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**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**





## Senate bills na magpapalakas sa wildlife conservation at protection law, suportado ni Cimatu



March 13, 2021 @ 5:01 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Para mapalakas ang kasalukuyang environmental laws sa anti-illegal wildlife trade, suportado ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang inihaing dalawang batas sa senado na magpapalakas sa naturang batas.

“We at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) give our full support to the initiatives of the legislators who are seeking to reinforce and recalibrate the existing Wildlife Act, particularly against wildlife traffickers who wreak havoc to our biodiversity that causes the imbalance in our ecosystems, impacting not only our livelihood but our economy in general,” saad ni Cimatu.

Ginawa ni Cimatu ang pahayag matapos ang anunsiyo nina Senadora Cynthia Villar at Senador Juan Miguel Zubiri sa paghahain ng Senate Bill (SB) 2078 at SB 2079.

“The Senate bills came at the most opportune time amid the COVID-19 pandemic, when many notorious and organized traffickers are taking advantage of the situation by resorting to online markets, and changing traffic routes which prove to be more challenging to our law enforcers.”

“With this, we are giving the culprits a stern warning that we are vigilant on their criminal schemes, and that we are very keen in our enforcement operations. We in the Department cannot tolerate any of their criminal acts,” saad pa ni Cimatu.

Kaugnay nito sinabi naman ni Villar na ang SB 2078 ay napapanahon para sa “relevant amendments” sa RA 9147.

Isa sa mga “proposed amendments” na nakasaad sa SB 2078 ay ang pagkilala sa Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government na pangasiwaan ang kanilang wildlife species sa kanilang teritoryo.

Iminumungkahi din dito na: “wildlife trafficking” and “wildlife laundering” as crimes, which are not included in and not made punishable under the present law. This also includes “organized syndicated crime” as a means of committing wildlife offenses.

Hinihiling din sa naturang batas ang pagdagdag ng multa at taon ng pagkakakulong upang mapigilan ang paggawa ng wildlife crimes.



Sinabi naman ni DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau OIC at Assistant Director Amelita Ortiz na natutuwa ang ahensiya sa aksiyon na ito ng dalawang senador.

“The support we get from our distinguished lawmakers in filing the bills will pave the way to our aspiration to make wildlife trafficking a serious crime with a penalty up to a maximum of 20 years imprisonment,” sabi ni Ortiz. **(Santi Celario)**



## DENR backs wildlife conservation bill

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has welcomed the filing of two Senate bills that would bolster the current environmental laws on anti-illegal wildlife trade.

“We at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) give our full support to the initiatives of the legislators who are seeking to reinforce and recalibrate the

existing Wildlife Act, particularly against wildlife traffickers who wreak havoc to our biodiversity that causes the imbalance in our ecosystems, impacting not only our livelihood but our economy in general,” Cimatu said.

The DENR chief made the statement following the announcement of Senators Cynthia Villar and Juan Miguel

Zubiri in filing Senate Bill (SB) 2078 and SB 2079.

He pointed out that “the Senate bills came at the most opportune time amid the Covid-19 pandemic, when many notorious and organized traffickers are taking advantage of the situation by resorting to online markets, and changing traffic routes which prove to be more challenging to our law enforcers.”

“With this, we are giving the culprits a stern warning that we are vigilant on their criminal schemes, and that we are very keen in our enforcement operations. We in the Department cannot tolerate any of their criminal acts,” Cimatu said.

SB 2078, filed by Villar, aims to strengthen the wildlife conservation and protection mechanism in the Philippines, amending Republic Act (RA) 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

Meanwhile, SB 2079 filed by Zubiri is a supporting bill to RA 9147, providing for a revised Act, appropriating funds therefor and for other purposes.

SB 2078 will provide timely or



PHOTOGRAPH BY AL PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephil\_al  
udy, but this boy is forced by circumstances to do so following the fire that

according to Villar.

One of the proposed amendments cited in SB 2078 is the recognition of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government over wildlife species in their territory.

It also proposes “wildlife trafficking” and “wildlife laundering” as crimes, which are not included in and not made punishable under the present law. This also includes “organized syndicated crime” as a means of committing wildlife offenses.

**He pointed out that “the Senate bills came at the most opportune time amid the Covid-19 pandemic.”**

The bill seeks to increase fines and jail time “to serve as a deterrent for the commission of wildlife crimes.”

SB 2079, on the other hand, is the appropriation of the funds for implementing SB 2078 once it becomes a law.

It also acknowledged that after almost 20 years of implementation, RA 9147 is “ripe for further strengthening and

Both Bills hope to “establish a more stringent legal framework, improve enforcement mechanisms, and strengthen inter-agency cooperation against illegal wildlife trade, among others.”

Villar is the current chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, while Zubiri is the principal author of RA 9147.

DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau OIC and Assistant Director Amelita Ortiz said the agency is delighted with the move by the two senators.

“The support we get from our distinguished lawmakers in filing the bills will pave the way to our aspiration to make wildlife trafficking a serious crime with a penalty up to a maximum of 20 years imprisonment,” Ortiz said.

“Once these bills are signed into law, we will be assured that wildlife resources will be protected through the enforcement of a stronger law which aims to deter individuals from making the Philippines, a source, destination and transit point of these trafficked wildlife, including the consumer,” she said. MBA @tribunephil\_mba





## Ganito Kasi 'Yan

ni **ANDY VERDE** DZRH anchorman

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DAPAT na maintindihan ng bawat isang Pinoy na para maprotektahan ang forest ecosystem at biodiversity ng bansa ay unawain ang kahalagahan ng makabagong solusyon base sa pahayag ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources

(DENR).

Upang makaabante tayo ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ay kinakailangang magkaroon ng tulongan sa panig ng enforcement agencies at pagbuo ng makabagong pamamaraan upang mabigyan ng solusyon ang environmental

## SOLUSYON SA PROBLEMA SA KALIKASAN

problems.

"It also means the creation of sustainable models that will guide the government in defining policies for the management of our ecosystems. It also means legislating pro-environment rules such as the Rules of Procedure for Environmental Cases," saad ni Cimatu.

Ipinaliwanag ng DENR Chief ang kanyang respeto at pagpapahakaga sa indigenous peoples (IPs) ng bansa kasabay ng pagsasabi na bagama't ang selebrasyon ng World Wildlife Day ay "globally" mananatili

naman itong "very Filipino."

Bilang bahagi ng selebrasyon ng World Wildlife Day, ang Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) ng DENR ay nagsagawa ng 8th Wildlife Law Enforcement Awards at nagbigay din ng rekognisyon sa Inter-Agency Task Force Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife (POGI) dahil sa pagkamit nito ng Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards na ipinagkaloob ng United Nations Environment Programme

noong Pebrero.

Umabot sa 43 law enforcers mula sa mga partner-agencies kabilang na dito ang National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police, at Bureau of Customs ang binigyan ng pagkilala.

