,662 naman ang death toll sa India habang 113,019 ang napaulat na nasawi sa Mexico.

Narito naman ang naitalang COVID-19 death toll sa iba pang bansa at teritoryo:

- United Kingdom - 63,506
- Italy - 63,387
- France - 57,567
- Iran - 51,727
- Spain - 47,624
- Russia - 45,893
- Argentina - 40,606

Samantala, lumabas din sa pinakahuling datos na umakyat na sa kabuuang 71,433,785 ang tinamaan ng nakakahawang sakit sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nasa 49,634,106 naman ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 pandemic sa buong mundo.

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/279406/global-death-toll-bunsod-ng-covid-19-higit-1-6o-milyon-na#ixzz6gRo3X5np>

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WHO NAGBABALA SA HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

written by [Ashley Jose](#) December 12, 2020



Nagbabala ang World Health Organization (WHO) laban sa mga selebrasyon ngayong nalalapit na holiday season.

Ayon kay WHO Chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, posible kasing mapalitan ng luha ang selebrasyon gaya ng Pasko't Bagong Taon na sana'y panahon para sa kaligayahan.

Sinabi ng WHO chief, ito ay kung hindi susunod ang publiko sa minimum standard health protocols dahil madali aniyang maging instrumento ang mga Christmas parties, at iba pang pagtitipon sa mabilis na pagkalat ng COVID-19.

Aniya, dapat na maging mas maingat pa ang publiko dahil wala aniyang papantay sa regalo ng malusog at maayos na kalusugan sa gitna ng pandemya.



Forecast: La Niña intensity shifts to ‘moderate’

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:22 AM December 12, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Climate experts in the United States have downshifted their La Niña forecast to “moderate” from “potentially strong,” based on indicators monitored in November.

Still, countries in the western Pacific Ocean, including the Philippines, will continue to expect higher than normal rainfall over the next three months.

The latest monthly advisory from the United States Climate Prediction Center (CPC) states that La Niña persisted in November, as indicated by well below-average sea surface temperatures.

The CPC added that the atmospheric circulation over the tropical Pacific Ocean remained consistent with La Niña.

The opposite of El Niño, La Niña typically increases rainfall over Southeast Asia including the Philippines from October to February and even up to May.

“Supported by the latest forecasts from several models, the forecaster consensus is for a moderate strength La Niña during the peak November-January season,” the agency said.

“La Niña is likely to continue through the Northern Hemisphere winter 2020-21 (about 95 percent chance for January-March), with a potential transition during the spring 2021 (about 50 percent chance of neutral during April to June,” it added.

“Neutral” means the absence of both La Niña and El Niño.

In the CPC’s previous advisory issued in November and based on October data, La Niña was assigned a 95-percent probability of continuing to prevail in the January to March period and 65 percent to linger on in March to May.

A series of typhoons that formed and hit the Philippines—as La Niña went full-blown in the previous several weeks—have caused devastating floods in various parts of the country, particularly Cagayan Valley.

On the other hand, the rains raised the stock of raw water at the Angat Dam in Bulacan province—the main source of water for Metro Manila and adjacent provinces—past the normal high level of 212 meters above sea level (masl).

As of the morning of Dec. 11, water level at Angat was pegged at 212.81 masl. The level has been above 212 masl since Nov. 30. —RONNEL W. DOMINGO

Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1370887/forecast-la-nina-intensity-shifts-to-moderate#ixzz6gRublpgt>

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The 2021 budget

Published December 12, 2020, 11:12 PM
[by Senator Sonny Angara](#)

BETTER DAYS



Senator Sonny Angara

The Senate and the House of Representatives recently approved the bicameral conference committee report on the 2021 national budget, amounting to P4.1 trillion. This is historic because of the circumstances surrounding the budget's passage—more so because of the unprecedented humanitarian challenges to which it aims to respond.

