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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Ensure wildlife protection despite pandemic constraints — Cimatu

Published December 15, 2020, 3:29 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu has called on wildlife officials and personnel to ensure a continued strict monitoring of the wildlife in the country amid the restrictions imposed to curtail the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu (RTVM / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Cimatu cited the sighting of a nesting sea turtle, locally called “pawikan,” in Zambales province as a proof that efforts to preserve the country’s wildlife during the pandemic have been effective.

“Even if we are faced with a difficult situation brought about by the threats of the disease, we must continue to strive to protect and preserve our endangered pawikan,” said.

According to Cimatu, observing a nesting pawikan was “enough to motivate the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to carry on with its task of protecting the environment during these uncertain times.”

The DENR’s Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Olongapo City had reported that sea turtle laying eggs were spotted at Aplaya Caarusipan Beach Resort in San Antonio town on the evening of Nov. 28.

The CENRO immediately sent a team to conduct monitoring and inspection at the site.

They were able to identify the sea turtle as an olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) classified as an endangered species under DENR Administrative Order 2019-09 or the Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories.

Olongapo City CENR Officer Roger Encarnacion said the nesting site, which is just in front of the beach resort, was safe from possible destruction from tide.

He noted that there was no need to relocate the nest to a safer place.

But as a precautionary measure, Encarnacion said multiple fences made from nets were placed to protect the eggs from possible predators.

He said the CENRO will regularly monitor the turtle eggs to protect them from poachers and illegal wildlife traders.

He added that they will conduct weekly information, education and communication campaign such as seminars for the concerned local government unit staff and resort employees to ensure the protection of the pawikan.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/15/ensure-wildlife-protection-despite-pandemic-constraints-cimatu/>



Wildlife conservation must continue even with pandemic: Cimatu

December 15, 2020, 2:09 pm



File photo

MANILA – Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the sighting of a nesting sea turtle in Zambales province is a testimony that the preservation of wildlife in the country must continue even amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

“Even if we are faced with a difficult situation brought about by the threats of the disease, we must continue to strive to protect and preserve our endangered pawikan (turtle),” Cimatu said in a news release on Tuesday.

He added that the sighting “proves that our efforts are not in vain”.

Cimatu said this incident was “enough to motivate the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to carry on with its task of protecting the environment during these uncertain times”.

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“Thankfully, we do not need to relocate the nest to a safer place. But as a precautionary measure, we placed multiple fences made from nets to protect the eggs from possible predators,” Encarnacion said.

Encarnacion said the team will regularly monitor the turtle eggs to protect them from poachers and illegal wildlife traders.

The CENRO will also conduct weekly information, education, and communication (IEC) campaign such as seminars for the concerned local government unit staff and resort employees. (PR)



Nesting Pawikan Sighting: Even with Pandemic, Wildlife Conservation must Continue

BY VILLAGE CONNECT ON DECEMBER 15, 2020

Nesting Pawikan Sighting: Even with Pandemic, Wildlife Conservation must Continue



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the sighting of a nesting sea turtle or pawikan in Zambales province is a testimony that the preservation of wildlife in the country must continue even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Even if we are faced with a difficult situation brought about by the threats of the disease, we must continue to strive to protect and preserve our endangered pawikan,” Cimatu said, adding that the sighting “proves that our efforts are not in vain.”

According to Cimatu, this incident was “enough to motivate the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to carry on with its task of protecting the environment during these uncertain times.”

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“Thankfully, we do not need to relocate the nest to a safer place. But as a precautionary measure, we placed multiple fences made from nets to protect the eggs from possible predators,” Encarnacion said.

According to Encarnacion, the team will regularly monitor the turtle eggs to protect them from poachers and illegal wildlife traders. The CENRO will also conduct weekly information, education and communication (IEC) campaign such as seminars for the concerned local government unit staff and resort employees.

Source: <http://villageconnect.com.ph/nesting-pawikan-sighting-even-with-pandemic-wildlife-conservation-must-continue/3059#>



Cimatu urges to continue wildlife conservation amid pandemic

By: [Cristina Eloisa Baclig](#) - Content Researcher/Writer / [@CeBacligINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:47 PM December 15, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu on Tuesday said the country's wildlife preservation should continue even with the COVID-19 restrictions.

Cimatu described the sighting of a nesting sea turtle or "pawikan" in Zambales as an indication that wildlife conservation is possible during the pandemic.

