

14 APRIL 2021, WEDNESDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**





# Davao, Caraga join forces against illegal logging

By Jan Vincent Leuterio Published on April 13, 2021



DAVAO DEL NORTE, April 13 (PIA) – The Davao and Caraga regions have created a Joint Inter-Regional Taskforce against illegal logging through a Joint Special Order.

The Signing of the Joint Special Order was held at Miko's Brew, Tagum City, Davao del Norte on April 12, 2021.

Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR) Region XIII Executive Director Nonito M. Tamayo said that this joint effort was done to strengthen the enforcement of anti-illegal logging laws in the borders of Davao and Caraga regions.

"Base sa mga reports na ating naririnig mula sa ating field offices sa PENRO at CENRO, marami pa rin tayong confiscations sa border na ito, meaning patuloy pa rin ang mga illegal logging activities na nanyayari (Based on the reports we've heard from our field offices in PENRO and CENRO, there are still many confiscations in this border, meaning, illegal logging activities have continued)," he said.

He added that timber poaching, in particular, have remained rampant in the border of Caraga Region and Davao Region despite the official prohibition of logging of national trees since 2011 and the department's "scores of accomplishments" over the years.

*"Hindi lang kami ngayon ang magbabantay diyan kasi common border namin yan from both sides maglalagay kami ng tao that will help us in manning (We [Region XIII] will no longer be the only ones safeguarding there because that is a common border of both sides; manpower will be added),"* he explained.

Additionally, DENR XI Executive Director Bagani Fidel A. Evasco said that one of the strategies of the taskforce is to put monitoring stations on the contested borders of Agusan del Sur and Davao de Oro so that both regions can file cases against illegal loggers in the borders.

"Foresters can also be embedded in the camps of Philippine National Police (PNP) and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to educate them on what kind of trees are illegally poached in certain areas," Evasco added.

Furthermore, with an incident of death having already been reported among the anti-illegal logging enforcers, Tamayo revealed that through this joint inter-regional taskforce, joint checkpoints in tandem with the police, the military, the local government units, and the communities will be established at the borders.



"Very risky, *kasi nga* this is enforcement. Involved *dito yung, sabihin ko na, kabuhayan ito ng mga apektadong tao eh. Siguro wala silang ibang pinagkukunan ng pamumuhay kaya namumutol sila kahit illegal* (Because this is enforcement. Involved here are, I will say, the livelihood of the affected people. Maybe they have no other source of livelihood that's why they are logging even if illegal)," Tamayo said.

For this, Evasco advised those affected to consult with their LGUs as there will be assistance programs that will help them in acquiring livelihood particularly through the rehabilitation programs by DENR that will be conducted on the campsites, allowing for job opportunities. (Jan Vincent Leuterio/PIA-XI)



## DENR seizes illegally-cut forest products



ZAMBOANGA. Personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) backed by policemen seize last week illegally-cut forest products in Tilubog village, Tampilisan, Zamboanga del Norte. A photo handout shows a DENR personnel inspects the confiscated Mayapis lumber. (SunStar Zamboanga)

April 13, 2021

PERSONNEL of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), backed by policemen, have seized illegally-cut forest products in the municipality of Tampilisan, Zamboanga del Norte, an official said Tuesday, April 13.

DENR Regional Information Officer Rosevirico Tan said the illegally-cut forest products were seized last week by the monitoring and enforcement personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro)-Liloy along with policemen in Tilubog village, Tampilisan.

Tan said there was no apprehension of the people behind the illegal cutting as the forest product, consisting of 143 pieces Mayapis lumber, were abandoned upon sensing the presence of lawmen.

Tan said the Mayapis lumber, which is around 1,147.6 board feet, is estimated to have a value of P45,906.67.

He said the lumber were confiscated since it is in violation of Section 78 of Presidential Decree 705 (Forestry Code of the Philippines) as amended by Republic Act 7161.

He said the illegally-cut lumber are now deposited at DENR sub-station in Gatas village, Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte.

He said investigation is underway to determine who were behind the cutting of the Mayapis timber. (SunStar Zamboanga)



# 17 GenSan, SoCot resorts shut down for forestry law violations

By Richelyn Gubalani April 13, 2021, 3:51 pm



GENERAL SANTOS CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has ordered the closure of 17 inland resorts here and nearby Polomolok town in South Cotabato for violation of the forestry law.

Elvira Lumayag, head of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, said Tuesday resorts in question are within areas classified as timberland or forestland not covered by Forest Land Use Agreement for Tourism (FLAgT).

“We already issued the closure orders, which are considered already effective,” Lumayag told reporters.

FLAgT is a contract between the DENR and a tourism project developer authorizing the latter to “occupy, manage and develop, subject to government share, any forestland of the public domain for tourism purposes.

The contract is valid for 25 years and may be renewed for the same period upon mutual agreement by the concerned parties.

Lumayag said the resort owners and operators violated Sections 20 and 78 of Presidential Decree 705 or the Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines.

She said Section 20 of the law provides that “no person may utilize, exploit, occupy, possess or conduct any activity within any forest land, or establish and operate any wood-processing plant, unless he has been authorized to do so under a license agreement, lease, license, or permit.”

Section 78 sets the “payment, collection and remittance of forest charges” in connection with the development of the resorts, she said.

Lumayag said Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier ordered all DENR field offices to conduct inventories of all resorts within forestlands and initiate appropriate actions on possible violations.

She said several resort owners have submitted appeals with their office, seeking authority to continue with their operations while in the process of complying with the requirements under the FLAgTs.

Among those issued with closure orders are the popular tourist spots Barikot Peak, Sanchez Peak, Mayango Peak, Queen Sheba Hidden Garden, Ulo Tulan, Buko-Buko Peak, Ante Agro Farm, Bato Peak, and Armros Native Farm. (PNA)



# GenSan resorts ordered closed for violation of envi laws

By ROMMEL G. REBOLLIDO -APRIL 13, 2021 6:13 PM

GENERAL SANTOS CITY (MindaNews / 13 Apr) – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources ordered the closure of at least 17 inland resorts and tourist destinations here and in the nearby town of Polomolok, South Cotabato for violation of environmental laws.



Some of the mountain resorts of General Santos City. Satellite image courtesy of Google Maria Elvira Lumayag, Community Environment and Natural Resources officer, said some of the resorts are within timber and forest land, where their operations are not supposed to be allowed. She also said the tourist facilities lack the necessary Forest Land Use Agreement for Tourism (FLAGT) given to inland resorts before they can operate..

Among those ordered closed include the tourist drawer spots in GenSan like the Barikot Peak, Sanchez Peak, Mayango Peak, Queen Sheba Hidden Garden, Ulo Tulan and trail destination Buko-Buko Peak. Also closed were Ante Agro Farm, Bato Peak and Armros Native Farm sa Polomolok town.

Lumayag on Tuesday said they sent the closure order signed by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to all the facilities they found to be within forestland in General Santos and in Polomolok, "a clear violation of section 20 and 78 of Presidential Decree 705."

Section 20 of PD 705 states that no person may utilize, exploit, occupy, possess or conduct any activity within any forest land, or establish and operate any wood-processing plant, unless he has been authorized to do so under a license agreement, lease, license, or permit.

Section 78, on the other hand, provides that "any person who fails to pay the amount due and payable under the provisions of PD705, the National Internal Revenue Code, or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, shall be liable to the payment of a surcharge of twenty-five per centum (25%) of the amount due and payable."

Lumayag said some of the resort operators sought a reconsideration of the order and asked that they be allowed to operate in the meantime that they are complying with the needed requirements in securing the FLAGT. DENR has yet to respond on their plea. (Rommel G. Rebolledo / MindaNews)

Source: <https://www.mindanews.com/top-stories/2021/04/gensan-resorts-ordered-closed-for-violation-of-envi-laws/>





# MGB-9 urges LGUs to heed geohazard maps, prepare for floods

By Dominic I. Sanchez, with reports from Mines and Geosciences Bureau-IX Published on April 13, 2021

ZAMBOANGA CITY, April 7 (PIA) – The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) regional office 9 urges local government units to heed their recommendations, including utilizing their Geohazard maps to cushion possible severe effects of floodings should they occur in the localities.



As per MGB report on April 1, scattered rains caused the overflowing of Sibuguey River resulting to the severe flooding of several barangays in Imelda municipality the most. These barangays include Balugo, Gandiangan, La Victoria, Lumpanac, Lumbog, San Jose and Sta. Barbara. The office added that the heavy rainfall was also felt by the neighboring municipalities including Diplahan, Zamboanga Sibugay and Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur. As a result, residents were evacuated while infrastructure and roads were submerged.

In its statement, the MGB pointed out that the impact of such severe flooding could have been minimized and prevented since “it was not a surprise”. The MGB in 2011 issued the Geohazard Matrix during the geohazard assessments where the said affected barangays were categorized to fall within the moderate to high flood susceptibility.

The MGB recommends for the following: “observe proper legal easement along active bodies of water specifically along the flood plains of Sibuguey River, and if possible, relocate existing houses that are vulnerable and much likely to be affected by such hazards; Develop an early warning system such as installation of Flood Hazard Warning Signage on critical areas and installation or improvement of engineering mitigating measures for flood along Sibuguey River; Utilization and integration of the 1:10,000 scale Geohazard Map in the future land development within the municipality especially along the floodplains of Sibuguey River; Constant communication and provide updates to barangay officials and the Imelda Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) on geohazard situations in the aforesaid barangays; The Local Government Unit of Imelda especially of the affected barangays through its respective Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) should come up with or enhance its respective Disaster Preparedness and Contingency Plan/Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan for the floodplains of Sibuguey River; and observe the rapid increase/decrease of Sibuguey River’s water level. (RVC/EDT/DIS/PIA 9-Zamboanga City, with reports from MGB-9, photo courtesy MGB-9)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1071999>



# Drawing contest promotes environmental awareness among kids

By Catherine Teves April 13, 2021, 1:49 pm



(Image taken from DENR Facebook page)

MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has opened a drawing contest for six- to 12-year-old Filipinos nationwide, with entries consisting of doodles reflecting the 2021 Earth Day theme "Restore our Earth".

By encouraging submission of such entries, the "E-Doodle Mo, Kid" contest launched by the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) this month, aims to raise Filipino children's awareness about caring for the environment.

"We want children to be involved in such environmental advocacy," said EMB information officer Hershey Palma.

She said even children from indigenous groups can join the contest as long as they are within EMB's specified age range.

Contestants must use pen and pencils to doodle on paper and other materials, she noted.

All entries for E-Doodle Mo, Kid must be original and not yet submitted to other competitions, EMB clarified.

However, entries that are either obscene, vulgar, pornographic, racist, discriminatory, offending to religious faiths, or not gender-sensitive will not be accepted, it added.

Observed annually on April 22, Earth Day commenced in 1970 as an activity that people in the US staged to call for increased environmental protection.

Earth Day eventually evolved into a global observance that this year focuses on natural processes, emerging green technologies, and innovative thinking which can help restore ecosystems worldwide.