The bicam officially convened twice—with most panel members attending virtually. In between those meetings were almost daily conversations among myself, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, my counterpart, Rep. Eric Go Yap, as chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, our respective vice-chairpersons, and colleagues from the Legislative and Executive.

Crafting and deliberating on the annual budget is a rigorous exercise of give-and-take. Nevertheless, we are proud to say that throughout the process, the original intent remained intact—for the 2021 budget to improve our response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; assist those stricken not only by calamity, but also poverty, hunger, disease, and joblessness; and ultimately jumpstart the country's recovery.

As the first COVID-19 vaccines are already being administered around the world, up to P72.5 billion has been set aside in preparation for a mass immunization program around the country. In fact, if the appropriations under the Bayanihan to Recover As One Act (RA 11494) are included and their validity extended to next year, then the Philippine government is authorized to spend up to P82.5 billion to purchase, store, distribute, and administer COVID-19 vaccines in 2021.

Though it is still unclear exactly which vaccine will be distributed, the Executive has already said that the appropriations Congress has approved are adequate for the country to vaccinate just enough people to achieve “herd immunity.”

We must remain vigilant though while waiting for the vaccines., This is why the 2021 budget that Congress has approved includes up to P500 million under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) for contact tracing operations, which is essential to monitoring, managing,



The 2021 budget

and preventing the spread of the virus. Significant funds were also appropriated for the Department of Health (DOH) to purchase more COVID-19 test kits, reagents, supplies, and viral transport and preservation systems.

Steps shall also be taken to address the infirmities in our healthcare system. In fact, the entire health sector—which includes the DOH, PhilHealth, and different hospitals and public healthcare providers—will be appropriated up to P287.472 billion, representing the third highest sectoral outlay, behind only education and infrastructure.

The 2021 national budget will also ensure that assistance is provided to any Filipino who may need it. For instance, a bigger appropriation for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Fund was approved—from P16 billion in 2020 to P20 billion in 2021—to empower the government to respond and save more lives in the face of natural disasters.

If this amount is added to the quick response funds or QRFs of various government agencies (totaling roughly P6.37 billion) and portions of the assistance to local government units or ALGU (worth P4.5 billion), then a little more than P30 billion has been set aside in next year's budget for disaster response, recovery, and rehabilitation — in short, for keeping our people safe.

Meanwhile, many of our kababayans are still recovering from the loss of livelihood due to the pandemic. Hence, under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), up to P19.036 billion will be allocated for its Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD), which targets the informal sector, and nearly P500 million for the adjustment measures program (AMP), which is for displaced formal employees. The Emergency Repatriation Fund, which the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration uses to assist retrenched OFWs, shall amount to P6.192 billion next year.

Hinging on the hope that more of the economy will be opened up as 2021 unfolds, the national budget shall also provide much-needed stimulus to restart our economy. For instance, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall receive close to P700 billion in a bid to refresh the administration's push for infrastructure.

Then in a bid to further facilitate the digital transformation of the country, the National Broadband Program and the Free WiFi in Public Places program under the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) were appropriated P1.858 billion and P3.224 billion, respectively.

These are but some of the big-ticket items in the national budget which we believe charts a path for the country out of the tragedy of 2020. Hopefully, this measure is signed soon. Email: sonnyangara@yahoo.com | Facebook, Twitter & Instagram: [@sonnyangara](https://www.instagram.com/sonnyangara)

Senator Sonny Angara has been in public service for 16 years—9 years as Representative of the Lone District of Aurora, and 7 as Senator. He has authored and sponsored more than 200 laws. He is currently serving his second term in the Senate.



Loren urges developed nations to honor 1.5°C climate goal in Paris Agreement

Published December 12, 2020, 1:58 PM

by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

House Deputy Speaker Antique Rep. Loren Legarda reminded developed countries to fulfill their obligations under the Paris Agreement as she urged them to invest in low-carbon technologies that would benefit developing countries.