Sa kabuuan, mayroong 18 gold awardees, 2 silver awardees, at 23 bronze awardees ang nakatanggap ng parangal at nagsagawa din ang BMB ng iba't ibang youth competitions kabilang na dito ang poster-making, mobile photography, at jingle-making.

# DENR's FOI contribution recognized for 2nd straight year

By DENR Published on March 13, 2021



QUEZON CITY, Mar. 13 -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has been recognized again as one of the "Top Requested and Performing Agencies" in the 2020 Freedom of Information (FOI) Awards.

The recognition was conferred by the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) to the DENR for consistently supporting the FOI program by providing timely and active responses to requests for information from the public.

Data from the DENR's Records Management Division showed the agency has successfully processed 250 to 499 requests from the public with at least 90 percent closed transactions in the eFOI portal.

The DENR also received the same award in 2019.

"I laud the DENR FOI group behind these two consecutive year successes. Once again, the DENR adhered to the call for transparency and full disclosure of information which is the right of every Filipino people," DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said.

The agency has also received a special citation on providing exceptional and significant contribution to FOI program's progress and development amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Despite the challenges of the persistent pandemic crisis today, we will continue to fulfill our responsibility on public disclosure of information, particularly on environmental policies and concerns. Transparency of information is necessary to exhibit good governance and earn the trust of Filipino citizens," Cimatu said. The annual FOI Awards aims to recognize the remarkable contributions of government offices in the executive branch, including government-owned and controlled corporations, state universities and colleges, and local water districts to the development and progress of the PCOO's FOI program.

The FOI Committee of the DENR was created in 2017 composed of representatives from the various offices and bureaus to oversee and ensure the effective implementation of Executive Order (EO) No. 2 issued by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in 2016.



EO 2 pertains to "operationalizing in the Executive Branch the people's constitutional right to information and the State policies to full public disclosure and transparency in the public service and providing guidelines therefor."

Through eFOI electronic platform, Filipino citizens can request online any information about government transactions and operations, and official and public records, among others provided that it shall not put into jeopardy privacy and matters of national security. (DENR)





SIGNIFICANT DISCOVERY

# Philippine eagle family seen in Surigao del Sur forests

By: [Erwin M. Mascariñas](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 05:02 AM March 13, 2021



OFFSPRING A Philippine eagle chick comes out of a nest in the deep forest of Bislig City in Surigao del Sur on March 9. A team of wildlife conservationists discovered an eagle family in the area after a three-day expedition this week. —PHOTO COURTESY OF JUN FELIPE D. ARMIHAR

**BISLIG CITY**—Wildlife conservationists from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) confirmed on Friday the presence of a family of the endangered raptors within this city’s forests that form part of the Tinuy-an Falls Protected Landscape in Surigao del Sur province.

A team composed of personnel from the DENR in the Caraga region and PEF biologists were able to verify the presence of an eagle nest in the area while another group of tree climbers led by their guide from the Manobo tribe observed the nest from another tree, according to Dr. Jayson Ibañez, PEF’s director for research and conservation.

The team found a chick, estimated to be 2 months old, in the nest. The pair of eagles, which are thought to be its parents, were found perched on tree branches near the nest.

Ibañez said they considered the sighting a “rediscovery” as they already found the pair more than 10 years ago. “This is very significant because, for over 10 years, we haven’t heard of any news about this pair here in Bislig. Our last confirmed sighting was in 2009,” he said.

Toward the end of last year, Ibañez said Manobo tribal leaders alerted them of a pair of eagles nesting on a huge lauan tree within the Tinuy-an forests, prompting them to organize the three-day expedition that began on Tuesday.

Further observation activities were, however, hampered by heavy rains on Wednesday. Ibañez said the pair was first sighted in 2007.

By 2008, conservationists observed a juvenile raptor in the area, believed to be the offspring of the pair, which left the nest two years later.

## Distinct sound

The observation missions after 2009 could have missed the pair because these might have transferred to other parts of the forest.





Manobo guide Virgilio Domogoy, 50, said he saw the pair of eagles in September last year while gathering rattan. He tracked the raptors up to November then reported his sightings to the DENR.

“I heard its distinct sound so I check on the area (regularly). There were times I only saw one of them, there were also times when I saw both. My memories of the 2007 sighting was refreshed,” Domogoy told the Inquirer.



# Valenzuela creek wins most improved estero award

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

By [Cherk Balagtas](#)



To keep estuaries and other waterways clean, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) honored Lingunan Creek in Barangay Lingunan, Valenzuela City as the “Most Improved Estero” in Metro Manila during the first Gawad Taga-Ilog awarding ceremony.

The DENR said the Gawad Taga-Ilog: Search for Most Improved Estero in Metro Manila is a recognition for local governments, particularly barangays, for the steps they are taking to keep estuaries clean and various other waterways in their areas of jurisdiction.

Aside from being the grand winner, Lingunan Creek was also awarded the “People’s Choice Award” for the more than 10 thousand likes and reactions it received on the official Facebook page of DENR-NCR.

Meanwhile, the Valenzuela local government, which is under the leadership of Mayor Rex Gatchalian, that manages Lingunan Creek, received a trophy and P50,000 cash and an additional P20,000 for winning the People’s Choice Award.

Park Creek 22 in Marikina, which was the first runner up, received P35,000, while Bangkulasi River, second runner up, received P25,000.

The nominees for the Gawad Taga-Ilog awards include the cities of Makati, San Juan, Manila, Parañaque, Quezon, Muntinlupa, Mandaluyong, Pasig, Malabon, Caloocan and Las Piñas.

The jury criteria included physical improvement, 40 percent; social mobilization and transformation, 30 percent; sustainability and replicability, 20 percent, and partnerships, 10 percent.

As the Gawad Taga-Ilog also recognizes the active participation of Metro Manila local governments in the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay, all participating cities received waste collector trikes, air purifiers and certificates of recognition from the DENR- NCR.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/03/14/valenzuela-creek-wins-most-improved-estero-award/>



# Navotas tops Manila Bay rehab program compliance

By Jerome Carlo R. PaunanPublished on March 13, 2021



CALOOCAN CITY, March 13 (PIA) -- The City Government of Navotas on Friday received recognition for being the top performer in the implementation of the Manila Bay Clean up, Rehabilitation and Preservation Program (MBCRPP).

With a score of 96.7 percent, Navotas was named the 2020 Most Compliant Local Government Unit in the implementation of the Supreme Court continuing mandamus for the clean-up and preservation of Manila Bay.

"In the past years, Navotas scored low in the MBCRPP. We strived to rework our priorities, strengthen our partnership with environmental organizations and agencies, and establish institutional changes to ensure that we will not just be compliant but committed in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay," Mayor Toby Tiangco said.

Navotas scored 100 percent in both informal settler families cluster and information, education and campaign. It also got 97 percent in solid waste management cluster and 92 percent in liquid waste management cluster.

Among the development priorities of the city is the provision of decent housing for its constituents, especially the informal settler families living in danger zones.



Aside from the off-city resettlements of the National Housing Authority, Navotas has six in-city housing projects with 2,595 units.