According to EMB, parties interested in joining E-Doodle Mo, Kid can send their entries to [emb.centraloffice@gmail.com](mailto:emb.centraloffice@gmail.com).

April 23, 2021 is the deadline for submitting entries.

People can contact EMB regarding the contest's other entry and submission requirements.

The E-Doodle Mo, Kid contest has a junior category for six to nine-year-olds and a senior category for 10- to 12-year-olds.

Palma said EMB will pick three winners for each category.

"There'll be no first, second, and third placers so prizes will be the same for each winner," she said.





Each winner will receive PHP3,000 in cash, art supplies worth PHP3,000, a collapsible tumbler, bamboo notebook, eco-bag, reusable lunch box, and books.

EMB's criteria for choosing the winners are content/message (40 percent), creativity/originality (40 percent), and overall quality (20 percent).

Palma said EMB will post all entries on its Facebook page so people can view these and pick those they like the most.

"In every category, the entry with the most likes and shares will win PHP2,000 as special prize," she said.

She said EMB will announce when people can go online to choose their favorite entries.

EMB plans to announce the winners this May, she added.

According to Palma, all entries for the E-Doodle Mo, Kid contest will belong to EMB.

She added EMB may use such entries in its environmental advocacy. (PNA)



## MGA NANALO SA 2021 WATER2ME DIGITAL POSTER MAKING CONTEST NG NWRB, INILABAS NA!



April 14, 2021 @ 12:20 AM 6 hours ago

PORMAL nang inanunsyo ng National Water Resources Board na pinamumunuan ni Dr. Sevillo David, Jr., bilang executive director, ang mga nagwagi sa "2021 Water2Me Digital Poster Making Contest" kaugnay sa paggunita sa World Water Day noong March 22, 2021.

Nakuha ni Joross Drio mula sa Barangay Mayasang, Lemery, Batangas, ang first prize para sa kanyang lahok na "Flow of Prosperity".

Second placer naman si Johnella Margarete Pinque ng Barangay San Isidro, Roriguez, Rizal para sa kanyang entry na "Deep Pockets" habang third placer naman si Felicito Perez II ng Barangay San Isidro, Angono, Rizal sa kanyang lahok na "Too Big".

Sila ay tatanggap ng cash prizes na five thousand pesos (Php 5,000.00), three thousand pesos (Php 3,000.00) at two thousand pesos (Php 2,000.00) at mga sertipiko.

Pinagbasehan ng napiling winning entries ang theme, relevance, originality and uniqueness, aesthetic appeal, narrative description of the entry, at ang dami ng nakuhang likes sa NWRB Facebook page.

Makikita ang mga nagsipagwaging digital poster sa official FB page ng NWRB.

-ooOoo-

"ASYNCHRONOUS CLASSES" PA RIN ANG PLM HANGGANG APRIL 30, 2021

IPINAAALAM ng pamunuan ng Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila na bagamat nasa M-E-C-Q o Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine na ang National Capital Region, mananatiling "asynchronous mode of learning" ang undergraduate classes sa nasabing unibersidad.

Ito ang nilalaman ng Office Order na inilabas ni PLM president Emmanuel Leyco para sa faculty members at mga enrolled students. Pero ang College of Law at College of Medicine ay maaaring magsagawa ng "synchronous classes" pero hindi dapat ito lumagpas ng fifty percent (50%) na base sa desisyon ng faculty members.



At dahil MECQ, ang mga quiz at iba pang pagsusulit ay kailangang mai-reschedule kabilang na rin ang deadline para sa class assignments.

Inatasan din ni president Leyco ang pagiging available ng faculty members para sa konsultasyon ng kanilang mga estudyante sa oras ng kanilang klase o maaari silang magtakda ng kanilang consultation hours.

Habang MECQ rin, skeleton workforce ang pinairal sa unibersidad na katumbas ng thirty percent (30%) lamang ng mga administrative staff, karamihan ay work from home. Ang mga kinakailangang mag-report physically ay may shuttle service na ginagamit para sa pagsundo at paghatid, at mahigpit na sinusunod ang minimum health protocol.

Paalala rin ni president Leyco sa mga estudyante, kung hindi esensyal ang gagawin sa labas ay huwag na lamang lumabas ng bahay. Ang Maynila kasunod ng Quezon City ay may higit sampung libong aktibong kaso ng COVID-19 sa buong Metro Manila.

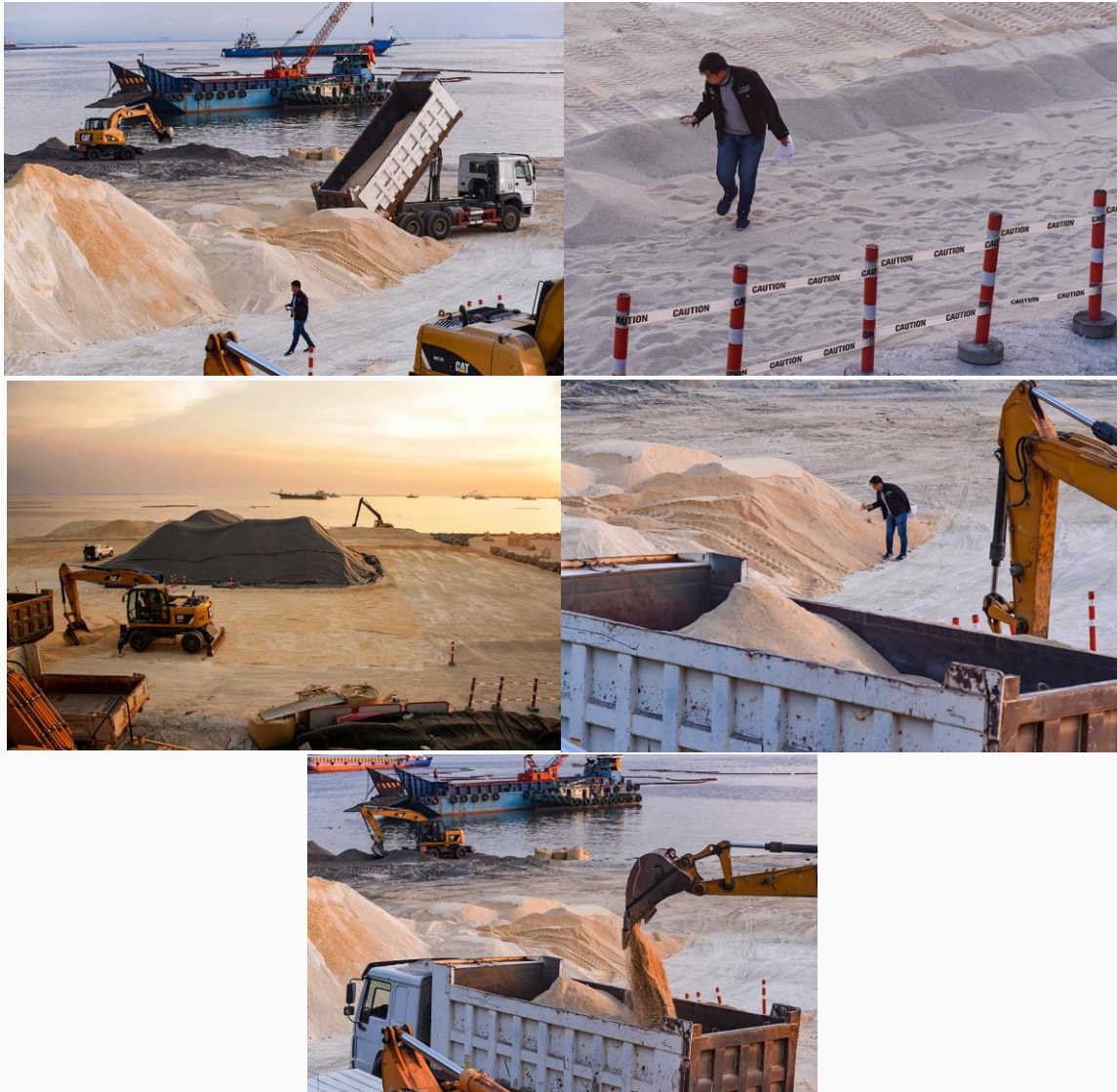




# LOOK: Crushed dolomite dumped anew in Manila bay shore

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 13 2021 10:57 PM



The government again fills a portion the Manila Baywalk with crushed dolomite as part of a P389-million project to rehabilitate the area, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA - Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the government again dumped crushed dolomite, which some call as "artificial white sand" along a portion of the Manila Baywalk as part of a P389-million project to rehabilitate the area.

The crushed dolomite initially dumped in the bay was sourced from Cebu.

Critics and the public have slammed the project, questioning its necessity and costs as the Philippines continues to struggle against controlling the spread of COVID-19.

Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan last year filed a resolution seeking to investigate the "wasteful and unnecessary" spending of the P389-million.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works and Highways have defended their decision to dump crushed dolomite along the Manila Bay shore, saying it serves as an "enhancer" for the beautification project in the area.

The Department of Health warned, however, that synthetic white sand can cause respiratory issues.