Deputy Speaker and Antique Rep. Loren Legarda (Congresswoman Loren Legarda Official Facebook Page / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

The House leader made the call five years after the landmark deal which calls for 1.5-degree global warming threshold was adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

“The Paris Agreement establishes the obligations of all nations to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is a vehicle towards achieving climate justice as it compels developed nations that have contributed the most to cause global warming and climate change to take deep and significant cuts to their greenhouse gas emissions,” Loren said.

She recalled that the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was formally adopted on Dec. 12, 2015 and entered into force or became operational on Nov. 4, 2016, 30 days after at least 55 countries accounting for at least 55 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions had ratified the agreement.

Loren, commissioner of the Global Commission on Adaptation, noted that around 189 countries have ratified the agreement.

“Developed countries are also expected to mobilize climate finance and channel them through the Green Climate Fund, as well as provide support to developing and vulnerable nations through capacity building and technology transfer. The Agreement is governed by transparency and



Loren urges developed nations to honor 1.5°C climate goal in Paris Agreement

compliance mechanisms that will ensure continued collective progress towards meeting these ambitious global goals,” she said.

Loren cited that during the negotiations in December 2015, the Philippines, as chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), was able to move forward the more ambitious climate goal of 1.5°C, compared to 2°C, in the final text of the Paris Agreement.

According to her, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change rallied behind the 1.5°C global warming threshold “for survival for developing countries, as well as an opportunity for all countries to transition towards a low carbon and climate-resilient development path.”

“We need bold climate action in terms of transformational planning and financing in all sectors, and we need the involvement of all actors in the community, most especially to spur locally led action. For all these, industrialized nations must lead towards the low carbon pathway. Only if the 1.5°C limit is met can we bring about sustainable industrial development and eradicate poverty.”



UN sa mga world leaders: Magdeklara na ng ‘climate emergency’

By [Bombo Bam Orpilla](#)

-December 13, 2020 | 3:11 AM

Hinikayat ngayon ng United Nations (UN) ang mga world leaders na magdeklara na ng “climate emergency” sa kani-kanilang mga bansa upang masimulan ang aksyon sa paglaban sa mapaminsalang global warming.

Pahayag ito ni UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres sa kanyang talumpati kasabay ng ikalimang taong anibersaryo ng 2015 Paris Agreement.

Ayon kay Guterres, tila hindi umano sapat ang mga umiiral nang commitments sa buong mundo para malimitahan ang pagtaas ng temperatura.

“Can anybody still deny that we are facing a dramatic emergency?” wika ni Guterres. “That is why today, I call on all leaders worldwide to declare a State of Climate Emergency in their countries until carbon neutrality is reached.”

Binatikos din nito ang mayayamang mga bansa sa paggastos sa 50% ng kanilang pondo para sa COVID-19 pandemic sa fossil fuel kaysa sa low-carbon energy.

“So far, the members of the G20 are spending 50% more in their stimulus and rescue packages on sectors linked to fossil fuel production and consumption, than on low-carbon energy,” ani Guterres.

“This is unacceptable. The trillions of dollars needed for COVID recovery is money that we are borrowing from future generations,” dagdag nito. “We cannot use these resources to lock in policies that burden future generations with a mountain of debt on a broken planet.”

Sa kasalukuyan, nasa 38 bansa pa lamang ang nagdeklara ng climate emergency kaya hinimok ni Guterres ang iba pang mga lider na gayahin ito.

Kaugnay nito, kapwa nangako ang China at India na kanilang sisikaping mapababa ang carbon pollution sa kani-kanilang bansa.

Sinabi ni Chinese President Xi Jinping na palalakasin nila ang kapasidad ng kanilang wind and solar power ng hanggang 1,200 gigawatts sa susunod na dekalda.