"Even if we are faced with a difficult situation brought about by the threats of the disease, we must continue to strive to protect and preserve our endangered pawikan," Cimatu said in a statement.

According to Cimatu, the sighting was "enough to motivate the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to carry on with its task of protecting the environment during these uncertain times."

The DENR's Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Olongapo City received a report that a sea turtle was spotted laying eggs at Aplaya Caarusipan Beach Resort in San Antonio town on the night of Nov. 28.

A team was immediately dispatched by CENRO to monitor and inspect the site.

The CENRO identified the sea turtle as an olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), an endangered species classified under the DENR Administrative Order 2019-09 or the Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories.

According to Olongapo City's CENR Officer Roger Encarnacion, the nesting site is located just in front of the beach resort and was "safe from possible destruction from tide."

"Thankfully, we do not need to relocate the nest to a safer place. But as a precautionary measure, we placed multiple fences made from nets to protect the eggs from possible predators," Encarnacion said.

Encarnacion assured that the team will regularly monitor the eggs and keep them away from poachers and illegal wildlife traders.

The CENRO also said it will conduct seminars for the local government unit staff and the resort employees.

CFC

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1372099/cimatu-urges-to-continue-wildlife-conservation-amid-pandemic>



USEC. Benny Antiporda nagpasalamat sa security guard na naka-rescue sa Musang



December 15, 2020 @ 7:45 PM 11 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nagpasalamat si Usec. Benny Antiporda, DENR spokesperson dahil sa pag-rescue ng security guard ng Bonifacio Global City (BGC) sa isang Civet Cat na mas kilala sa tawa na “Musang” at isinuko sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) rescue center.

Ayon sa DENR, ang Civet cat (Musang) ay kinakategorya na bilang endangered species dahil sa maliit na bilang na lamang ng mga ito.

Sinabi sa ulat na na-rescue ng mga security guard ng BGC ang naturang Civet cat habang pagala-gala ito sa naturang lugar. **(Santi Celario)**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/usec-benny-antiporda-nagpasalamat-sa-security-guard-na-naka-rescue-sa-musang/>



50 portable toilets installed in Parola Compound

Published December 15, 2020, 6:11 PM

by [Minka Klaudia Tiangco](#)

At least 50 portable toilets were installed in Barangay 275 at Parola Compound in Tondo, Manila on Tuesday as part of the city government's "Kubeta Ko" project.



Manila Mayor Isko Moreno samples a toilet, one of more than 50 toilets that will be given to residents of Bgy. 275 in Parola, Manila on Tuesday during the launching of Kubeta Project that will give poor communities in the city access to clean and working toilets. (Ali Vicoy)

Under the project, a portable, container-based toilet technology developed by Loowat, Limited will be used. The said company secured funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for the "Kubeta Ko" project.

In September, the Manila city government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) entered an agreement to install the portable toilets to minimize open defecation around the Manila Bay area.

Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso said the project is a realization of his dream to provide "dignified" toilet facilities for the poor.

Promoting proper hygiene can also allow residents to avoid catching illnesses, Domagoso said.

"May dignidad sa pagiging mahirap sa pagpapakita ng kalinisan at kaayusan at pag-alis ng kadugyotan sa ating pamumuhay (There is dignity in being poor, in showing cleanliness and orderliness and eliminating filth in our lifestyle)," he said in his speech.

don't care if I spend every single cent to give you a decent living, to give you something that you can call your home," he added.

In a message, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the "Kubeta Ko" project is also in line with his department's Manila Bay beautification project.

He also said the portable toilets have a waterless flush system that can save water.

The biowaste collected in these toilets can also be converted into energy and liquid fertilizer.

Cimatu said this is only the pilot stage of the project. Around 400 portable toilets will be installed for the full-blown implementation of the project.



The DENR allotted a total of P10 million to the City of Manila for the said project and an additional P5 million for the city “to cover the operational costs during the implementation of the project.”

However, this is only a “temporary solution” to the city’s pollution problems, the environment secretary said. A better sewerage system must be built and informal settler families, especially those living in critical areas, must be relocated, he added.

The Manila mayor reminded residents to practice discipline and keep the portable toilets clean.

Officials from the Manila city government, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the British Embassy Manila attended the event.

The project is also in coordination with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and Maynilad Water Services and will be effective for a year.