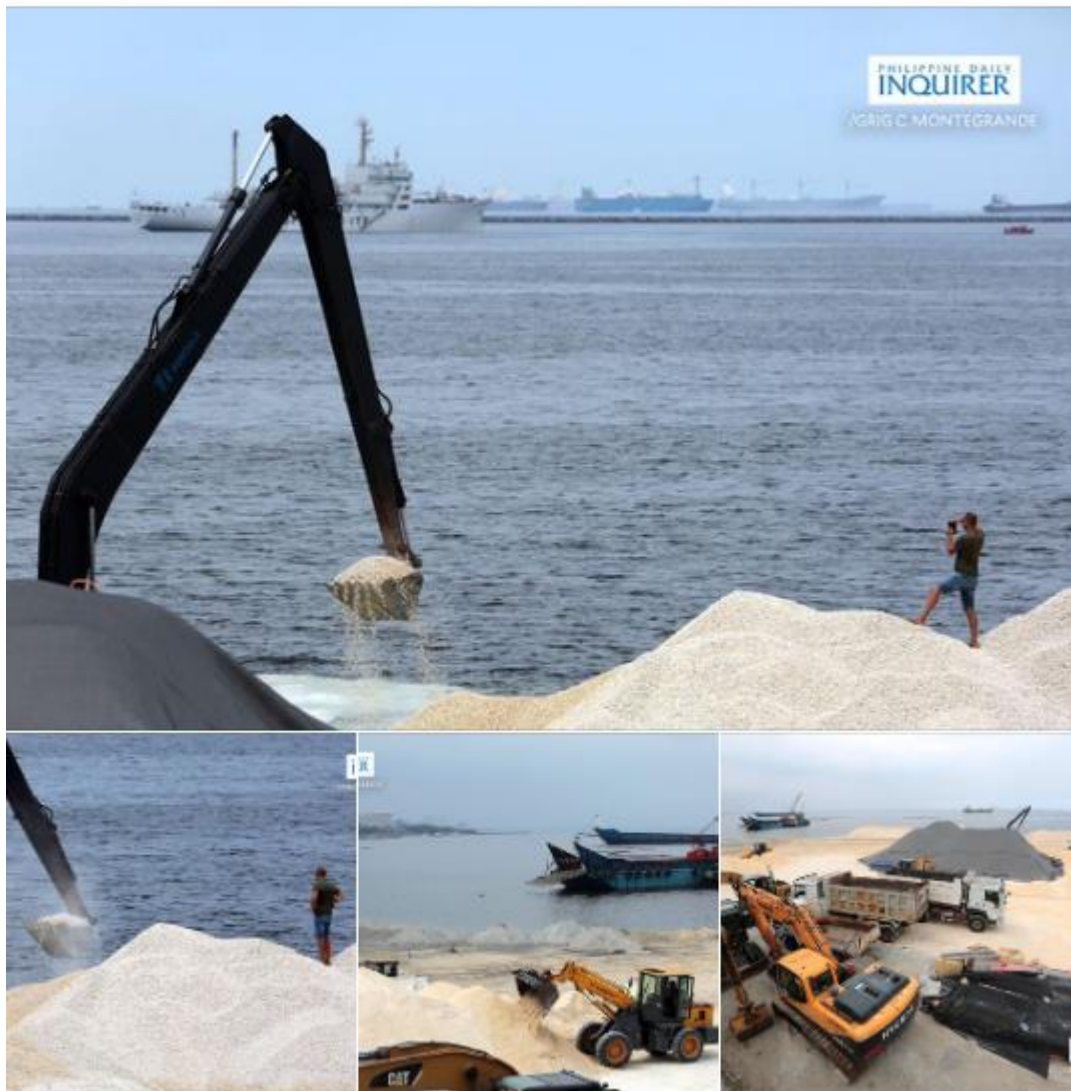
Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/13/21/look-crushed-dolomite-dumped-anew-in-manila-bay-shore>

CDN Digital 13h · 🌐

### ANOTHER DOSE OF DOLOMITE.

Heavy vehicles dump fresh dolomite at the "Dolomite Beach" along Roxas Boulevard in Manila on Tuesday, April 13. The artificial white sand beach is part of a P389 million-peso project of the gov't to rehabilitate Manila Bay.

Malacañang has long defended the controversial dumping of crushed dolomite in the area. Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque last Sept. 7 said that Manila Bay's "white sand" makeover will give immeasurable benefit to Filipinos' mental health. 🇵🇭 Grig C. Montegrando/Philippine Daily Inquirer via [INQUIRER.net](https://www.inquirer.net) #CDNDigital



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**FRESH DOLOMITE.** Nagtambak muli ng panibagong bulto ng mga dolomite o artipisyal na white sand sa bahaging ito ng Manila Bay.

Matatandaang 2020 nang ikasa ang naturang proyekto na nagkakahalaga ng P389 milyon para sa umano'y rehabilitation ng Manila Bay.

Sa kabila naman ng kaliwa't kanang batikos lalo't marami ang nakapansin na tila inaanod at nawawala rin ang malaking bahagi ng dolomite white sand, idinepensa pa rin ito ng administrasyong Duterte.

Makatutulong pa umano ito sa mental health ng mga Pinoy na magtutungo roon para i-enjoy ang tanawin. 📺 George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News



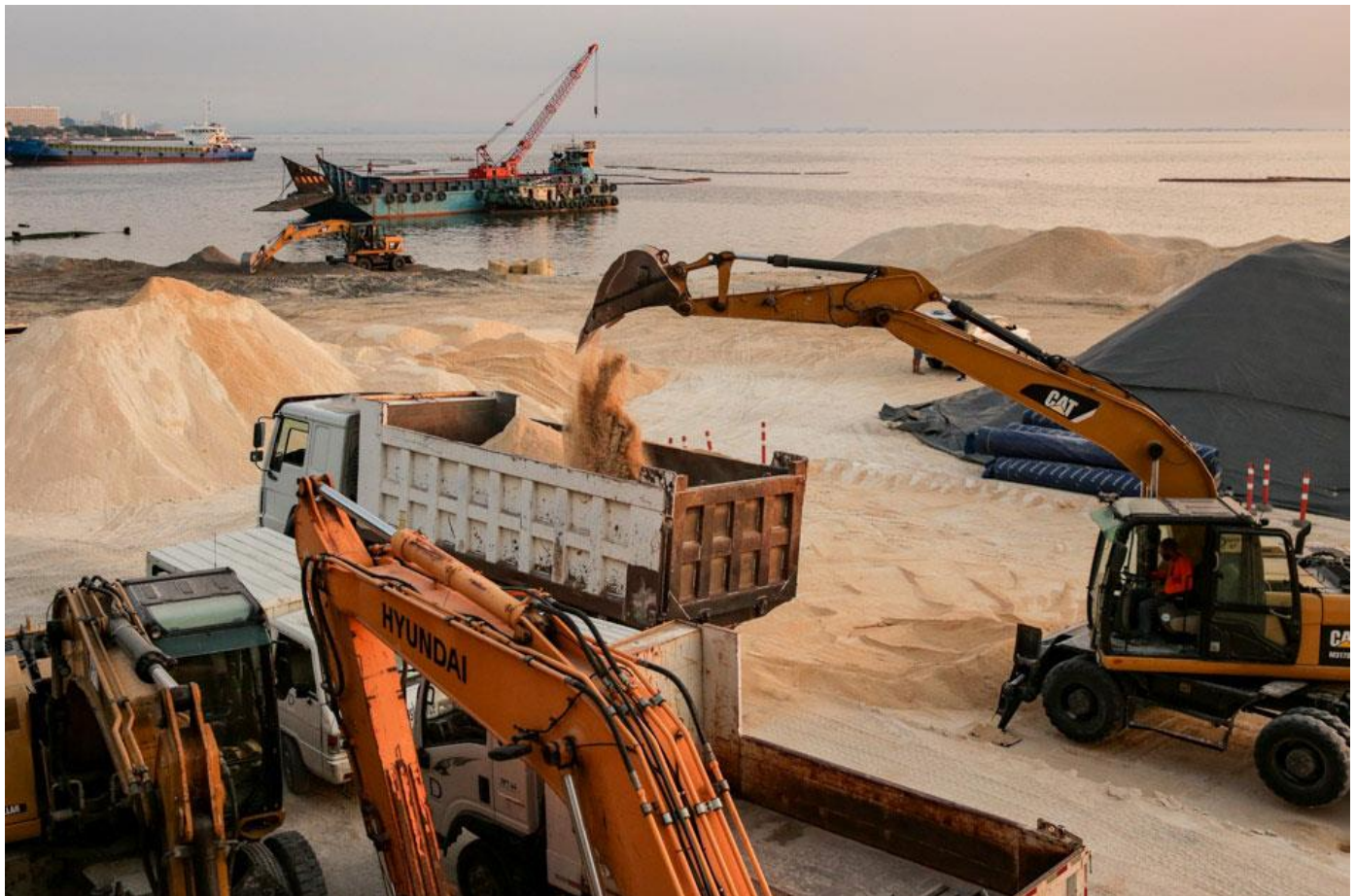




# Crushed dolomite replenished along Manila Baywalk

**George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News**

Posted at Apr 13 2021 09:09 PM | Updated as of Apr 13 2021 09:11 PM



Heavy machinery put fresh dolomite along the Manila Baywalk on Tuesday as part of a government project costing some P389 million to rehabilitate Manila Bay. Critics have scored the project and questioned its necessity as the country continues to struggle against controlling the spread of COVID-19.

# Catbalogan City to implement 'no segregation, no collection' policy

By Golda Meir T. TabaoPublished on April 13, 2021

CATBALOGAN CITY, April 13 (PIA) -- The City Government of Catbalogan is set to strictly implement the "No Segregation, No Collection" Policy starting Wednesday, April 14.

The said move is pursuant to Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) mandate on Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Act of 2000.

With this plan, Catbalogan City Mayor Dexter Uy has called for a meeting with the barangay officials of the city on April 5, to discuss on the said policy.



*Stakeholders discuss the different strategies to which they can contribute to the successful implementation of the solid waste management policy. (PIA-Samar)*

In support to the program, the city has also partnered with the different stakeholders such as teachers, daycare workers, Sangguniang Kabataan Councils and other Socio-Civic Groups, and likewise conducted an orientation as to proper implementation.



*Catbalogan Mayor Dexter Uy, and representatives from Catbalogan Environment and Natural Resources Office, Department of Interior Local Government, Metro Waste discuss with the barangay officials the No Segregation, No Collection Policy. (PIA-Samar)*

Among the agreements made during the meeting was for the stakeholders to help intensify the information and education campaign through house-to-to house strategy.

Further, the city has required each barangay to have its own Material Recovery Facility, information dissemination efforts on the 4Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse), creation of compost pit, and alternative recycling activities, among others.



In his message, Mayor Uy said, "The problem on garbage disposal in the city is not just an obligation of the Local Government Unit, but also a responsibility of each Catbaloganon."

The City Environment and Natural Resources Office, in coordination with the Department of Interior Local Government Unit, Catbalogan City Police, socio-civic and volunteer groups, will then strictly monitor the implementation and strict compliance of the policy. (Idl/gmt/PIA-Samar)





## Plastic sa takeout P5 bayad

By Abante News Online — Last updated Apr 13, 2021

NEWS



Inendorso ng House Committees on Ecology at on Ways and Means sa plenaryo ng Kamara ang panukalang pag-phase out sa mga single use plastic (SUP) product.

Sa ilalim ng House Bill 9147, ang paggawa, pagbebenta at paggamit ng SUP na drinking straw, stirrer, candy stick, balloon stick, cotton bud stick, bunting, confetti at packaging/bag na hindi tataas sa 10 micron ang kapal ay ipi-phase out sa unang taon ng pagpapatupad ng panukala.

Ang mga negosyo ay inoobliga ng panukala na itaguyod ang paggamit ng reusable, recyclable, at retrievable product bilang sisidlan ng kanilang produkto.

Ang mga kostumer ay pagbabayaran ng P5 bawat piraso ng SUP para sa takeout o delivery ng pagkain.

Ang mga lalabag ay pagmumultahin ng P50,000 hanggang P500,000 para sa mga maliliit na negosyo at P250,000 hanggang P1 milyon para sa malalaking negosyo. (Billy Begas)

Source: <https://www.abante.com.ph/plastic-sa-takeout-p5-bayad/>



# P57M in giant clam shells found in Palawan town

By: [Romar Miranda](#) - Correspondent / [@RVMirandaINO](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:54 PM April 13, 2021



A government personnel arranges the giant clam shells worth P57 million that were left by still unknown persons at a coastal village in Narra, Palawan. Those who illegally harvested the giant clams would be liable for violation of Republic Act 9147, otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, when identified. Contributed photo

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—An estimated P57 million worth of giant clam shells were found abandoned in a coastal community in the town of Narra, Palawan province on Tuesday (April 13).