Sa panig naman ni Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paiigtingin nila ang paggamit ng malinis na pagkukunan ng enerhiya at “on target” aniya sila na makamit ang itinakdang emmissions norms sa ilalim ng 2015 Paris agreement. (AFP/ Reuters)



More ambitious climate plans on 5th year of Paris Agreement

posted December 12, 2020 at 10:50 pm
by [AFP](#)

London -- Global leaders were due to announce more ambitious plans to combat global warming on Saturday, on the fifth anniversary of the signing of the landmark Paris Agreement.

The Climate Ambition Summit, being held online, comes as the United Nations warns current commitments to tackle rises in global temperatures are inadequate.

Britain, the UN, and France are co-hosting the summit, which Prime Minister Boris Johnson will open at 1400 GMT and which will be live streamed at climateambitions summit2020.org.

China's President Xi Jinping and France's Emmanuel Macron are among the heads of state taking part, with speaking slots handed to leaders of countries that submitted the most ambitious plans.

These include Honduras, and Guatemala, which were both recently hit by hurricanes, as well as India, which is battling increasingly erratic weather patterns and air pollution.

Business figures set to speak reportedly include Tim Cook, the chief executive of Apple, which has committed to making its whole supply chain carbon neutral by 2030.

But major economies including Australia, Brazil and South Africa are absent. Australia has not committed to net-zero emissions by 2050 and has been accused of setting targets that are too weak.

Speakers will deliver short video messages, with organisers saying they will announce "new and ambitious climate change commitments" and there will be "no space for general statements".

The 2015 Paris climate accord saw signatories commit to take action to limit temperature rises to "well below" 2.0 Celsius above pre-industrial levels and try to limit them to 1.5C.

But the UN warned this week that under current commitments, the Earth is still on course for a "catastrophic temperature rise" of more than 3.0C this century.

It warned this will create a crisis that will "dwarf the impacts of Covid-19" and has said current pledges to cut emissions to meet the Paris accord were "woefully inadequate".

- 'Moment of accountability' -

Greenpeace called the summit -- seen as a warm-up for the UN's climate change conference COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, next November -- a "moment of accountability for leaders".



'Not enough' climate ambition shown by leaders

By Matt McGrath
Environment correspondent
Published
55 minutes ago



IMAGE COPYRIGHTREUTERS

image caption Mr Sharma said progress had been made, but it was not enough yet to avoid dangerous warming this century

The UK minister tasked with leading UN climate talks says world leaders are failing to show the necessary level of ambition.

Alok Sharma was speaking at the conclusion of a virtual climate summit organised by the UK, UN and France.

He said "real progress" had been made and 45 countries had put forward new climate plans for 2030.

But these were not enough to prevent dangerous warming this century, Mr Sharma explained.

Taking place on the fifth anniversary of the Paris climate agreement, the virtual meeting heard the UN Secretary General warn that every country needed to declare a climate emergency.

Around 70 heads of state and government took part in the meeting, outlining new pledges and commitments to curb carbon.

China's contribution was eagerly awaited, not just because it is the world's biggest emitter, but because it has recently promised to reach net zero emissions by 2060.

Achieving net zero means that emissions have been cut as much as possible and any remaining releases are balanced by removing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere,

But while President Xi Jinping outlined a range of new targets for 2030, many analysts felt these did not go far enough.



'Not enough' climate ambition shown by leaders

India brought little in the way of new commitments but Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his country was on track to achieve its goals under the Paris agreement and promised a major uptick in wind and solar energy.

media captionClimate change: How 1.5C could change the world

According to the UK, some 24 countries had outlined net zero commitments and 20 had now set out plans to adapt and become more resilient to rising temperatures and their impacts.

But despite these commitments, Mr Sharma said not enough had been achieved.

"Have we made any real progress at this summit? And the answer to that is: yes," he said.

"But they will also ask, have we done enough to put the world on track to limit warming to 1.5C, and protect people and nature from the effects of climate change? To make the Paris Agreement a reality."