Eco-friendly toilets, ipinamahagi sa mga residente sa Parola



December 15, 2020 @ 5:14 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Bilang bahagi ng paglulunsad ng “Project: Kubeta Ko”, namahagi ng may limampung kubeta bilang donasyon sa mga residente ng Parola 3 sa lungsod ng Maynila ngayong araw.

Dumalo sa naturang seremonya si Manila Mayor Isko Monreo Domagoso, opisyal at kinatawan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), British government, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) at Maynilad.



Ang nasabing proyekto ay alinsunod sa mandamus ng Korte Suprema hinggil sa paglilinis at rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Ayon kay DENR Usec. Jonas Leones, ang limampung donasyong portable container-based toilets ay paunang batch pa lamang dahil aniya nasa 400 na kubeta pa ang ipamahagi sa iba’t ibang mga lugar sa Maynila.





Dagdag pa ni Leones, layon umano ng pamamahagi ng kubeta na maisulong ang “good hygiene” ng mga residente, lalo na ang malapit sa Ilog Pasig at Manila Bay. Hangad din ng DENR na makatulong ang mga kubeta upang mabawasan ang mga dumi sa Manila Bay.

Giit ni Leones, ang mga makokolektang dumi mula sa mga ipinamahagi nilang portable toilets ay gagawing biogas o kaya’y liquid fertilizer kaya’t hindi na kakailangan ng sewerage system.



Ngunit nilinaw naman ni Leones na ang nasbaing proyekto ay pansamantalang solusyon lamang dahil kailangan pa ring magpatuloy ang rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay at mabigyan ng relokasyon ang mga informal settler.

Pinaalalahanan naman ni Mayor Isko Moreno ang mga residente na nabigyan ng eco-friendly toilet na gamitin ang mga bagong kubeta ng tama at pahalagahan ang mga ito upang maiwasan ang kadugyutan at higit sa lahat ay maiwasan ang mga sakit gaya ng polio. JAY Reyes

Para may dignidad: Ilang pamilya sa Maynila nakatanggap ng portable toilets

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 15 2020 04:18 PM | Updated as of Dec 15 2020 04:37 PM



Target ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Maynila na malagyan ng portable toilets ang mga lugar sa lungsod na kulang sa mga palikuran. *Jerome Lantin, ABS-CBN News*

MAYNILA — Limampung portable toilets ang ipinamahagi ngayong Martes sa mga pamilya sa Parola Compound sa Tondo district, Maynila.

Bahagi umano ito ng proyektong "Kubeta Ko" ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Maynila, kasama ang Maynilad, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, British Embassy in Manila, at Bill Gates Foundation.

Ayon kay Mayor Isko Moreno, malapit sa kaniya ang proyektong ito, dahil personal niyang naranasan ang hirap ng kawalan ng sariling palikuran habang lumalaki sa Maynila.

Mabibigyan ng dignidad ang mga mahihirap at informal settlers sa pagkakaroon ng portable toilets dahil maiiwasan ang pagkakalat ng dumi kung saan-saan at hindi na magiging "dugyot" ang paligid, ani Moreno.

Isa ang pamilya ni Desa Ripo sa mga nabigyan ng toilet.

Sa isang maliit na barung-barong sila nagsisiksikan ng kanyang mister at 6 na anak kaya wala nang espasyo para magkaroon ng sariling banyo.

Aminado si Ripo na ang ilog ang ginagawa nilang palikuran.

Kada Lunes at Huwebes kokolektahin ang waste ng portable toilets.

Hiniling ni Moreno na pangalagaan at panatilihing malinis ang mga portable toilets, lalo't 2 hanggang 3 pamilya ang maghahati-hati sa paggamit nito.

Pero batid umano ni Moreno na short-term solution lang ito kaya inuumpisahan na nila ang in-city relocation para magkaroon na ng sariling bahay ang mga informal settlers sa lungsod.

— **Ulat ni Jerome Lantin, ABS-CBN News**

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/15/20/para-may-dignidad-ilang-pamilya-sa-maynila-nakatanggap-ng-portable-toilets?fbclid=IwAR0Jb2pu7Vnuc2sdnmUs4UStPw7JAVsEB0WA5zGKgIdBGTuHCD6hES-mDOQ>



Namahagi ng portable toilets ang DENR, Manila LGU, Maynilad, at ilang international NGOs sa mga residenteng walang sanitation access sa Tondo, Maynila. | via Romel Lopez



YOUTUBE.COM

DOH: 10 milyong pamilyang Pinoy, walang maayos na palikuran

#FrontlinePilipinas | Namahagi ng portable toilets ang DENR, Manila LGU, Maynilad, at ilang in...