Volunteers, Coast Guard men, police and military found at least 26 tons of the shells at the village of Panacan 1 during an operation.

Authorities are gathering intelligence to identify the perpetrators of the giant clam harvest, which is illegal under Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, according to an initial police report.

The shells had been turned over to the watchdog Bantay Palawan-Task Force South at the village of Tagpait in Aborlan town.

Giant clam shells are being used for making pieces of jewelry and as alternative to ivory.

Giant clams are also the target of Chinese poaching in the West Philippine Sea.

TSB

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1418580/p57m-in-giant-clam-shells-found-in-palawan-town>



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### IP group na Batak, nagsisilbing forest rangers ng kagubatan ng Palawan | SONA

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Ang Palawan ay hitik sa likas na yaman kaya mainit ito sa mga mata ng illegal loggers at poachers.

Upang mabantayan ang lalawigan, nagsisilbi bilang forest ranger ang indigenous people group na

SHOW MORE





# Legarda files Bill on Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting

By Jerome Carlo R. Paunan Published on April 13, 2021



*Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda (PIA NCR file photo)*

CALOOCAN CITY, April 13 (PIA) -- Three-term Senator, now Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, filed a bill seeking to develop and implement an ecosystem and natural accounting system that applies to the Philippine environment, giving importance to the role, value, and impact of the country's natural resources on the economy.

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

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

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

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

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



"The bill, when passed into law, will allow government planners to have a full understanding of the natural capital available and expendable in the pursuit of national goals. For instance, there has not been an accounting of whether our legally harvested sand and gravel will suffice to meet the needs of both the Build Build Build program and the demands of the private sector. Good housekeeping requires that you budget what you have and not live beyond your means. It is the same for national patrimony. Not taking into account how much we have and how to allocate it drives our ecosystems to ruin. The climate crisis and biodiversity losses that could potentially lead to the next pandemic highlight the urgency of having this bill approved and implemented," Legarda concluded.

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

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



Renewable energy such as geothermal elevates the entire nation from the destructive consequences of fossil fuel-based power and its attendant negative impact on the planet.

Photo Release

## EDC: In pursuit of powering a regenerative, decarbonized future

(Philstar.com) - April 13, 2021 - 9:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced one of the most important lessons from climate change, in that any and all actions of human beings have corresponding consequences on the environment. More so, adverse impacts circle back to threaten and devastate human existence itself.

Today, the challenge lies in not only minimizing the bad but growing the good. From an enterprise mindset of leaving things as one had found them, the greater mission is to leave things in a better state than before—to grow, nurture and elevate everything that a business touches across all aspects of its operations, to produce more positive outcomes.

This is the spirit of regenerative development that Energy Development Corporation (EDC) has undertaken as its revitalized mission. Coupled with its relentless pursuit toward a decarbonized environment, it sees these approaches as part of an effective framework to mitigate this century's single most defining issue of climate change.

EDC's regenerative mission touches five key stakeholder groups. With employees comprising the lifeblood of daily operations that deliver power to consumers, elevating them means treating them with *malasakit* or a deep concern for their welfare. This is a core value of the Lopez Group that EDC is part of.



With geothermal energy relying on the natural steam beneath the earth's surface, the environment is a key impact area that EDC elevates primarily through its flagship BINHI greening program.

Photo Release





At the start of the pandemic and up to this day, malasakit has been the touchstone of management directives to work from home, disburse financial assistance and repurpose benefits to keep team members and their families comfortable and safe.

“Malasakit” extends as well to EDC’s communities of operations, where the health and safety of residents are top priority. More than that, elevating them means building their capacity through livelihood and educational opportunities.

The SIKAT scholarship program, for instance, has been providing not only scholarships to underserved youth but career opportunities and long-term professional development.

With the ongoing pandemic as well as perennial natural disasters and climate threats, the resilience of these communities is fortified through partnerships with local government units and assistance to various public healthcare and other needs.

With geothermal energy relying on the natural steam beneath the earth’s surface, the environment is a key impact area that EDC elevates primarily through its flagship BINHI greening program.

For more than a decade, BINHI has been increasing forest cover across the country by focusing on native tree species, which enjoy long-term survival and resiliency. The program has successfully identified 96 threatened Philippine native tree species as priority and continuously elevating them from extinction through propagation.

The ongoing success of BINHI is in no small part due to another stakeholder, which is EDC’s strategic multi-sectoral partners. The company elevates these partnerships through the exchange of knowledge and information dissemination that seeks to enrich the science behind environmental conservation.

Among EDC’s most notable partnerships are with the Global Tree Assessment program of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through its secretariat, Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), with the University of the Philippines Institute of Biology for EDC’s biodiversity and conservation monitoring program, and with the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) for the protection and propagation of the endangered national bird.

Last but not the least, all that EDC does is for the ultimate benefit and welfare of its energy consumers. Baseload geothermal or what the company refers to as “Geo 24/7,” as well as wind, solar and hydro power provide an alternative choice for renewable and eco-friendly power for all Filipinos—increasingly so as modern technologies continue to make them more cost-efficient as well.

Renewable energy elevates the entire nation from the destructive consequences of fossil fuel-based power and its attendant negative impact on the planet.

Making a choice for such alternative energy sources is the least that citizens and enterprises can do so that the difficulties of the devastating pandemic may not be in vain.



# One Planet City Challenge

## WWF-Philippines urge local sustainable urban development champions to join OPCC 2021-2022

by  **Village Connect** about 12 hours ago



**ONE PLANET  
CITY CHALLENGE**

*The One Planet City Challenge (OPCC), a friendly competition that supports cities in developing climate action plans and targets that aligns with the Paris Agreement's 1.5 °C maximum global warming goal. The OPCC recognizes leading cities and inspires other cities to join the movement. This year, the OPCC celebrates 10 years of engagement during which time we have seen the participation of nearly 600 cities in over 50 countries.*

The **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines** is inviting all Philippine cities to participate in the next run of the **One Planet City Challenge (OPCC)** which will formally be launched on April 15, 2021.

Cities and local governments play a central role in combatting climate change and are key actors in creating the climate-neutral, resilient future we need. For this, WWF created the One Planet City Challenge (OPCC), a friendly competition that supports cities in developing climate action plans and targets that align with the Paris Agreement's 1.5 °C maximum global warming goal. The OPCC recognizes leading cities and inspires other cities to join the movement. This year, the OPCC celebrates 10 years of engagement during which time we have seen the participation of nearly 600 cities in over 50 countries.

In the 2019-2020 leg of the OPCC, over 250 cities from around the globe participated, including 13 from the Philippines, with the cities of Muntinlupa, Santa Rosa, and Batangas advancing to the final round and further represented the country to OPCC-related public engagement campaign called We Love Cities (WLC). Significantly, Batangas City was selected as the OPCC 2020 National Winner and also emerged as the Global Winner for the WLC campaign, being declared as the "World's Most Lovable City".

With Philippine cities' impressive finish in the recent leg of the competition, WWF-PH hopes that more cities can participate in this call for transformational governance.

"These challenging times have proved to us that planetary health and human health are directly connected," says WWF-PH Executive Director Trin Custodio. "During this Decade of Action where the whole world must accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs, we call on Philippine cities to join the One Planet City Challenge to engage constituents in making our cities more liveable, sustainable, and resilient; leading us toward a low-carbon and climate-secure future for the country."

Interested cities may submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) from **April 12 to 30, 2021**. *A required checklist must be filled out together with a cover letter signed by the City Mayor to officially be part of this EOI for OPCC. To receive the checklist, please email [opcc@wwf.org.ph](mailto:opcc@wwf.org.ph). Information provided in this checklist will be then used for the initial screening before the announcement of qualified Philippine cities.*



Once an official list of entries is gathered, participating cities will be then asked to submit emission reports, as well as their goals and targets relating to climate action using standardized reporting platforms. These will then be subjected to a methodology that has been devised by experts and incorporates findings from the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C. Capacity-building activities are planned for Philippine participating cities as part of the OPCC in the country.

The most ambitious cities will be recognized as national winners, and, from among these, one city will be crowned the global winner of the One Planet City Challenge. For more information and updates, log on to <http://panda.org/opcc>.





## BASURA NAUNA PA SA TAO SA PINAkamALALIM NA PARTE NG KARAGATAN



April 14, 2021 @ 12:15 AM 6 hours ago

HINDI natin tatalakayin sa pitak na ito ang mga basurang nasa ibabaw ng karagatan gaya ng mga barko ng Intsik na nagkalat sa iba't ibang bahura natin.

Ang paksa natin ay tutukoy sa mga basurang napunta sa kaila-ilaliman ng ating karagatan, ang ikatlo sa pinaka-malalim na bahagi ng karagatan sa buong mundo – ang 'Emden Deep' na tinatawag, na matatagpuan sa 34,100 talampakan o 10,400 na metrong lalim sa pusod ng karagatan na kung tawagin ay 'Philippine Trench'.

Dito naikwento kamakailan ni Dr. Deo Florence L. Onda, isang microbial oceanographer na Associate Professor at Deputy Director for Research of the Marine Science Institute (MSI) ng University of the Philippines, Diliman, na gumawa ng kasaysayan bilang kauna-unahang Filipino at isa sa unang dalawang nilalang na nakapunta sa Emden Deep, at kanyang ikinagulat ang mga nasaksihan sa paglusong nila sa pinaka-malalim na parteng iyon ng karagatan.

Naganap ang kakaibang karanasan ni Dr. Onda noong March 23, kasama ang Amerikanong 'undersea explorer' na si Victor Vescovo sakay ng DSSV Pressure Drop, na natatanging sasakyang dagat sa mundo na ginawa upang kayanin ang pagsisid sakay ang tao sa pinaka-malalim na lugar sa karagatan.

Sa tinatawag na 'Emden Deep Expedition' na pinangunahan at ginastusan ng pribadong kompanyang Caldan Oceanic, namalas ni Dr. Onda ang kakaibang kapaligiran sa ilalim ng karagatan na matatagpuan pa sa ating bansa.

Sari-sari at mga kakaibang laman-dagat ang kanyang nakita habang sila ay pumapailalim sa Emden Deep.

Ngunit gumulat kay Dr. Onda ang isang bagay na una ay inakala niyang isang uri ng 'jelly fish', ngunit nang kanila itong lapitan, laking gulat ng doktor, na ito pala ay isang plastic.

Paliwanag ni Dr. Onda, kaya siya nagulat bukod sa pagiging unang taong nakarating sa pusod ng karagatan ay kanila nang napag-aralan na ang plastic ay 'di kayang magtagal sa kaila-ilaliman ng dagat, dahil ang pressure sa bahaging ito ng karagatan ay kaya nang sirain ang plastic.