Mr Sharma re-stated a commitment made last year to double the UK's international climate finance spend. This will bring it to at least £11.6bn over the next five years.

"Friends, we must be honest with ourselves, the answer to that, is currently: no. As encouraging as all this ambition is. It is not enough."

Earlier on Saturday, UK Prime Minister Mr Johnson said advances in renewable energy technologies would "save our planet and create millions of high-skilled jobs".

media captionBoris Johnson outlines a 10-point plan for a "green industrial revolution"

He added: "Together we can use scientific advances to protect our entire planet - our biosphere - against a challenge far worse, far more destructive even than the coronavirus. And by the promethean power of our invention, we can begin to defend the Earth against the disaster of global warming."

Meanwhile, UN Secretary General António Guterres criticised rich countries for spending 50% more of their pandemic recovery cash on fossil fuels compared to low-carbon energy.

Mr Guterres said that 38 countries had already declared a climate emergency and he called on leaders worldwide to now do the same.

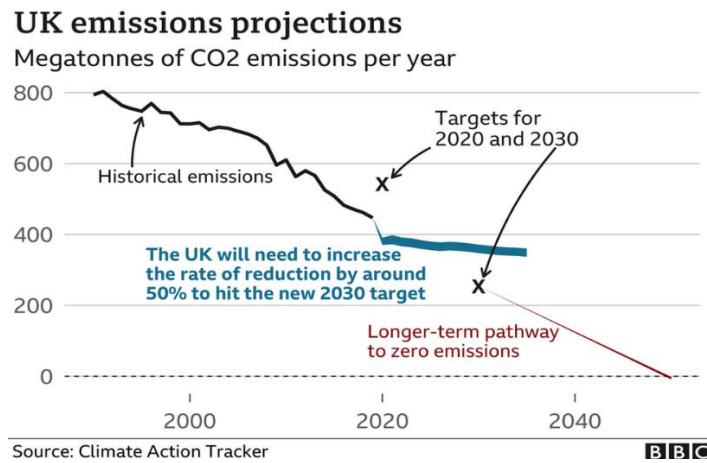
On Covid recovery spending, he said that this is money being borrowed from future generations.

"We cannot use these resources to lock in policies that burden future generations with a mountain of debt on a broken planet," he said.

Over 70 world leaders have been speaking at the meeting organised by the UK, UN and France. It is taking place after the pandemic caused the postponement of the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) meeting, which had been due to take place in Glasgow this year.



'Not enough' climate ambition shown by leaders



The UK has announced an end to support for overseas fossil fuel projects, and has today deposited a new climate plan with the UN.

It's the first time that Britain has had to do this, as it was previously covered by the European Union's climate commitments.

The UK pointed to its new commitment on overseas fossil fuel projects as well as a new carbon cutting target of 68% by 2030, announced last week by the prime minister.

The EU also presented a new 2030 target of a 55% cut in emissions, agreed after all-night negotiations this week. "That is now Europe's calling card," said Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission. "It is the go-ahead for scaling up climate action across our economy and society."

China's President Xi Jinping reiterated a previous commitment to reach peak CO₂ emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

He announced that China would reduce its carbon emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) by over 65% compared with 2005 levels. The country will also increase the share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption by about 25%. And President Xi pledged to increase forest cover and boost wind and solar capacity.



IMAGE COPYRIGHTREUTERS

image captionHurricane Iota was one of a record number of storms to wreak havoc on the Americas this year

'Not enough' climate ambition shown by leaders

But Manish Bapna, executive vice president and managing director of the World Resources Institute (WRI) said: "The strengthened renewable energy, carbon intensity, and forest targets are steps in the right direction, but recent WRI analysis shows that China would benefit more economically and socially if it aims higher, including by peaking emissions as early as possible."