The city also partnered with Mother Earth Foundation, which helped it establish a phased, low-cost and community-centered zero waste program.

Furthermore, it institutionalized bottom-up documentation and reporting as well as top-down monitoring and feedback.



"Helping on-ground implementers see the positive impact of their labor made them realize the importance of what they do. This, in turn, inspired them to work harder not just to fulfill their duties but also to become part of the change they want to see in Manila Bay," Tiangco said.

"The Battle for Manila Bay is long and arduous, but we will continue to persevere knowing that what we are doing will benefit everyone, especially Navoteños who depend on the sea for their livelihood," he added.

Earlier, Navotas placed third in the Gawad Taga-Ilog: Search for the Most Improved Estero in Metro Manila for its entry, the Bangkulasi River. (PIA NCR)





# Sarangani taps eco-friendly Pyroclave technology to treat medical waste, curb COVID-19

By: [Bong S. Sarmiento](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 01:36 PM March 13, 2021

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The provincial government of Sarangani will use the innovative and environment-friendly Pyroclave technology to treat medical waste and help stop the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the province, an environment official said.

Pyroclave, a non-incineration technology developed by the Davao City-based RAD Green Solutions, processes medical waste using pyrolysis—the process of decomposing organic material using extreme heat in the absence of oxygen, according to Rolando Tuballes, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) chief, citing the product’s briefer.

Compared to incineration or burning, which requires oxygen and brings about harmful by-products, pyrolysis produces fewer by-products and produces less carbon dioxide, Tuballes said.

He said Sarangani would be the eighth local government unit in the country to make use of the technology in treating medical wastes.

“It is urgent that we start the full commissioning of the Pyroclave technology to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in contaminated medical wastes,” he said.

He said the province had been fast-tracking the construction of a temporary disposal site in the provincial capital of Alabel, where the province would finally dispose of the Pyroclave-treated medical wastes.

“We already have the Pyroclave technology installed and ready to be used but we don’t have yet the disposal site,” he said.

“(That’s why), we are fast-tracking the construction of the temporary disposal site so we can start to treat medical wastes using such technology,” he said in a phone interview.

As one of the top non-incineration technologies available in the market, Pyroclave has been used to specifically treat infectious, pathological and pharmaceutical wastes as well as bio-medical materials like syringes and needles.

Tuballes said the Department of Health (DOH) allowed the provincial government to establish a temporary disposal facility for treated products in Alabel town to be used for a maximum of two years.

The province has already completed the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Sarangani Medical Waste Treatment Facility (SMWTF). Its final version will be submitted to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) next week, Tuballes said.

The EIS is a requirement for the issuance of the environmental compliance certificate, a clearance that will allow the province to operate the SMWTF.



Aside from the P19.3 million Pyroclave technology, Tuballes said the SMWTF's components include the construction of a sanitary landfill and wastewater facility in the province. Tuballes said the construction of the province's 2.8-hectare Category 3 sanitary landfill would be completed in the next two years, just in time for the temporary disposal site to exhaust its allotted time.

The SMWTF will exclusively accept toxic and hazardous wastes from medical and industrial institutions, and not domestic or non-toxic wastes, as the latter falls under the responsibility of municipal government units, Tuballes said.

Based on its recent test commissioning, the Pyroclave technology can treat at least 150 kilograms of medical wastes per hour.

As the province-run six low-level hospitals generate only an estimated 200 kg of medical wastes per day, the facility will be capable of processing wastes of big tertiary-level hospitals, which generate an estimated four tons of medical wastes per day in the city.

Engr. Gerald Faciol, assistant Sarangani provincial administrator, said the SMWTF would be one of the income-generating projects classified by the provincial government as a local economic enterprise.

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### Brgy. Captain, kabilang sa mga arestado sa illegal quarrying | 24 Oras

Huli sa akto ng mga awtoridad ang isinasagawang illegal quarrying sa Laguna at isa sa mga inaresto, ang kapitan ng barangay. See Less



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# San Roque residents complain of foul smell from wastewater of nearby construction site

Published March 13, 2021, 5:45 PM

by [Joseph Pedrajas](#)

Residents of an urban poor community in Quezon City had complained about experiencing diarrhea and other health concerns allegedly due to wastewater emitting foul smell that was being released by a nearby construction site.



Save San Roque Alliance / MANILA BULLETIN

At least three individuals living in Sitio San Roque interviewed by Save San Roque Alliance, a group fighting for the residents' rights, said the foul odor can be smelled even inside their houses that some of their family members also suffered from vomiting and stomach aches.

“Anim na kaming nagkakasakit dito. ‘Yung una akala namin normal lang, di namin inaasahan na galing dito yung amoy nya (Six of us here already got sick. At first, we thought it was just normal. We did not expect that the smell came from the leak),” Alma Esteban, community leader of Area J, said.

“Malangaw talaga sya, pati sa loob ng bahay pumapasok yung langaw (There were a lot of flies, which also go even inside our houses),” she added.

Esteban told the group that the foul smell started as early as February, which persists up until now.

“Yung una sumakit lang tyan ko, eh nagtatae na ako eh (At first, I only experience stomach ache. But eventually, I also had diarrhea),” she said.

“Marami rin nagsasabi sakin na ganon din nararamdaman nila (Many of my neighbors told me they experienced the same),” two more residents said in a separate interview with Save San Roque Alliance.

Although two workers already fixed the motor pump of the sewage, which supposedly caused the leak after it got broken, Esteban said there was still a foul smell.

“[I] asked Ate Alma... if there was any action taken, she said, none until now,” Mitzi Sumilang, Save San Roque Alliance's co-head for Area J Task Force, said in a Viber message on Saturday, March 13. She said the update was as of March 11.



In a statement, the group said that the construction waste “poses serious health risks among” the residents.

“Amid the year-long COVID-19 pandemic, threats to completely evict residents of Sitio San Roque in Brgy. Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City intensified,” the group added.

The group also expressed concern about the situation of the residents in the area as the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in a March 11 memorandum circular, also allowed the resumption of demolition and eviction activities.

The lifting of the ban came almost a year after the national government ordered on April 2, 2020 to temporarily halt such activities due to lockdown that limited the movement of people amid threats of COVID-10 spread.

For Sumilang, the DILG’s move is not acceptable in the time of pandemic.

“Sa ilalim ng ganitong pandemya ay hindi katanggap-tanggap na pagkaitan ng tahanan ang maralita at mailagay sila sa mas bulnerableng posisyon (In this time of pandemic, depriving the marginalized sectors places to live and putting them in vulnerable situations are not acceptable),” she said.





# Philippines consumer and environmental groups urge government to tackle plastic pollution at source: ban single-use plastics

By Ecowaste Coalition Published on March 13, 2021

QUEZON CITY, Mar. 13 -- Consumer advocacy group Laban Konsyumer Inc. and environmental health group EcoWaste Coalition have jointly urged the government to tackle plastic pollution at source such as by banning single-use plastics (SUPs).

Through a joint statement to mark this year's World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) on March 15 that has for its theme "Tackling Plastic Pollution," the non-profit groups highlighted two policy opportunities that can catalyze the beneficial shift to sustainable packaging and product delivery systems in the Philippines.