Bukod doon, iba't bang mga bagay pa, na gamit ng tao ang mga tumambad sa kanila, gaya ng mga damt na luray-luray, bote ng tubig na plastic at maging isang teddy bear pa nga.

lisa lang ang ibig sabihin nito, ayon kay Dr. Onda. Ang tao ay walang pakundangan sa pagtatapon ng basura. Biruin niyo nga naman, nakarating na sa pinaka-malalim na parte ng karagatan na para sa mga dalubhasa ay di kakayanin ang pressure at agaran itong masisira. Siguro, ito ay likas-yamang katangian ng parteng iyon ng karagatan upang protektahan ang sarili nilang kapaligiran.

Ngunit sa panahon ngayon, ang mga plastic o bagay na likha ng tao ay di na kayang tunawin agad-agad, at nagiging sanhi pa ng panganib di lang sa kasalukuyan kundi sa mga darating na panahon.

Kaya nga nakikiusap si Dr. Onda, na kung maaari ay bawas-bawasan natin ang paggamit ng plastic at mga bagay na nakasisira ng ating mundo.

Alam ng doktor na ito na 'di kayang gawin ng tao ang biglang hinto sa paggamit ng plastic o mga bagay na 'di recyclable.

Kelan pa kaya tayo matututo? Aantayin pa ba nating isuka ng karagatan ang mga itinapon nating mga bagay sa karagatan?

Nangyari na ito sa Japan na kilalang gumagalang sa kapaligiran, nang tamaan sila ng Tsunami matapos ang malakas na lindol.

'Di ba pagtaas at nang umapaw ang karagatan, sangkaterbang basura rin ang tumambad sa kanila na ibinalik ng karagatan.

—

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh!



# Cooperate with contact tracers, COVID-stricken Antiporda pleads to Pinoys

Published April 13, 2021, 11:02 AM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Contact tracers should be viewed as lifesavers, not gossipers.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Usec. Benny Antiporda made this point on Facebook as he called on his followers to cooperate with contact tracers instead of shun them.



(Photo by Ted ALJIBE / AFP)

“Sa halip na mabuwisit tayo sa mga tawag na nanggaling sa DILG [Department of Interior and Local Government] contact tracers, mas minabuti nating isipin na mas marami pa silang maililigtas na buhay kapag nakipag cooperate tayo (Instead of getting irked by the calls coming from DILG contact tracers, we thought it would be better to cooperate with them in order to save more lives),” he wrote in a post Monday afternoon, April 12.

Antiporda and his wife have been on home isolation the past three weeks after testing positive for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

“Hindi ho kayo ini-interview dahil gusto lang maki usisa ng mga yan, kaya kayo tinatanong ay para makatulong sa prevention o mapigilan ang tuluyang hawaan ng COVID-19 (They are not interviewing you just because they want to know the details themselves, they’re doing it in order to help in the prevention and spread of COVID-19),” he stressed.

Antiporda urged the public to be truthful when answering contact tracers’ questions and give them all the details that they ask for.

“Ibinigay ko sa kanila ang buong detalye ng aming COVID-19 chronology of events para makatulong na hanapin pa kung sakaling may nahawaan ba kami ng sakit o wala (I gave them the full details of our COVID-19 chronology of events to help determine if we infected other people),” he said.

“Again! Hindi po maaaring gawing secret ang sakit na COVID, dahil mabilis po itong nakamamatay kung sakaling hindi maaagapan (Again! You shouldn’t keep your COVID illness a secret since it will kill you faster if it isn’t addressed immediately),” the DENR official added.

At least 12,000 new contact tracers are expected to be hired in the coming weeks by the national government in response to the recent surge in new COVID-19 infections, particularly in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/04/13/cooperate-with-contact-tracers-covid-stricken-antiporda-pleads-to-pinoys/?fbclid=IwAR0Q0TSkUHagYpNelmiN0hBASSCE2IOXfNIASvwbBEbMnhCRrzaSTfCVuDM>





10h · 🌐

Contact tracers should be viewed as lifesavers, not gossipers.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Usec. Benny Antiporda made this point on Facebook as he called on his followers to cooperate with contact tracers instead of shun them.

READ: <https://mb.com.ph/.../cooperate-with-contact-tracers.../>



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# 8,571 bagong hawa ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas naitala; kaso nasa 884,783 na

(Philstar.com) - April 13, 2021 - 4:00pm



Mahigpit na sumusunod ang mga mananakay na ito sa health protocols ng IATF sa loob ng Light Rail Transit Line 1 at 2 laban sa kinatatakutang COVID-19, Linggo, April 11, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Nakapagtala ang Department of Health (DOH) ng 8,571 bagong infection ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) ngayong Martes, kung kaya nasa 884,783 na sumatotal ang nahahawaan nito sa bansa.

Batay sa mga bagong nakalap na datos ng Kagawaran ng Kalusugan, narito ang bagong mga pasok na datos para araw na ito:

- lahat ng kaso: 884,783
- nagpapagaling pa: 165,534, o *18.7% ng total infections*
- bagong recover: 400, dahilan para maging *703,963 na lahat ng gumagaling*
- kamamatay lang: 137, na siyang nag-aakyat sa *total local death toll sa 15,286*

Anong bago ngayong araw?

- Umaasang [makakukuha ang Pilipinas ng 20 milyong doses ng Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine ng Rusya sa susunod na apat na buwan](#), pagbabahagi ng ni vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. sa panayam ng ABS-CBN News Channel kanina. Kabilang na ryan ang 500,000 unang doses na darating ng bansa ngayong buwan.
- Bukod pa ryan, sinabi pa ni Galvez na [nakatakdang pirmahan ng gobyerno ang supply agreement kasama ang Johnson & Johnson para sa 6 milyong COVID-19 vaccines ngayong linggo](#). Nire-regotiate na rin daw ng estado ang 25-40 milyong doses ng COVID-19 vaccines mula sa Pfizer.
- Nasa 194,000 doses naman ng Moderna COVID-19 vaccines ang inaasahang darating ng Pilipinas sa susunod na buwan ng Mayo. Bahagi ito ng 13 milyong bakuna na in-order ng gobyerno at 7 milyon ng pribadong sektor.



- Kinumpirma naman ng Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra na [kasama na rin ang mga prosecutor ng Department of Justice \(DOJ\) sa A4 priority vaccinees ng gobyerno](#) — ang susunod na nakapila sa jabs laban sa COVID-19. Una nang sinabi ng National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) na [posible itong maiturok sa Mayo o Hunyo](#) sa nasabing sektor.
- Umaabot na sa halos 135.64 milyon ang tinatamaan ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo, ayon sa huling ulat ng [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Sa bilang na 'yan, mahigit-kumulang 2.93 milyon na ang patay.

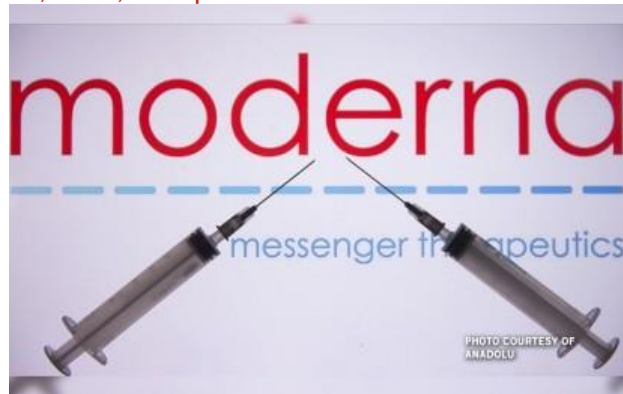
— James Relativo





# PH to get first 194K doses of Moderna vaccine in May

By Lade Jean Kabagani April 13, 2021, 6:54 pm



MANILA – National Task Force Against Covid-19 chief implementer Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. on Tuesday said some 194,000 doses of Moderna vaccine will be delivered in the Philippines in May.

Galvez, also the country's vaccine czar, said this will be the first batch of the 13 million doses of Moderna Covid-19 vaccine procured by the government through a bilateral agreement.

"And then Moderna, napirmahan na rin po natin ang supply agreement at darating po ang first doses this coming May, 194,000. (we have already signed the supply agreement and the first doses – 194,000 will arrive this coming May)," Galvez said in a virtual Palace presser.

Apart from government-procured jabs, Moderna company will be sending an additional 7 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine purchased by the private sector.

Galvez added that bulk of the Moderna's deliveries will arrive in the third and fourth quarters this year.

He likewise said the Maryland-based biotechnology company Novavax will be sending Covid-19 jabs within the third and fourth quarters this year.

"Iyong Novavax po mayroon po tayong 13 million, na sealed na po iyong ating supply agreement, mayroon na lang po tayong inaayos sa financing (We have sealed a supply agreement to secure 13 million doses from Novavax, we are just finalizing the financing)," he said.

Galvez, meanwhile, said the AstraZeneca firm will resume its deliveries in June.

"Tuluy-tuloy na po iyon hanggang maka-deliver po sila hanggang first quarter po ng 2022 (It will be continuous until they can deliver in the first quarter of 2022)," he added.

The Philippines has initially received 525,600 doses of AstraZeneca through the COVAX Facility. (PNA)



# Are you using this? Environmental group identifies type of face mask that can screw up your lungs

Published April 13, 2021, 12:35 PM  
by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Face masks are supposed to help you avoid catching the dreaded coronavirus disease (COVID-19). But what if they contain harmful chemicals that damage your lungs?



(JANSEN ROMERO / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Environmental and health watchdog EcoWaste Coalition called on local health authorities Tuesday, April 13 to ensure that the face masks being sold in the market do not contain nanographene—a novel nanomaterial that may compromise people’s lungs.

“The government must ensure that face masks and other personal protective equipment are safe from graphene and other potentially toxic nanoparticles that can be inhaled and get trapped in our lungs,” Thony Dizon, EcoWaste Coalition Chemical Safety Campaigner said in a statement.

The group’s push to rid the market of graphene-containing face masks came on the heels of a recent advisory by Health Canada telling the public to ditch such masks “because there is a potential that they could inhale graphene particles, which may pose health risks.”

Health Canada, which is equivalent to the Department of Health (DOH) of the Philippines, had recalled face masks labeled to contain graphene or biomass graphene after receiving complaints of breathing difficulties from wearers of such masks. A subsequent assessment of available studies indicated that graphene-laced face masks had the potential to cause early lung toxicity in animals.

Through a letter sent to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the EcoWaste Coalition urged the government to issue a public health advisory, in line with the precautionary principle, that will warn the Filipino people against the potential health risks from wearing face masks containing nanographene. They also want the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of such products stopped.

Jim Thomas, research director of Quebec, Canada-based ETC Group, said: “Face masks are supposed to keep citizens safe not put them at further risk. Rushing untested nanomaterials into millions of face masks is an example of unscrupulous pandemic profiteering.”



“Governments need to urgently reassure parents, workers, and other citizens that commitment to the precautionary principle and protecting health will not be cast aside to let risky tech companies make a killing in a pandemic,” he added.

Preliminary market monitoring by the EcoWaste Coalition revealed that graphene-laced face masks were being sold by third-party dealers in popular online shopping platforms.