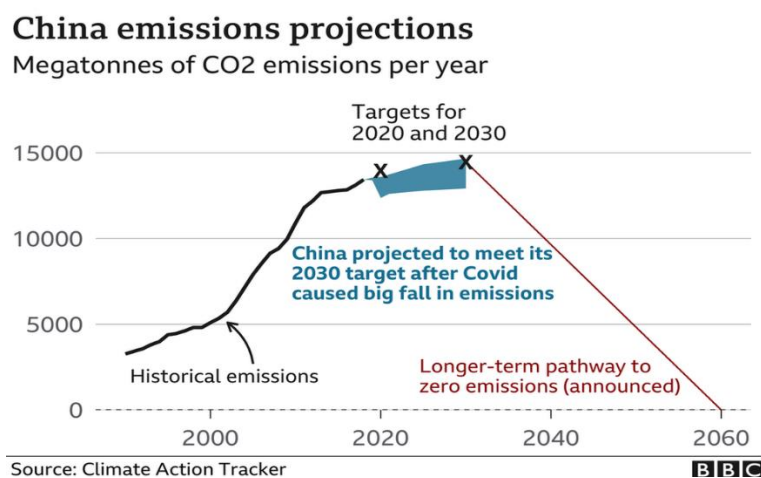
Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, said the country's renewable energy capacity was on target to reach 175 Gigawatts by 2022, and it would aim to boost this to 450 Gigawatts by 2030. He added that India was on track to exceed the targets in the Paris Agreement.

Although President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the Paris pact, the summit saw statements from the Republican governor of Massachusetts, Charlie Baker, and the Democrat governor of Michigan, Gretchen Whitmer, who said the US was "all-in" on tackling climate change.

Pope Francis said the Vatican had committed to reaching net zero emissions, similar to carbon neutrality, before 2050. "The time has come to change course. Let us not rob future generations of the hope for a better future," he said.

A number of big emitters, including Australia, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Mexico, are not taking part, as their climate actions were not deemed ambitious enough.

Some observers believe this hard line on some countries is justified.



"From a kind of symbolic procedural point of view, it's good to have everybody on board," said Prof Heike Schroeder from the University of East Anglia.

"But from a proactive, creating some kind of sense of urgency approach, it also makes sense to say we only get to hear from you if you have something new to say."

The five years since the Paris agreement was adopted have been the warmest on record, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and emissions have continued to accrue in the atmosphere.

But many countries and businesses have started the process of decarbonisation in that time.



'Not enough' climate ambition shown by leaders

The progress they've made now needs to be acknowledged and encouraged, says former UN climate chief Christiana Figueres.

"For this Saturday, they are focusing on the reduction of emissions, and that is a good thing because that progress that's been seen in the real economy has to be reflected and incentivised further by those additional commitments."

One area that yielded little progress at this meeting was the question of finance. Rich countries had promised to mobilise \$100bn a year from 2020 under the Paris agreement - but the commitments on cash are not forthcoming.



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



By [Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General](#)

December 13, 2020

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 gases 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, reengineer economies and reimagine 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, reskilling and upskilling 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.



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

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 toward 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.



Global emissions were slowing even before the Covid pandemic

By [Bloomberg News](#)
December 12, 2020



In this July 27 photo, the Dave Johnson coal-fired power plant is silhouetted against the morning sun in Glenrock, Wyoming.

The growth rate of human-created greenhouse gases was slowing even before the pandemic hit the global economy—just not fast enough to hold back the rate of climate change.

Global carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels increased just 0.1 percent in 2019 from the previous year. In 2020, they'll fall a record 7 percent, to 34 billion metric tons of CO₂, according to the Global Carbon Project, an international effort by researchers to measure CO₂ emissions. The results line up closely with a [major United Nations report](#) released this week that also showed an anticipated 7-percent drop in emissions this year.

“This level of reduction is unprecedented and about five times bigger than the drop during the global financial crisis in 2018,” said Pep Canadell, executive director of the Global Carbon Budget. “Although the future is yet to be written, there is indeed an unprecedented opportunity that could curve down the future trajectory of emissions if we actively choose to do so.”