First is through the enactment of a national legislation banning SUPs by the 18th Congress, and second is via the issuance of the list of non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging (NEAP) in accordance with R.A. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

"We need a strong policy in the form of a Republic Act that will provide a general framework, direction and timeline toward phasing out SUPs on a national scale within a reasonable period," said Atty. Vic Dimagiba, President of Laban Konsyumer Inc., a full term active member of Consumers International, which organizes the annual WCRD to highlight "the power of consumers and their rights for a fair, safe and sustainable marketplace for everyone."

"The adoption of such a law will support and strengthen the efforts by national government agencies, local government units, industries and businesses, civil society groups and consumers to address plastic pollution in an effective and united manner," he added.

Among the local government units that have adopted ordinances banning or regulating plastic bags and other SUPs include the cities of Antipolo, Cagayan de Oro, Caloocan, Bacolod, Baguio, Batangas, Iriga, Lapu-Lapu, Las Piñas, Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Puerto Princesa, Quezon, San Carlos, San Fernando, Santa Rosa, Trece Martires and many other cities and municipalities across the archipelago.

For his part, Thony Dizon, Chemical Safety Campaigner of the EcoWaste Coalition, pointed to the importance of releasing the long overdue NEAP list, which the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) is required to do one year after R.A. 9003 took effect in 2001.

"The 20-year delay in identifying and consequently banning products and packaging materials that are not environmentally acceptable has sadly led to the massive production of throw-away SUPs that are barely reused or recycled," said Dizon, noting the mind-boggling amounts of plastic waste and their chemical additives that get dumped, incinerated or disposed of in the oceans.

According to the report "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean," the Philippines wastes 6,237,653 kilos of plastic per day, of which 81 percent is mismanaged.

As noted by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), "plastic packaging accounts for nearly half of all plastic waste globally, and much of it is thrown away within just a few minutes of its first use," noting that "our oceans have been used as a dumping ground, choking marine life and transforming some marine areas into a plastic soup."



As stated by Helena Leurent, Director General of Consumers International: "Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing issues facing our planet. Consumer awareness of the plastics crisis is growing around the world. Consumers have a crucial role to shape the marketplace, and we must support them to mobilize businesses and governments, to ensure sustainable consumption is accessible to all." (Ecowaste Coalition)



# Mga face mask, kabilang sa sako-sakong basura na nahakot sa Anilao Beach

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Mar 13 2021 06:17 PM



Ayon sa mga awtoridad, nasa 30 sako ng iba't ibang uri ng basura ang nakolekta sa Caban Cove Anilao Beach, na tanyag sa mga naggagandahan nitong mga diving spot. *Screenshot mula sa video ni Dood Santos.*

MAYNILA - Kabilang ang mga face mask sa sako-sakong basura na nahakot ng mga awtoridad sa isinagawang clean-up dive sa Anilao Beach sa Batangas nitong Biyernes.

Ayon sa mga awtoridad, nasa 30 sako ng iba't ibang uri ng basura ang nakolekta sa Caban Cove sa Anilao Beach, na tanyag sa mga naggagandahan nitong mga diving spot.

Ani Mabini tourism officer Ian Buena, kailangang magtulong-tulong para isaayos ang waste management sa lugar, dahil dumagdag na rin ang face mask sa mga basurang karaniwang nakukuha sa tubig.

"Ngayong pandemya...palagay ko natural lang tayo na makakita (ng face mask) at kailangan nating magtulongtulong para isaayos ang waste management," ani Mabini tourism officer Ian Buena.

Paliwanag ng tourism office ng Mabini, kung saan napapasakop ang Anilao Beach, naiipon ang mga basura dahil maituturing itong "natural catch basin." Dumarami rin umano rito ang basura kapag may dumaraang bagyo.

Nababahala rin ang ilang diver na lumahok sa clean-up drive sa pangamba nito sa kabuhayan at kapaligiran.

"Kung laging may makukuhang basura diyan sa ilalim ng tubig ano na ang mangyayari sa kabuhayan ng mga tao, hindi na magandang i-dive plus nakakasira ng ecosystem," ayon sa diver ng Buceo Anilao na si Dood Santos.

Iginiit naman ng tourism office na hindi sinasadya ang pagtatapon ng basura sa lugar, at sinisikap na panatilihin ang kalinisan ng iba't ibang diving spot sa Anilao.

"Hindi naman ito ang general picture ng Anilao dahil mahigit 30 ang diving sites sa Anilao," ani Santos.

Inatasan na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environment Management Bureau ang mga bayan ng Mabini at Tingloy na magtulungan para mapangalagaan ang dagat ng Anilao.

-- **Ulat ni Dennis Datu, ABS-CBN News**

Source: [https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/13/21/mga-face-mask-kabilang-sa-sako-sakong-basura-na-nahakot-sa-anilao-beach?fbclid=IwAR3CJmFd0RkZFMuuEatd0m4\\_seikYtuoHnO6HtYpdA1NdoExBMQZ0D6DAsQ](https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/13/21/mga-face-mask-kabilang-sa-sako-sakong-basura-na-nahakot-sa-anilao-beach?fbclid=IwAR3CJmFd0RkZFMuuEatd0m4_seikYtuoHnO6HtYpdA1NdoExBMQZ0D6DAsQ)





# San Carlos City strictly enforces 'No plastic policy'

Published March 13, 2021, 3:51 PM

by [Glazyl Masculino](#)

BACOLOD CITY – The city government of San Carlos in Negros Occidental has reiterated its call to all vendors of beverages and coolers to strictly enforce the “No plastic policy” starting Friday, March 12, due to rampant violations.

This was stated in the notice issued by Mayor Renato Gustilo Wednesday, following observation of various violations of City Ordinance 18-87, “An ordinance regulating the use of plastic cellophane, and sando bags as packaging materials, and utilization of polystyrene, commonly known as styrofoam, for food and beverages containers in the city, and prescribing penalties thereof.”

Gustilo said in the notice that violating the ordinance resulted to proliferation of plastic wastes while the city has been lenient due to the pandemic, which are getting worse and most of the people no longer observe proper disposal and non-use of plastics.

He emphasized to the sellers that utilization of plastic cups and plastic drinking straws will be prohibited whether dine in or take out.

Gustilo warned them that appropriate legal actions, including issuance of citation tickets, shall be undertaken against violators.

The city banned the use of plastic bags in public markets in 2018.



# PLASTICS CRISIS

By **Panay News** -Saturday, March 13, 2021

DID YOU KNOW that this Monday, March 15, is World Consumer Rights Day? It has for its theme "Tackling Plastic Pollution". Thus for the nth time, we're urging the government to tackle plastic pollution at source, and by than we mean banning single-use plastics.

The government actually has two policy opportunities that can catalyze the beneficial shift to sustainable packaging and product delivery systems.