The group also found wholesalers and retailers in Bambang and Binondo, Manila selling nano masks containing unidentified nano fibers.

In addition to issuing a public health advisory, the Quezon City-based group also requested the FDA to determine which of the 93 FDA-notified medical face masks, as well as the numerous unnotified face masks that have flooded the market, contain nanographene.

“Manufacturers must also conduct safety tests on nanomaterials used in the production of face masks and make the results publicly available before placing such products on the market,” the group insisted.





## HEAVEN PERALEJO, MAGANDANG EHEMPLO LABAN SA COVID-19



April 14, 2021 @ 12:30 AM 6 hours ago

MAITUTURING na isang napakagandang ehemplo sa giyera laban sa coronavirus disease o COVID-19 itong si Heaven Peralejo.

Sa halip na itago, inilantad ni Peralejo ang kanyang sarili na biktima ng COVID-19 at nasa ospital na upang magpagamot.

Aniya, wala siyang lagnat at ubo pero isa sa mga iniinda niya ang hirap sa paghinga sa pagbaba ng oxygen level niya kahit sa unang araw pa lang ng kanyang pagkakasakit.

Nakatulong umano sa kanya ang pagkakaroon ng ayuda sa paghinga mula sa oxygen tank sa payo ng doktor na kinonsulta niya.

Parang bumigat umano ang kanyang puso o sabihin nating kanyang dibdib, nakaramdam siya ng panghihina at may pananakit ang kanyang ulo at katawan.

Nang pasama nang pasama na ang kanyang kalagayan, dito na siya nagpaospital mula sa home at hotel quarantine.

Ibinahagi niya ang kanyang karanasan para makahalaw ang iba ng leksyon at magamit para sa kanilang mga sarili.

### HINDI LANG PANGKABATAAN

Itong si Heaven Peralejo, bagama't 18 anyos pa lang, ay nakalikha ng napakalaking pagkakataon upang seryosohin ng milyon-milyong katulad niyang kabataan ang pandemya na kumitil na ng buhay ng mahigit 15,000 katao sa Pilipinas at halos 3 milyon na sa buong mundo.

Sa mahigit isang taon nang pananalasa ng pandemya sa daigdig, umabot na sa halos 138 milyon ang nagkakasakit, pwersa pa ang mga hindi naisama sa mga rekord,

Meron namang gumaling na mahigit sa 110 milyon pero mabigat isiping halos 24 milyon ang aktibong kaso, kabilang na ang 23,765,557 mild ang kondisyon at 103,903 serious o critical na karaniwang pinagmumulan ng mga nasasawi.

Sa Pinas, may 158,000 na aktibong kaso at nasa 800 ang serious o critical.

Kabilang si Heaven sa mga aktibong kaso at dalangin nating hindi siya mapapasama sa mga serious o critical ang kalagayan na pinto ng matinding kapahamakan sa pandemya.



Bagama't malamang na pangkabataan ang tatamaan ng kanyang mga mensahe laban sa COVID-19, may mga magulang din siya na bahagi ng mga nakatatanda at ibang mga magulang na makahalaw ng leksyon.

Promise ni Heaven nang dalhin siya sa ospital, maglalabas pa rin siya ng kanyang mga karanasan sa pagkakasakit para masubaybayan ng iba.

Para sa ating Uzi, hindi na lang pansariling interes o kapakanan ang nasa isipan ng dalaga kundi ibang mamamayan.

Kailangang seryosohin nating lahat ang pandemya, hindi lang para sa sarili nating buhay at kalusugan kundi para rin sa buhay at kalusugan ng iba.

### MGA BASHING ITIGIL

Sana itigil na ang bashing sa social media, lalo na sa mga nagkakasakit at partikular sa mga tinatamaan ng COVID-19.

Ayon kay Heaven, kahit nagkasakit na siya, may mamba-bash pa rin sa kanya.

Dahil ba sa nakapasok siya sa ospital sa kabila ng pag-apaw na ang mga ospital ng mga biktima ng pandemya?

Ginagamit lang ba nito ang kanyang pagkakasakit upang magkaroon siya ng mas maraming follower bilang artista, vlogger, fashion endorser at iba pa?

Sa halip na i-bash siya, sana gawin ng mga basher ang pagkakataon na tumingin sa kanilang mga sarili kung ano-ano ang kanilang magagawa upang tulungang maligtas sa krisis, pagkakasakit at kamatayan ang kanilang mga sarili, pamilya, kabarangay, katrabaho at iba pa.

Sa halip na mag-bash, tingnan nila ang sitwasyon ng dalaga na maaaring panahon ng pagmuni-muni, pagdarasal at iba pa para sa ikabubuti ng iba.

Isa ring mahalagang pahayag ng 21 anyos na dalaga ang mariing pagsasabi na dapat magkaroon ang lahat ng biktima ng "will to live" o lakas ng loob para mabuhay.

'Yun bang === hindi ka dapat sumuko kundi lumaban sa pandemya.

### BASHING SA PULITIKA ITIGIL DIN

May maiinit na isyu ukol sa COVID-19 at dito nauulol sa pagba-bash ang iba at iniuugnay ito sa pulitika, lalo na ang mabilis na pagdating ng halalang 2022 na pormal na magsisimula sa Oktubre 2021 sa pamamagitan ng filing ng candidacy ng mga politiko mula sa konsehal ng bayan hanggang sa Pangulo ng Pilipinas.

Halimbawa ang kawalan umano hanggang ngayon ng maraming bakuna para sa mga Pinoy.

Ayaw intindihin ng mga basher ang reklamo mismo ng World Health Organization na 87 porsyento ng isang bilyong nagagawang bakuna ang nasa kamay at ayaw ipamahagi ng iilang mayayamang bansa kundi para sa kani-kanilang mga mamamayan lamang.

Sa US lamang, may 237,796,305 doses na ang naipamahagi at naiturok na ang 189,692,045 sa mga nasasakupan nito.



Binibili lahat ng US ang mga bakunang Pfizer, Moderna at iba pang gawang Kano na bakuna.

Kung matatapos na nila ang pagbabakuna, uunahin ng mga Kano na bigyan ang mga kapit-bansa nilang Mexico at Canada bago ang iba.

Sa United Kingdom naman, may 33 milyon nang nabakunahan at binibili lahat ng pamahalaan dito ang gawang AstraZeneca rito.

Ang iba, ibinebenta sa European Union na gustong mabakunahan naman ang 450 milyon nilang mamamayan at kakambal nito ang pagbabawal na mag-export ang mga vaccine maker na nakabase naman sa kanila, gaya ng AstraZeneca/Oxford University.

Sa India, nabakunahan na ang mahigit 106 milyong mamamayan nila at ang bansang ito ang pinakamalaking tagagawa ng bakuna laban sa COVID-19 sa buong mundo.

Pinakamarami ang AstraZeneca na gawa nito at pinigil ang export sa ibang bansa dahil sa paglala ng pandemya sa kanila.

Dahil sa mga patakaran ng mga mayayamang bansang nabanggit, akalain ba nating mismong ang WHO ay nakaagaw lang ng 38 milyong dosage at ito ngayon ang naipamahagi na sa 100 bansa mula sa kakapurit na dosage gaya ng mahigit 500,000 lang sa Pilipinas.

Sa Pilipinas, ayaw tanggapin ng mga kritiko ang lahat ng katotohanang ito at ang sinasabi sa kanilang pag-bash na kainutilan at kapalpakan ng pamahalaang Duterte ang dahilan.

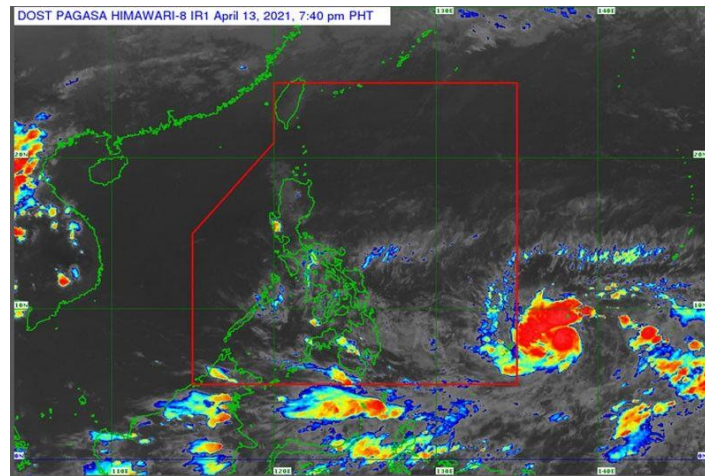
Hindi nila maintindihan o ayaw nilang intindihin na may nagaganap na vaccine nationalism o "kami muna bago ang iba" na patakaran ng mayayamang bansa at kinatatayuan ng mga gumagawa ng bakuna.

Ayaw rin nilang intindihin na ginagawa lahat ng pamahalaang Duterte ang paghahanap at pagbili ng bakuna kahit pa sa China at Russia dahil napakahirap nga ang pagbili mula sa US, UK, India at EU, para lang matiyak na may mababakunahang maraming Pinoy.

Para sa mga politiko, lalo na ang mga nag-aasam ng mga pambansang posisyon na gustong lumaban sa maaaring mga kandidato mismo ni Pangulong Digong, ang bashing sa bakuna ang kanilang pinupuhunan para umasa ng panalo sa halalang 2022.

Sana nga, maging sa hanay ng mga politiko, itigil na ang bashing at magkaisa sila na humanap ng mga bakuna, alang-alang sa buong sambayanang Filipino.





The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the tropical depression was located 1,290 kilometers east of Mindanao as of 3 p.m. yesterday, packing winds of 55 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 70 kph.

PAGASA

## Tropical cyclone off Mindanao to intensify into storm – PAGASA

[Helen Flores](#) (The Philippine Star) - April 14, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — A tropical depression spotted off Mindanao is expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility this weekend.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the tropical depression was located 1,290 kilometers east of Mindanao as of 3 p.m. yesterday, packing winds of 55 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 70 kph.

PAGASA said the weather disturbance is forecast to move west at 20 kph and likely to intensify into a storm within the next 24 hours.

The tropical depression is predicted to move north or northwest and slow down to almost stationary today.

It will be locally named Bising once it enters the country.

“Over the next five days, this tropical cyclone is unlikely to affect any portion of the country,” PAGASA said.



# 158 volcanic quakes reported at Taal Volcano – PHIVOLCS

By CONSUELO MARQUEZ, GMA News

Published April 13, 2021 4:36pm

One hundred fifty-eight volcanic earthquakes were documented at Taal Volcano in Batangas in the last 24 hours, PHIVOLCS said in a Tuesday bulletin.

Of the 158 volcanic earthquakes, 127 were "volcanic tremor" episodes with durations of one to 14 minutes, and 31 were low-frequency tremors.

Sulfur dioxide emissions were also recorded at the main crater of the volcano which reached 1,886 tonnes a day.

"Activity at the Main Crater consisted of very weak emission of steam-laden plumes from fumarolic vents that rose five (5) meters," PHIVOLCS also said.