The average annual growth in global emissions between 2010 and 2019 dropped to 0.9 percent, compared with an average 3-percent increase registered over the previous decade, researchers found.

That slowdown on its own isn't enough to prevent the worst effects of climate change, however. Scientific models show that total emissions need to fall between 25 percent and 50 percent through 2030 to limit global warming to 2° or 1.5° Celsius above preindustrial levels, the threshold at which UN climate researchers say certain destructive effects of warming will be locked in.



Global emissions were slowing even before the Covid pandemic

Last year's small increase and this year's record decline in emissions also won't slow down the accumulation of CO₂ in the atmosphere, which is responsible for most of the global warming trend. The concentration of CO₂ in 2020 was 48 percent above pre-industrial levels and 16 percent above 1990.

Emissions from China, the world's top emitter, fell 1.7 percent this year. US emissions were down 12 percent, while the European Union—excluding the UK—saw a drop of 11 percent. India, the world's third-largest emitter, cut its CO₂ footprint by 9 percent.

Transport emissions, which usually make up 21 percent of global emissions, were halved at their nadir during the most widespread lockdowns. (Aviation emissions plummeted 75 percent, although that decline had a smaller global effect because aviation accounts for just under 3 percent of total global emissions.) Industrial emissions fell by a third, while emissions from power production were down 15 percent.

In many places, the sharp emissions declines from coronavirus restrictions were superposed on prior reductions. Twenty-four countries have shrunk their carbon footprints over the past decade, including the US, the UK, Japan, Germany, and Mexico.

The US and EU emitted less in 2019 largely because they reduced coal usage by nearly 15 percent and 18 percent, respectively. India's emissions were already lower than normal late last year because of economic turmoil and strong hydropower generation, the report said.

On top of that, more than 2,000 climate and energy policies in countries around the world bear some of the responsibility for the weakening of emissions growth over the past decade, according to the report. Among the most relevant is the 2015 Paris Agreement, under which most world governments pledged to cut emissions to keep warming below 2°C by the end of the century.

There's a risk that this year's sharp reductions are short-lived. Data from CarbonMonitor, a daily global CO₂ estimate run by four research centers, suggests industrial emissions from China and Brazil picked up enough in October to offset reductions in other countries during that time. In the past, slumps in emissions driven by economic crises have been followed by a rebound as activity picked up.

"Toward the end of 2020, what is clear is that emissions are edging back toward 2019 levels already now," said Corinne Le Quéré, Royal Society professor of climate change science at the University of East Anglia, during a press conference. "But it's a little bit early to say how big the rebound will be in 2021." Bloomberg News

While overall human emissions have dropped, those resulting from changes in land use remain unchanged from the past decade, staying at about 6 billion metric tons of CO₂ for 2020. These sort of emissions—which include managed fires for agricultural use, land degradation, emission from soils, and peat-burning—could be brought close to zero by implementing measures to halt deforestation and degradation, the report said.



The road to extinction



By [Fr. Shay Cullen, SSC](#)

December 13, 2020

What a happy world it would be if all its living species lived in harmony — plants, animals and humans. It's a utopian dream, some say, impossible in this world of modern urban living, say others. It does happen. In the last remaining forests of the Amazon, the indigenous people have lived for centuries in isolation and in close dependency in harmony with nature. Now they, together with the plants and animals, are being driven to extinction.

The rain forests are being burnt, the wild animals are dying with less habitat and food, and the indigenous tribal people are being increasingly infected with the diseases of intruders. The most recent is Covid-19. The natural world is being destroyed. The forests are burnt, replaced with palm trees, beef cattle and soya beans. We humans are a ferocious species. Greedy for profit, the corporations mine and excavate the minerals, cut and haul the logs, capture and trade the wild animals, over-fish the oceans and pollute the air. We are dangerously overheating the planet with poisonous greenhouse gases. That temperature increase is killing animal species, damaging sea corals and causing raging bush fires around the globe where animals die. We must understand the cause and act to stop it.