First is through the enactment of a national legislation banning single-use plastics by the 18th Congress, and second is via the issuance of the list of non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging (NEAP) in accordance with Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

We need a strong policy in the form of a Republic Act that will provide a general framework, direction and timeline toward phasing out single-use plastics on a national scale within a reasonable period.

The adoption of such a law will support and strengthen the efforts by national government agencies, local government units, industries and businesses, civil society groups and consumers to address plastic pollution in an effective and united manner.

Among the local government units that have adopted ordinances banning or regulating plastic bags and other SUPs include the cities of Iloilo, Bacolod, Antipolo, Cagayan de Oro, Caloocan, Baguio, Batangas, Iriga, Lapu-Lapu, Las Piñas, Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Puerto Princesa, Quezon, San Carlos, San Fernando, Santa Rosa, Trece Martires and many other cities and municipalities across the archipelago.

Meanwhile, the importance of releasing the long overdue NEAP list, which the National Solid Waste Management Commission is required to do one year after RA 9003 took effect in 2001, could not be overemphasized.

The 20-year delay in identifying and consequently banning products and packaging materials that are not environmentally acceptable has sadly led to the massive production of throw-away single-use plastics that are barely reused or recycled. We note the mind-boggling amounts of plastic waste and their chemical additives that get dumped, incinerated or disposed of in the oceans.

According to the report "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean," the Philippines wastes 6,237,653 kilos of plastic per day, of which 81 percent is mismanaged!



As noted by the United Nations Environment Programme, “plastic packaging accounts for nearly half of all plastic waste globally, and much of it is thrown away within just a few minutes of its first use,” noting that “our oceans have been used as a dumping ground, choking marine life and transforming some marine areas into a plastic soup.”

Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing issues facing our planet. Consumer awareness of the plastics crisis is growing around the world. Consumers have a crucial role to shape the marketplace, and we must support them to mobilize businesses and governments, to ensure sustainable consumption is accessible to all.





# USAID lauds 2 Filipino biologists, botanist for path-finding discoveries in Mindanao

Published March 13, 2021, 2:50 PM

by [Genalyn Kabling](#)

Filipino scientists are reaping praises for the discovery of species in Mindanao's rich biodiversity.



(Photo from USAID Philippines)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Philippines has commended biologists Kier Mitchel Pitogo and Aljohn Jay Saavedra for rediscovering a rare frog that was last seen almost three decades ago.

The brightly colored Guttman's stream frogs were believed to be extinct until they were rediscovered living in the forest of Mount Busa. They were first seen in the wild in 1993.

"USAID supports Filipino scientists who are making discoveries in Philippine biodiversity," the agency said in a statement posted on Facebook March 12.

"Deep in the forests of Busa mountain range in southern Mindanao, Kier Mitchel Pitogo and Aljohn Jay Saavedra rediscovered Guttman's stream frog—an amphibian so rare, it was thought to be extinct for decades since it was first recorded," it reported..

The two biologists, in a research paper published on Herpetology News, said they found the small population of the frogs called "*Pulchrana guttmani*" near the streams of Bulul Tbotu, Lake Sebu in South Cotabato in September 2020.

The stream frog is "a high-elevation specialist and may have little to no tolerance to disturbance, which may explain its absence from the type locality despite recent, extensive fieldwork in the area," the paper read.

The two scientists committed to continue follow-up studies on the mysterious stream frog but admitted that the "difficult logistics" of accessing the deep forested area, "security concerns, and bureaucracy" still impeded fieldwork. "We hope that our discovery can be a milestone that paves the way for more field-based biodiversity surveys in southern Mindanao, with strong support from local government institutions, grant-giving bodies, and local communities," they said.

## New species of lipstick vine discovered by Filipina botanist

The US agency likewise lauded the work of Shiella Mae Batuigas Olimpos following the discovery of a new lipstick vine in Tawi-Tawi.

The lipstick vine, with official species name *Aeschynanthus rejieae*, is the latest discovery in the past 20 years. Olimpos is a botanist belonging to the Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc.



“Olimpos found a new species of lipstick vine in the forests of Panglima Sugala while doing a botanical survey as part of a field expedition to study Sulu hornbills,” the USAID said.

The research of three Filipino scientists has received backing from the USAID to advance the conservation of biodiversity in the country.

“USAID supported both field researchers through its program of assistance for graduate students, local experts, and conservation groups to pursue scientific studies that will support biodiversity conservation in the Philippines,” the agency said.



A rare frog thought to be extinct (top) and a new species of lipstick vine in Mindanao were recently rediscovered by Filipino scientists.

Kier Mitchel Pitogo, Shiella Mae Olimpos

## Filipino scientists lauded for new discoveries in Mindanao

[Kathleen A. Llemit](#) (Philstar.com) - March 12, 2021 - 4:04pm

MANILA, Philippines — Filipino scientists found discoveries of their lifetime — a rare frog thought to be extinct and a new species of lipstick vine in Mindanao.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced these feats in its Facebook page yesterday.

"Deep in the forests of Busa mountain range in southern Mindanao, Kier Mitchel Pitogo and Aljohn Jay Saavedra rediscovered Guttman's stream frog—an amphibian so rare, it was thought to be extinct for decades since it was first recorded," the post read.

The species was first discovered by American herpetologist Rafe M. Brown in 1993 while on a fieldwork on Mt. Busa on the border of South Cotabato and Sarangani provinces.

USAID Philippines on Thursday

USAID supports Filipino scientists who are making discoveries in Philippine biodiversity.

Deep in the forests of Busa mountain range in southern Mindanao, Kier Mitchel Pitogo and Aljohn Jay Saavedra rediscovered Guttman's stream frog — an amphibian so rare, it was thought to be extinct for decades since it was first recorded.

In Tawi-Tawi, Shiella Mae Olimpos found a new species of lipstick vine in the forests of Panglima Sugala while doing a botanical survey as part of a field ... See More



In their [paper](#) "Rediscovery of Guttman's Stream Frog, *Pulchrana guttmani* (Brown, 2015) in the mountains of Southern Mindanao, Philippines" published online on January 22, 2021 on Herpetology Notes, Pitogo and Saavedra shared their experiences of conducting a targeted herpetological fieldwork at the *P. guttmani* type locality and other portions of Mount Busa Key Biodiversity Area and adjacent areas between June 2018 and August 2020. It included notes on the possible reasons why the species was hard to come by in its known locality.

Meanwhile, another Filipino scientist discovered a new species of lipstick vine in Tawi-Tawi. "In Tawi-Tawi, Shiella Mae Olimpos found a new species of lipstick vine in the forests of Panglima Sugala while doing a botanical survey as part of a field expedition to study Sulu hornbills," USAID announced.





## Sightings of manta ray seen as challenge

We are now coordinating with the local governments in LIPASECU Council (Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste and Culasi) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, including the office of Congresswoman Legarda for the protection of our environment.

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

By [Jun Aguirre](#)



KALIBO, Aklan — At least three sightings of an endangered Oceanic Manta Ray in different days posed more challenges to the provincial government of Antique to balance environmental conservation and tourism.