Taal Volcano is currently under an Alert Level 2 or Increased Unrest, which means sudden steam-driven or phreatic explosions, volcanic earthquakes, minor ashfalls, and lethal expulsions of volcanic gas may occur and threaten nearby areas.

PHIVOLCS warned that it was prohibited to enter the "Taal Volcano Island, Taal's Permanent Danger Zone or PDZ, especially the vicinity of the Main Crater and the Daang Kastila fissure, and occupancy and boating on Taal Lake." — DVM, GMA News

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/783555/158-volcanic-quakes-reported-at-taal-volcano-phivolcs/story/?utm\\_source=GMAnews&utm\\_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3Lukah834RgszNdJBsO5coA2XmF5Hov7xuXCTcY69a8E7yKEvmEZH9IvA](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/783555/158-volcanic-quakes-reported-at-taal-volcano-phivolcs/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3Lukah834RgszNdJBsO5coA2XmF5Hov7xuXCTcY69a8E7yKEvmEZH9IvA)



# PH calls for South China Sea code of conduct

Published April 13, 2021, 5:42 PM

by [Genalyn Kabling](#)

The Philippines has made another pitch for the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea to avoid escalating tension among claimants.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said President Duterte hopes the code of conduct will be finalized as he pressed for a peaceful and rules-based resolution to the territorial conflict.



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque  
(OPS / FILE PHOTO)

Tension in the region has been reignited after the Philippines protested the unlawful stay of Chinese vessels in the West Philippine Sea. The government earlier raised alarm over the presence of over 200 Chinese maritime militia vessels at the Julian Felipe Reef last month. The number of Chinese ships at the local reef has reportedly dwindled but the vessels simply spread to other parts of the local waters.

“Umaasa po tayo na magkakaroon tayo ng Code of Conduct nang maiwasan ang hidwaan diyan sa lugar na iyan (We are hoping there will be a code of conduct to avoid the conflict in the area),” Roque said during an online briefing Tuesday, April 13.

“Inaasahan natin maresolba po ito nang mapayapa sa panig ng mga magkakaibigan (We are also hopeful this could be resolved peacefully between friends),” he added.

A substantive and effective code of conduct in the South China Sea is still being negotiated by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China since the first non-binding declaration was forged in 2002. The group earlier agreed to finalize the code by 2022 but negotiations have reportedly been derailed by the movement restrictions arising from the pandemic.

Apart from the Philippines, ASEAN member-nations Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam have overlapping claims with China in the South China Sea.

Roque said the President’s position on the West Philippine Sea has not changed, citing an arbitral ruling that nullified China’s claims over the area.

“Kinakailangan maresolba po ang hindi pagkakasunduan diyan sa West Philippine Sea sa pamamagitan po ng UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (The conflict in the West Philippine Sea must be resolved through the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea),” Roque said.

“Nandiyan po ang desisyon ng ating UN Tribunal for the Law of the Sea na nagsasabi na walang basehan ang tinatawag na historic claims to waters at kinikilala po na ang malaking bahagi ng West Philippine Sea ay kabahagi ng ating exclusive economic zone (The UN Tribunal for the Law for the Law of the Sea has ruled that its historic claims to water have no basis and it recognized the large part for the West Philippine Sea is part of our exclusive economic zone),” he added.





Manila has asked Beijing to pull out its vessels from local waters, insisting the country's sovereign rights over the territory. China however ignored the country's plea, insisting the fishing vessels were taking shelter from rough seas and that no militia were onboard.



# Task force seeks increased maritime, sovereignty patrols in West PH Sea

Published April 13, 2021, 3:56 PM

by [Martin Sadongdong](#)

Intensified inter-agency maritime operations should be a norm in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) to assert the country's sovereignty and resist other nations' illegal claims, the National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) said.



West Philippine Sea  
(PNA file photo)

“Sea assets are, and shall be, continuously deployed to different areas in the WPS to conduct maritime and sovereignty patrols, and other law enforcement activities, including the Julian Felipe Reef, Pag-asa Cay, Recto Bank, and other parts of the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG),” Vice Admiral Ramil Roberto Enriquez, chairman of ATF-West and commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Western Command (AFP-WesCom), said in a statement.

According to Enriquez, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) deployed BRP Cabra (MRRV 4409) while the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) sent two more ships in the area to conduct patrol operations. Meanwhile, he said the WesCom deployed four Philippine Navy vessels namely BRP Dagupan City (LS 551), BRP Apolinario Mabini (PS 36), BRP Magat Salamat (PS 20), and BRP Miguel Malvar (PS 19) to provide support and assistance to the PCG and BFAR.

“These inter-agency efforts are very essential in the way we address the national concerns in the WPS,” Enriquez said.

“The ATF-West shall continue to do so to ensure that our government forces and agencies will be able to collaborate, complement and support each other in performing respective mandates in support to national policy and strategy,” he added.

Further, Enriquez urged the public, especially Palawenos, “to know and understand their role, and to take their part in the national's stake in the WPS, so that through the whole-of-nation efforts, the national interests and security will be safeguarded for the present and future generation of the Filipino people.”

The government has repeatedly protested the continued stay of around 220 Chinese vessels at the Julian Felipe (Whitsun) Reef in WPS which was monitored by security forces as early as the first week of March. The vessels later dispersed to other parts of the WPS and Kalayaan Island Group.

On Tuesday, the Department of Foreign Affairs summoned Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian to express “displeasure” over the “illegal lingering presence” of the Chinese vessels at the reef.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/04/13/task-force-seeks-increased-maritime-sovereignty-patrols-in-west-ph-sea/>



This 2020 photo shows bats as part of animals being sold at an Indonesian market

## WHO urges ban on sale of live wild mammals in food markets

(Agence France-Presse) - April 13, 2021 - 5:39pm

GENEVA, Switzerland —The World Health Organization on Tuesday called for a halt to the sale of live wild mammals in food markets to prevent the emergence of new diseases.

The WHO said that while traditional markets play a central role in providing food and livelihoods for large populations, banning the sale of live wild mammals could protect the health of market workers and shoppers alike.

It said some of the earliest known cases of COVID-19 had a link to a wholesale traditional food market in Wuhan in China, with many of the initial patients stall owners, market employees or regular visitors to the market.

The interim guidance was drawn up alongside the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

"The guidance calls on countries to suspend the sale of captured live wild mammals in food markets as an emergency measure," the WHO said.

"Animals, particularly wild animals, are the source of more than 70 percent of all emerging infectious diseases in humans, many of which are caused by novel viruses. Wild mammals, in particular, pose a risk for the emergence of new diseases," it said.

"Traditional markets, where live animals are held, slaughtered and dressed, pose a particular risk for pathogen transmission to workers and customers alike," said the guidance.

It also called on governments to close sections of food markets selling live wild mammals unless adequate risk assessments were in place.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/world/2021/04/13/2090874/who-urges-ban-sale-live-wild-mammals-food-markets>





# Microplastics in our air 'spiral the globe' in a cycle of pollution, study finds

By [Jessie Yeung](#), CNN

Updated 0410 GMT (1210 HKT) April 13, 2021

(CNN) Tiny bits of plastic from your packaging and soda bottles could be traveling in the atmosphere across entire continents, carried by winds, a new study found.

Most of our plastic waste gets buried in landfills, incinerated or recycled -- but up to 18% ends up in the environment. Since plastic isn't easily decomposable it instead fragments into smaller and smaller pieces until the microplastics are small enough to be swept into the air.

"Akin to global biogeochemical cycles, plastics now spiral around the globe," said the study, led by researchers from Utah State University and Cornell University, and published in the journal [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#).

That means much of the plastic that gets dumped in the sea and across the land is broken down and spat back out, posing potential risks for our ecosystems. And though there has been some progress with the creation of biodegradable polymers, the researchers warned microplastics "will continue to cycle through the earth's systems."



A close-up image of microplastics, which researchers found cycle the globe through the atmosphere.

"We found a lot of legacy plastic pollution everywhere we looked; it travels in the atmosphere and it deposits all over the world," said lead author Janice Brahney in [a news release](#) from Cornell. "This plastic is not new from this year. It's from what we've already dumped into the environment over several decades."

The research team collected atmospheric microplastic data from the western United States from 2017 to 2019, and found an estimated 22,000 tons of microplastics are being deposited across the US each year.

In the US, the main way plastics get tossed into the air is through road traffic. Car tires, brakes and even road surfaces contain plastic, which can be worn down into microplastics that enter the atmosphere. The turbulence of cars on the road -- the motion of tires, the braking process, the exhaust they emit -- all help churn up plastic on the ground and send it skyward, according to the study.

This happens in the ocean, too, where large clusters of waste form entire plastic islands. They are broken down into plastic particles that sit on the top layer of the water, where they are tossed into the air by waves and wind.

There are several other ways microplastics enter the atmosphere, in large cities through the wind, and in farms through soil dust during agricultural processes.

Once they enter the atmosphere, plastics can stay airborne for up to six and a half days, according to the study. Within this time, "under the right conditions, plastics can be transported across the major oceans and between continents, either in one trip or by resuspension over the oceans," the study said.



The US, Europe, Middle East, India and Eastern Asia are hotspots for land-based plastic deposition, said the study. Meanwhile, ocean sources of airborne plastic are more prominent along the coasts, including the US' West Coast, the Mediterranean, and southern Australia. Dust and agriculture sources for microplastics are more prevalent in northern Africa and Eurasia, while microplastics from road traffic are major contributors in "heavily populated regions" worldwide.

Microplastics are everywhere -- they influence soil and plant production, are consumed by flora and fauna, and "act as vectors for contaminants," said the study. Though previous studies have not found that microplastics pose a threat to human health, this study's researchers warned they "may have negative and as yet unknown consequences for ecosystems and human health."

"The inhalation of particles can be irritating to lung tissue and lead to serious diseases, but whether plastics are more or less toxic than other aerosols is not yet well understood," said the study. It added that further research is also needed to understand the impact of different factors including population density and ocean circulation.

The researchers also called for better plastic waste management.

"Our relative ignorance of the consequences despite rapidly rising plastic concentrations in our environment highlights the importance of improving plastic waste management or, indeed, capturing ocean plastics and removing them from the system," the study said.



# Japan decides to dump Fukushima wastewater into sea amid concerns

April 13, 2021, 5:57 pm



Photo taken on Feb. 20, 2012 shows destroyed No.3 reactor building of Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO)'s tsunami-crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Fukushima prefecture, Japan. (Xinhua/Pool)

TOKYO – Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said on Tuesday that his government has decided to discharge contaminated radioactive wastewater in Fukushima Prefecture into the sea amid domestic and international opposition.

Suga made the announcement after convening a meeting of relevant ministers to formalize plans to release the radioactive water accumulated at the plant into the Pacific Ocean.

Struck by a magnitude-9.0 earthquake and ensuing tsunami that hit Japan's northeast on March 11, 2011, the No. 1-3 reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant suffered core meltdowns.