The first place to look is at human nature. Our species has evolved rapidly and unpredictably to the point where we have taken over the earth. The number of wild animals on the earth has been reduced by half since 1970 and the human population has doubled. As a result, animals are becoming extinct 100 times faster. Our expanding population is cutting and destroying the forests, killing and eating the animals and, in the process, provoking and inviting deadly killer viruses to jump from one animal species to humans.

We had SARS, Ebola, HIV and now Covid-19 to mention a few and more to come. Call it the deadly embrace of nature. Another more deadly virus will attack for which we cannot develop a vaccine and could face extinction ourselves.

It all began with oil, fossil fuels, fertilizers, pesticides and corporate agriculture. Cheaper food in abundance. Then, the scientific community made great discoveries in antibiotics and vaccines. Life expectancy zoomed from 45 to 70 years and the Green Revolution produced more food and populations grew but most remained poor.

In 1898, when the Philippines fought Spanish and then American forces for independence, the population was about seven million people scattered over the islands. Then 102 years later, by the year 2000, it was 76 million people. According to the UN projection report, by the year 2050 it will be 127 million. At present the population of the Philippines is 110 million. Will the nation be able to feed itself? Obviously not. It imports most of its rice and has a semi-starving population of impoverished slum and rural dwellers of 16 million people, if not more. With millions of educated



The road to extinction

Filipinos migrating and working abroad, the future is bleak with social unrest and political turmoil brewing. This Philippine population growth is unsustainable, and should it continue at this rate, it would be a doubling of the population every 35 years. That means a population of 152 million in the year 2035 and 304 million by the year 2070. The Philippines is just one example in a global catastrophe of ecological destruction because of uncontrolled population growth in the developing world. There are now only 3 percent of the Philippine primeval rain forest left. In 1900, there were 70 percent forest coverage of the archipelago. The forest-dwelling indigenous people of the Philippines are now neglected, abandoned subsistence farmers on bare mountains denuded by corporations owned by local elite and foreign corporations. An ecological crime of gigantic proportions and a lost and stolen natural resource and heritage.

The world population is at present seven billion people, most are in China and India. The world population will continue to increase to 9 billion by 2045, according to UN projections. The continent of Africa where the great remaining rain forests and most of the world's species of animals live faces a very precarious uncertain future and extinction is ongoing at present. There were about 230 million African people in 1950. They made up nine percent of the world population but in 60 years, by 2010, that number had grown to one billion. That was then 15 percent of the world's population.

By 2050, Africans will make up 24 percent of the world population. This is 2.2 billion people, the UN says. Every 12 to 15 years, we humans add one billion more humans to the earth. They have to live, work, eat, procreate and survive. That demands more land, housing, farming, chemicals and water. Population growth has a huge impact on the ecology and the animals in Africa and the Amazon are losing their habitat and are dying out.

In Africa, about 60 percent of the population are below 25 years of age. There is high unemployment, inequality, poverty, social unrest, corruption and political conflict. These are driving the youth to migrate. Thousands are streaming toward Europe in the hope of a better life. Western countries are absorbing many and some nations are fast becoming multicultural and multiracial. Racists want to stop them. The European population growth, stagnant at present, will soon start growing because of the young migrants.

Climate change, driven by Western industrialization, is heating the globe with greenhouse gases. That is drying up once lush African grasslands, rivers are drying out, leaving dying reptiles and animals. What is left alive are being hunted to extinction for their tusks and horns or captured and sold internationally to corrupt collectors of wildlife.

The hope for the remaining forests and the natural world is the international movement to save the planet, to reduce global warming and to preserve the environment vital for our survival. We can all join in by working for a clean organic environment, campaigning and speaking out for each other and the animals and creatures with whom we share the earth.