In her Instagram post, Antique lawmaker Loren Legarda, a known environmental champion, said a private documentary group hired for the promotion of eco-tourism efforts of the province has twice sighted the giant manta ray in Pandan Bay.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has reported that the conservation status of the giant manta ray (or oceanic manta ray) has been changed from Vulnerable to Endangered on the red list of threatened species.

According to Manta Ray Advocate website, there are around 300-1,500 manta rays recorded worldwide.

“Oh the treasures that we have in Antique! Two of these endangered giant oceanic manta rays were sighted and documented by Studio H20 — a sneak peak of the documentary that I initiated and supported under the Department of Tourism on the marine biodiversity of our province. This project that I envisioned way back in 2012 will be finally launch soon,” she said in her Instagram post.

The province thrust to promote the Antique province as an eco-tourism destination stemmed as it is nearby Boracay Island in Aklan province considered a premier beach destination. Previous reports indicate that Antique, especially the Pandan town, is receiving a spillover of tourists coming from Boracay.

Already, there were several European inspired resorts in Pandan and in nearby Antique towns.

The dream of Legarda to make Antique an eco-tourism site boosted after several rare bowl corals was discovered by a group of diving enthusiasts in October 2020.

The group known as Sabbad Samurai Extreme was conducting a diving expedition when they chanced upon the bowl corals. The bowl of corals was discovered along Sebaste shoal which is connected to the Pandan Bay.

The Sabbad Samurai Extreme was a group of professional divers of Boracay but are residents of Antique.



They come together to explore the diving industry in Antique after they were forced to quit their diving jobs in Boracay due to COVID 19 pandemic.

Sabadd divers Aldwin Alojipan and Jude Dionela Sanchez said that the bowl corals they discovered seemed already to have a dents, believed to have come from several incidents of illegal fishing in the area in 1980's.

“We are now coordinating with the local governments in LIPASECU Council (Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste and Culasi) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, including the office of Congresswoman Legarda for the protection of our environment,” they said.



## Green sea turtle, nailigtas sa Quezon province

Marso 13, 2021 11:54am GMT+08:00

SINULAT NI: PEEWEE C. BACUÑO

Nailigtas nitong Sabado ang isang green sea turtle sa bayan ng Tagkawayan sa lalawigan ng Quezon, pahayag ni Engr. Francis Villanueva ng municipal LGU.

Ayon sa kanya, isang mangingisda ang nag-turn over sa pawikan sa kanilang tanggapan.

Aksidente umanong pumasok ang pawikan sa isang baklad o fish pen.

Sinuri agad ng mga awtoridad ang pawikan kung may sugat ito.

Umabot sa 1.3 metro ang haba ng babaeng pawikan, at may bigat na sa 120 kilos.

Matapos matiyak na malakas at malusog ang pawikan, nilagyan kaagad ito ng tag or marka ng mga taga-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Nagtulong-tulong ang mga Bantay Dagat at PNP na madala ang pawikan pabalik sa malalim na parte ng dagat.



Photos courtesy of Tagkawayan LGU

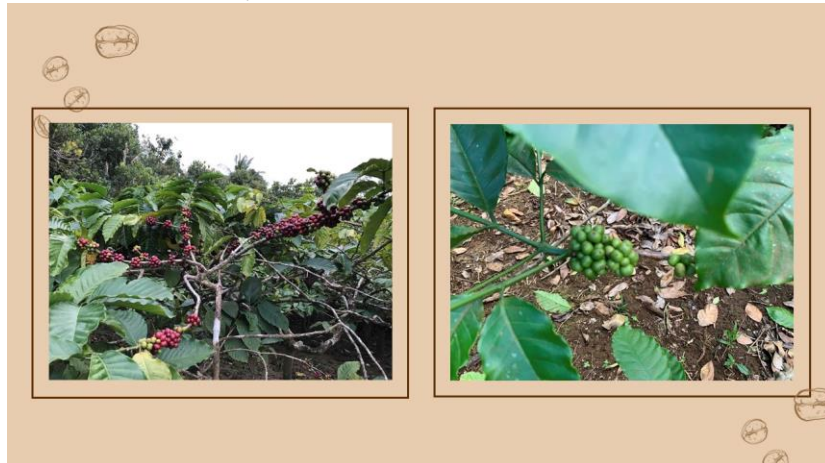
Ang green sea turtle ay kabilang sa mga endangered species o yung mga nanganganib nang maubos. —**LBG, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/promdi/779524/green-sea-turtle-nailigtas-sa-quezon-province/story/>



# Achieve empowerment for women in PH coffee industry –Coffee experts

By Jimmyley E. GuzmanPublished on March 13, 2021



**Coffee plantation in Tagaytay City (Contributed photo)**

CALOOCAN CITY, March 13 (PIA) -- Filipina coffee enthusiasts highlighted the state of the local coffee industry in the Philippines and called for increased coffee promotion and production in the 37th episode of "Stories for a Better Normal: Pandemic and Climate Pathways," hosted by three-term Senator, now House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda.

The third part of the resilient livelihoods episode with the topic, "Kwentong Kape ng Kababaihan" featured all-Filipina guests including Pacita "Chit" Juan, co-chair of Philippine Coffee Board, Inc.; Jocelyn Mamar, a coffee farmer; and Rosario Juan, Chief Executive Officer of the Commune Café, in celebration of Women's Month.

"Bakit kape? Ano ang koneksyon niyan sa climate change? Tatlong aspeto ang nakaaapekto sa climate change, at ang climate change ay nakaaapekto sa pang-araw-araw na buhay. Una, urban governance, kung papaano sinusunod ang ating batas. Pangalawa, ecosystems decline, 'pag kalbo ang bundok at marumi ang lawa at ilog, papaano na tayo? At pangatlo, dito papasok ang kape - rural livelihoods - ang kabuhayan ng mga kababayan sa kanayunan, ang pinagkakakitaan ng ating micro and small enterprises. Papaano na ang coffee farmers, ano ang epekto ng pandemya at papaano tayo makatutulong dito," said Legarda, who launched a special coffee blend made from Robusta beans, "Lola Mameng's", named after her maternal grandmother who planted coffee trees many years ago.

The guest coffee connoisseurs have shown and presented the long and meticulous process of coffee-making – from farming and harvesting, drying, milling – up to roasting and serving. They also discussed how the coffee farmers and businesses are coping up with the impacts of a pandemic as well as climate change.

"Noong 2002, kami ay nagconduct ng trainings around the country at meron kaming kaakibat na LGU, PGU, or organizations. Ngayon, mayroon kaming project with USAID para sa mga kababaihan sa walong bayan na pinagkukunan ng kape at ginagawaan ng programa para ma-connect ang farmers sa mga buyers. At sa tulong ng Department of Trade and Industry - Export Management Bureau, kami ay nag-present ng green beans at kung papaano ito pwedeng ibenta sa ibang lugar para makilala ang Philippine Coffee. Alam natin na maliit lang ang produksyon nito at dapat bago tayo mag-export, ipakilala natin ang sarap ng Philippine coffee." said Chit.