The plant has been generating massive amount of radiation-tainted water since the accident happened as it needs water to cool the reactors. The plant's operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. (TEPCO) said it will take around two years for the release to start.

The water has been treated using an advanced liquid processing system, or ALPS, to remove most contaminants. However, things like tritium, a radioactive byproduct of nuclear reactors, are hard to filter out.

According to some marine experts, traces of ruthenium, cobalt, strontium, and plutonium isotopes in the wastewater also raise concerns.

The plant has been struggling to store the contaminated water in tanks at its facility where more than 1.25 million tons of contaminated water are currently stored in huge tanks, and the space is expected to reach capacity next year.

TEPCO claimed that the whole decommissioning process will be hampered if it needs to keep building storage tanks within the plant's premises.

Japan had considered evaporating or storing underground the tritium-laced water from the plant as an alternative. However, from the perspective of cost and technical feasibility, the Japanese government decided to dilute the contaminated water and discharge it into the sea.

The plan has been facing strong opposition from the Japanese fish industry and the public, with fishery industry representatives saying it would undo years of work to restore their reputation.

"We are dead against a release of contaminated water to the ocean as it could have a catastrophic impact on the future of Japan's fishing industry," Hiroshi Kishi, head of the national federation of fisheries cooperatives known as JF Zengyoren, told a meeting with government officials last October.



International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspection team members watch No.3 reactor of the crippled Tokyo Electric Power Co.(TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Fukushima Prefecture, in this handout photo taken and released by TEPCO on May 27, 2011. (Xinhua)

According to Kishi, the release of radioactive water could trigger other countries to tighten restrictions on imports of Japanese fishery products, reversing a recent trend toward loosening.

Currently, a number of countries and regions continue to impose restrictions on Japanese agricultural and fishery products as a result of the Fukushima crisis amid continued concerns about the safety of the produce.

During a meeting with Suga last week, Kishi reiterated his organization's ardent opposition to the idea of dumping the radioactive water into the sea.

"It is inevitable that there would be reputational damage regardless of how the water will be disposed of, whether into the sea or into the air," he said. "I want the government to clarify how it intends to respond to such reputational damage."

Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshi Kajiyama said last Friday that while working on the concerns of the fisheries industry, the government hopes to seek cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other global organizations, while maintaining transparency over the matter.

The Japanese government had initially hoped to make a decision on the release of the water last October. However, it delayed the decision due to fierce opposition from local fishermen.

According to a survey conducted by public broadcaster NHK late last year, 51 percent of respondents said they are "against" or "quite against" the idea of discharge the wastewater into the sea, while only 18 percent said they are in favor of the plan.

Another poll conducted by Asahi Shimbun newspaper in January showed that 55 percent of respondents are against the government's plan to discharge contaminated radioactive wastewater in Fukushima into the sea, while 32 percent said they support it.

Yukio Edano, the leader of Japan's main opposition party the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDPJ) strongly condemned the plan on Saturday, saying the government's decision is unacceptable and a complete disregard for the voices of the people of Fukushima.



The sign of Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is seen in the district of Okuma, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan, March 7, 2015. (Xinhua/Liu Tian)





Some environmental groups including Friends of the Earth Japan and the Citizens' Commission on Nuclear Energy said on Monday that they have collected more than 64,000 signatures from 88 countries and regions in a petition to the government against the decision to dump Fukushima wastewater into the sea.

The environmental groups called the government's decision a "crude way of deciding" without adequate discussion and called for it to be withdrawn.

The plan also raised concerns from neighboring countries about possible negative impact on people's health and fishery businesses resulting from the discharge.

China on Tuesday once again expressed serious concerns about Japan's decision to discharge contaminated water from Fukushima nuclear station by releasing it into the Pacific Ocean.

On Monday, China expressed its grave concerns through diplomatic channels, with Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian saying that China urged the Japanese side to take a responsible attitude and treat the issue of nuclear waste disposal with caution.

Zhao stressed that proper disposal of nuclear waste is related to international public interests and the vital interests of neighboring countries. It should be handled carefully and properly to avoid further damaging the marine environment, food safety and human health.

Meanwhile, South Korea on Monday also voiced "grave concerns", with foreign ministry spokesman Choi Young-sam saying "It will be difficult to accept if the Japanese side decides to release the contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant without sufficient consultations."

"Our government expresses grave concerns as the decision can have direct and indirect impact on the safety of our people and the surrounding environment," he added. (Xinhua)



## Japan to release treated Fukushima water into the sea: PM

posted April 13, 2021 at 11:00 am

by [AFP](#)

Japan's government has approved a plan to release over one million tonnes of treated water from the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant into the ocean, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said Tuesday.



*This picture taken on March 10, 2021 of the coast of Futaba town, in Fukushima prefecture, shows the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (TEPCO) Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant (top). AFP*

The release is unlikely to begin for at least two years but has already sparked opposition from local fishing communities and concern in Beijing and Seoul.

Japan's government argues that the release will be safe because the water has been processed to remove almost all radioactive elements and will be diluted.

It has support from the International Atomic Energy Agency, which says the release is similar to processes for disposing of waste water from nuclear plants elsewhere in the world.

"The Japanese government has compiled basic policies to release the processed water into the ocean, after ensuring the safety levels of the water... and while the government takes measures to prevent reputational damage," Suga told reporters.

Around 1.25 million tonnes of water has accumulated at the site of the nuclear plant, which was crippled after going into meltdown following a tsunami in 2011.

It includes water used to cool the plant, as well as rain and groundwater that seeps in daily.

The water is pumped out and filtered, but the decision is certain to spark controversy, angering local fishing communities that have spent years trying to restore confidence in seafood from the region.

"They told us that they wouldn't release the water into the sea without the support of fishermen," Kanji Tachiya, who heads a local fisheries cooperative in Fukushima, told NHK ahead of the announcement.

"We can't back this move to break that promise and release the water into the sea unilaterally."

The decision also prompted regional opposition even before it was official, with South Korea's foreign minister on Monday expressing "serious regret over this decision, which could have a direct or indirect impact on the safety of our people and the surrounding environment in the future".

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian urged Japan to "act in a responsible manner" over the discharge of the water.

"To safeguard international public interests and Chinese people's health and safety, China has expressed grave concern to the Japanese side through the diplomatic channel," Zhao said Monday.



# Disposing Fukushima water into sea 'irresponsible' – Chinese FM

## Refrain from wantonly discharging the wastewater

**BELJING (Xinhua)** – China on Tuesday expressed grave concern about Japan's decision to discharge nuclear wastewater from Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea.

The spokesperson of China's foreign ministry said, "This is highly irresponsible and will severely affect human health and the immediate interests of people in neighboring countries."

The spokesperson said China strongly urges the Japanese side to face up to its responsibility, follow the science, fulfill its international obligations and duly respond to the serious concerns of the international community, neighboring countries and its own people.

The spokesperson called on the Japanese side to reevaluate the issue and refrain from wantonly discharging the wastewater before reaching consensus with all stakeholders and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through full consultations.

A review report by the IAEA expert team points out that if the wastewater containing tritium from the Fukushima nuclear plant is discharged into the sea, it will affect the marine environment and health of people from neighboring countries and that the

treated wastewater needs to be further purified to remove other radionuclides.

### Tons of contaminated water

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said on Tuesday that his government has decided to discharge contaminated radioactive wastewater in Fukushima Prefecture into the sea amid domestic and international opposition.

Suga made the announcement after convening a meeting of relevant ministers to formalize plans to release the radioactive water accumulated at the plant into the Pacific Ocean.

Struck by a magnitude-9.0 earthquake and ensuing tsunami that hit Japan's northeast on 11 March 2011, the No. 1-3 reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant suffered core meltdowns.

The plant has been generating massive amount of radiation-tainted water since the accident happened as it needs water to cool the reactors. The plant's operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. (TEPCO) said it will take around two years for the release to start.

The water has been treated using an

advanced liquid processing system or ALPS to remove most contaminants. However, things like tritium, a radioactive byproduct of nuclear reactors, are hard to filter out.

According to some marine experts, traces of ruthenium, cobalt, strontium, and plutonium isotopes in the wastewater also raise concerns.

The plant has been struggling to store the contaminated water in tanks at its facility where more than 1.25 million tons of contaminated water are currently stored in huge tanks, and the space is expected to reach capacity next year.

TEPCO claimed that the whole decommissioning process will be hampered if it needs to keep building storage tanks within the plant's premises.

Japan had considered evaporating or storing underground the tritium-laced water from the plant as an alternative. However, from the perspective of cost and technical feasibility, the Japanese government decided to dilute the contaminated water and discharge it into the sea.

The plan has been facing strong opposition from the Japanese fish industry and the public, with fishery industry representatives saying it would undo years of work to restore their reputation.



# Scientists discover new frog species

Published 5 hours ago on April 14, 2021 02:30 AM

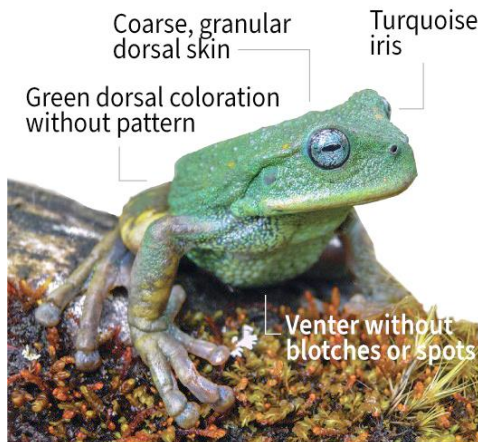
By [Agence France-Presse](#)

## New frog species unearthed in Peru

### Discovery made in Peruvian Amazon

Marsupial frog is part of the *Gastrotheca* genus, a type of Anura order amphibian found in Central and South America

#### ➤ *Gastrotheca gemma*



Source: Sernanp AFP/Sernanp photo



SERNANP/Agence france-presse THE frog's turquoise eyes are very striking, contrasting against its green skin. AMAZON (AFP) — A new species of marsupial frog has been discovered in Peru's Amazon jungle, the state service for natural protected areas said on Monday. The new species belongs to the *Gastrotheca* genus of tailless frogs found in South and Central America.

"The Cordillera de Colan National Sanctuary made an important discovery for science: a new species of marsupial frog registered for the first time in this protected area in the Amazon region," said the SERNANP service.

The discovery was made a few weeks ago during a study in the humid tundra and mountainous woodland area of the Cordilleras de Colan, an Amazon region in the north of Peru close to the Ecuador border that sits at 3,100 meters altitude.

"This new species is distinguished by having a thick granular skin on the back, a green dorsal coloration without a pattern, turquoise iris and a belly without spots, specks or dots," said SERNANP.

The Cordillera de Colan National Sanctuary spans more than 39,000 hectares and includes six areas of threatened wildlife.

Peruvian authorities say the area is of great biological importance as several unique species live there.

It has thus been classified as a priority site for conservation.



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