"Ine-encourage talaga namin na magtanim ng kape, at 'wag gumamit ng synthetic fertilizers. Dapat yung organic lang. Kung ano 'yung waste natin, ibabalik natin sa farm," said Mamar.

"It was really our vision and mission to promote Philippine coffee. Mula pagbukas namin noong 2013, ang ino-offer lang namin na kape ay ang kapeng galing sa Pilipinas. Ang sinasabi ng mga tao ay "Huh? May kape ba tayo?", 'yung iba naman "Huh? Masarap ba 'yung kape natin?" 'Yun ang naging challenge for us to really show people and let them taste good coffee from the Philippines," said Rosario.

Legarda reiterated the need to establish an inventory of coffee farms all over the Philippines, and also called for increased appreciation and support for the women coffee makers who continuously uplift the coffee culture in the country.

"This is not the last for coffee because there's much to learn and much to do to help our coffee farmers. Hindi po kailangan ng sampung ektarya o magmana ng maliit na lupa. Kahit sampung puno, kayang magtanim ng kape. Dapat nating maitaas ang antas ng kabuhayan ng ating mga kababaihang gumagawa ng kape," Legarda concluded.

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 Department of Education, Philippine Information Agency, Philippine Commission on Women, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, The Climate Reality Project-Philippines and Mother Earth Foundation.

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



# Creating a green recovery pathway for the Philippines

By DR. SELVA RAMACHANDRAN

March 14, 2021

Almost a year has passed since Covid-19 hit, causing job losses and increasing poverty levels. Sadly, this has impacted people unevenly, particularly women, youth, the poor and informal-sector workers.

A recent United Nations Development Program (UNDP) survey showed many households (27 percent) earning below P10,000 lost all income during lockdowns. Estimates from International Labor Organization (ILO) further revealed that 10.9 million workers in the Philippines have had their livelihoods disrupted — equivalent to 25 percent of total employment in the country. Women and youth are particularly impacted, especially those studying, training, job-hunting or working part-time.

As the pandemic continues, socio-economic recovery remains uncertain. The World Economic Outlook (2020) projections showed a glimmer of hope for the Philippines, but slowly striding on the path to recovery in 2021 and beyond. Sustainable recovery requires building back better in new ways. To do so, we need to work collaboratively.

Expanding digitalization is one approach. The ILO's Future of Work in the Philippines Report recommended promoting competitive, innovative industries, and advancing productive employment, but noted that it must be accompanied by upskilling or reskilling workforces — particularly those in technology-supporting sectors, or those most impacted by Covid-19 or changes to traditional work—as well as investing in the digital and green economies.

Jump-starting a green recovery with more decent jobs, and healthy and resilient societies is crucial to building back better and greener. Although modest compared to some countries, the Philippines is considered well on its way toward effective recovery, thanks to the significant actions taken by the government.

Notably, the government is at the cusp of submitting its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which aims for an ambitious target of 75 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. But to do so, investment in green technology and energy is essential, while enabling a green recovery strategy.

This approach—putting emphasis on recovery that benefits all and progresses toward a greener economy—is not just good for our health and the environment; It is good for economic growth. UNDP's 2020 Human Development Report shows a \$2 to \$10 return for every \$1 invested in nature- and climate-aligned Covid-19 stimulus packages. For the Philippines, this means Covid-19 economic recovery projects should also contribute to overall improvement of the environment and natural resources while reviving affected livelihoods, jobs and industries.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) sets a positive example. Recent reports cited that BSP has invested close to \$200 million on green bonds in 2020—bonds that invest in green, sustainable and renewable investments — making the Philippines the 3rd largest green bond issuer in Asean with over US\$2 billion.

Mobilizing similar smarter, better investments is crucial to recovery success, which requires incentives to attract domestic and foreign capital. For instance, the proposed amendments to the Foreign Investment Act could incorporate incentives to redirect foreign investment to green recovery opportunities—like renewable energy and electric-vehicle production and usage.



But this can be accelerated with a “whole-of-government” approach. Fast-tracked government efforts to promote green jobs, prepare the human resources needed and monitor and support these mechanisms are necessary. Together with the proposed Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production, they will set a momentum for greener recovery while propelling the country toward its climate targets.

Timely action by the government should be matched with investments by others, including the private sector. The government creates an enabling environment and provides the required leadership. Businesses and enterprises, development partners, business and labor organizations and civil society, however, play crucial roles to align efforts with the national green recovery agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, ensuring a green recovery requires the need to introduce support to unlock the potential of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Philippines — those most impacted by Covid-19 — and increase their participation in green and inclusive recovery. MSMEs are the backbone of the Philippine economy. UNDP and ILO remain committed to supporting the enterprises, employers, workers and the government to helping MSMEs bounce back.

We plan to do this through innovative financing, as well as providing business development and forecasting tools that will enable planning and transition to sustainable and more resilient economic opportunities. We welcome open and effective social dialogue on how we can best bring this to life.

While the pandemic has caused one of the greatest disruptions of all time, the recovery effort offers a unique opportunity to change the course of development in the Philippines toward a human-centered, greener future, and leave a legacy for the next generations of Filipinos and the world.

*Dr. Selva Ramachandran is the UNDP Philippines resident representative and Khalid Hassan is the ILO Philippines country director.*



Members of the Manila Police District are deployed at Barangay 351 in Sta. Cruz, Manila to strictly implement the localized lockdown with the help of barangay officials on Thursday midnight, March 11, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

# With 5,000 new COVID-19 cases, Philippines logs highest daily rise since August last year

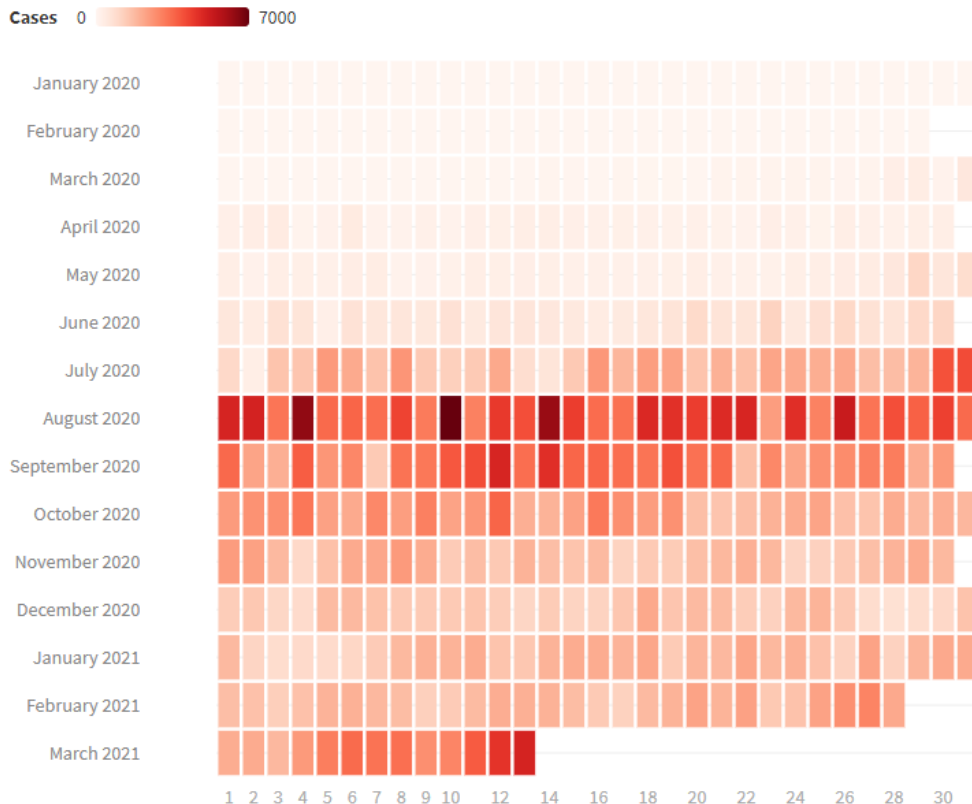
Bella Perez-Rubio (Philstar.com) - March 13, 2021 - 4:00pm

MANILA, Philippines — **(Updated 4:33 p.m.)** The Philippines on Saturday recorded 5,000 additional COVID-19 cases, bringing the total number of infections to 616,611.

- Active cases: 55,679 or 9.2% of the total
- Recoveries: 281, pushing the total to 547,166
- Deaths: 72, bringing the total to 12,776

## COVID-19 cases in the Philippines

The Philippines recorded the most number of COVID-19 cases in a single day on August 10, 2020.



Source: Department of Health • As of March 13, 2021, 4 p.m.





## What's new today?

- The additional coronavirus infections recorded Saturday mark the highest daily rise since Aug. 26, 2020, when the Philippines recorded 5,277 cases.
- This is the seventh time in less than two weeks that cases breached the 3,000-mark and the second day in a row that they surpassed 4,000.
- Active cases are also the highest reported since Oct. 3, 2020, when there were 58,606 cases.
- Dr. Tony Leachon, public health expert and former adviser to the coronavirus task force, called out the health department for blaming the increase in cases on "social mobility and behavior" instead of focusing "on the impact of variants to COVID transmission." He added that this attitude from the DOH "creates problems in diagnosis and management."

DOH has not really focused on the impact of variants to COVID transmission and blames social mobility and behavior as the main cause - this creates problems in diagnosis and management ! <https://t.co/Tabr1LKim5>

— Tony Leachon MD (@DrTonyLeachon) [March 13, 2021](#)

- Leachon has long called the dramatic and repeated increase in cases this month a second surge but health authorities have refused to do so.
- Health authorities said they [detected the first case of the coronavirus variant first seen in Brazil](#) called P.1 from a Filipino who came from the South American country and lives in Western Visayas. They added that P.1 is considered a variant of concern, indicating an increased risk to human health.
- Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases the night before said [a traveler from the Philippines who arrived in the country last February 25 was found to be carrying a new coronavirus variant](#). The institute said the variant carries the mutations which may help the virus dodge antibodies increase its transmissibility.
- The Department of Health reported that they detected [98 cases of a new coronavirus variant first seen in the country](#). The variant, now called P.3, also carries mutations that could help the virus dodge antibodies increase its transmissibility but health authorities did not confirm if it is the same one that was detected in Japan.
- The World Health Organization on Friday said there is [no reason to stop using AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine](#) after several countries suspended the rollout over blood clot fears.
- The provincial government of Oriental Mindoro said PGen. Debold Sinas, national police chief, [skipped health screening](#) when he arrived at the province last Thursday, hours before it was announced that he contracted COVID-19.
- This is not the first time Sinas was seen flouting the very health protocols enforced by the police, gaining national notoriety last year for his birthday party which was held amid a stringent lockdown.

— with reports from **Xave Gregorio**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/03/13/2084064/5000-new-covid-19-cases-philippines-logs-highest-daily-rise-august-last-year>



# Gov't offices to adopt DOLE rules on proper ventilation

By Ferdinand Patinio March 13, 2021, 6:55 pm



(File photo)

MANILA – Government offices will adopt the new guidelines recently released by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on the proper ventilation of workplaces and public transport.

“When we are crafting it, the Civil Service Commission is with us and they agreed to use these guidelines for the implementation of proper ventilation in all government offices as well. So yes, even for the public offices, these will be guidelines,” Labor Assistant Secretary Ma. Teresita Cucueco said in a Laging Handa briefing on Saturday.

On March 3, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III issued Department Order 224-21 that sets new rules on proper ventilation for private establishments and public transport.

The guidelines include the installation and use of exhaust fans in indoor workplaces, restrooms, and water closets; ventilation in air, rail, land, and sea transport; and other measures to improve and maintain the quality of air in the workplace and public transportation.

The order said for air-conditioned spaces and heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems, the outdoor air supply should conform to the recommended breathing zone ventilation rates for air dilution and comfort control.

It recommended the use of the ventilation system at least 30 minutes before and after spaces are occupied.

For non-air-conditioned spaces, the DOLE suggested maximizing natural ventilation through the use of doors, windows, and other openings.

If natural ventilation is not feasible or inadequate, mechanical ventilation shall be provided.

Strategies were also recommended for restrooms and water closets, such as making sure that exhaust fans in restroom facilities are functional and operating at full capacity when the building is occupied.

It advised the closure of toilet bowl lids before flushing to minimize the release of droplets into the air.

For public transport, the order said minimum health standards must strictly be followed such as the proper wearing of approved face masks and face shields at all times; proper and frequent disinfection before and after completing a route; a distance of one seat apart for passengers; and use of plastic barriers between passengers, which must also be disinfected after each trip or when necessary.

The guidelines will cover all commercial and industrial establishments, projects, sites, and all other places where work is being undertaken indoors, except health care facilities, which require special considerations or stricter rules in controlling the coronavirus disease 2019. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1133525>



## Biden, Suga meet over virus, climate woes

By Xinhua

March 14, 2021

**WASHINGTON, D. C.:** US President Joe Biden on Friday (Saturday in Manila) met virtually with leaders of Japan, India and Australia over Covid-19, climate change and other regional issues.

The meeting focused primarily on pressing global crises including Covid-19 and the climate crisis, Biden's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters at a White House briefing.

A joint statement following the meeting said the four countries, known as "the Quad," would cooperate to expand vaccine production. "The Quad" committed to delivering up to 1 billion doses to Asean, the Indo-Pacific and beyond by the end of 2022, Sullivan said.

According to a fact sheet released by the White House, the four countries would launch working groups on climate change and critical and emerging technology.

Leaders also discussed the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the situation in Myanmar and maritime security, said Sullivan. "The way that we look at this is that the Quad is not a military alliance. It's not a new NATO, despite some of the propaganda that's out there," he noted.

The virtual meeting on Friday was the first time that the four countries gathered at the leader level. The joint statement said that leaders of the group would hold an in-person summit by the end of this year.



14 MARCH 2021, SUNDAY



**DENR**

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