67

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Gov't wins case in smuggling of 757 spiders

posted December 15, 2020 at 10:10 pm

by [Joel E. Zurbano](#)

The government has won a legal case against a trader accused of smuggling 757 tarantulas at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

In a decision dated Nov. 20, Judge Allan Ariola of the Pasay Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 48 found Jesse Camaro guilty of violating the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act and the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

He ordered Camaro jailed and to pay P120,000 in fines.

"This will serve as a deterrent and warning to others engaging in similar illegal activities that the full force of the law will eventually place them behind bars," said Port of NAIA district collector Carmelita Talusan.

Talusan said Customs examiners discovered the tarantulas concealed inside boxes of cookies and oatmeal.

Customs agents in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources seized the shipment from Poland after Camaro claimed it in April 2019 at the Central Mail Exchange Center.

The spiders were valued at P310,900, with customs duties and taxes amounting to P54,752.

In March, the DENR commended the Port of NAIA for intercepting smuggled wildlife and endangered species, including the shipment of tarantulas.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu awarded the certificate of recognition to Talusan during the World Wildlife Day at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City.

Customs-NAIA had seized a total of 3,084 wildlife and endangered species from the illegal wildlife trade from 2018 to 2019. The seizures included 1,529 turtles and tortoises, 757 live tarantulas, live geckos, 254 live Corals and snakes.

The bureau also seized endangered species through different modes of smuggling into the Philippines.



2 firms accredited for Cagayan River rehab

By Leander C. Domingo, TMT

December 15, 2020

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan: The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) has accredited two dredging firms for any minerals, which may be discovered to be of value during the rehabilitation of the Cagayan River to mitigate massive flooding.

Engineer Mario Ancheta, MGB-Region 2 director, said a Certificate of Accreditation or CoA was issued to Great River North Consortium (GRNC) and Riverfront Construction Inc. (RCI) to dredge the river without any expense to be incurred by the government.

Ancheta said the MGB certifies the two companies as “dealer, trader and/or retailer of minerals/mineral products and/or by-products,” which may be extracted from the dredged materials.

Last Thursday, a memorandum of agreement (MoA) was signed between the two companies and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the removal of silt that is blocking the flow of water running through the Cagayan River.

The MoA was signed by DENR Cagayan Valley Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan, GNRC Manager Antonio Talaue and RCI President Feng Li. The plan covers 30.8 km as the river dredging zone (RDZ) is believed to be rich in magnetite, more popularly known as black sand.

Magnetite is used as an additive in the manufacture of concrete and steel products, magnets, paint, ink, paper, jewelry and cosmetics.

As stated in the MoA, the DENR will conduct a survey of nonmetallic and metallic resources in the RDZ to determine metallic and other valuable materials in economic quantities. It will also monitor the operation of the operator-dredger to ensure faithful compliance with applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations.

For Governor Manuel Mamba, the rehabilitation of the Cagayan River is a “dream come true” for the province of Cagayan, which has been suffering massive flooding due to siltation.

“There is an urgent need to dredge the river to mitigate flooding in the province and other parts of the region. This will also make it possible for us to reopen the decades-old Port of Aparri that was closed due to the heavy buildup of sand and other materials,” Mamba said.

Ancheta reiterated that GRNC and RCI will undertake the project without funding from the government and bear the full cost of the project, including the disposal of the dredged materials.

The companies are disallowed from processing dredged materials and will have to dispose them of outside the Philippine territorial jurisdiction.



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JAN 07 2020

DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 01, S. 2020

SUBJECT : RATIONALIZING DREDGING ACTIVITIES IN THE HEAVILY-SILTED RIVER CHANNELS WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL PURSUANT TO THE DENR-DPAW-DILG-DOTR JOINT MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 1 SERIES OF 2019

Pursuant to Section 2, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution, the Department's mandate under Executive Order No. 292 or the Administrative Code of the Philippines, and Section 5.4 of DENR-DPAW-DILG-DOTR Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2019-01, in order to protect and properly manage the disposition of sand as well as restore the natural state and water flow of the heavily-silted river channels in the Province of Negros Occidental, the following guidelines are hereby prescribed:

L.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Coverage. This Order shall cover the implementation of the DENR River Restoration and Dredging Activities as embodied in Section 5.4 of the DENR-DPAW-DILG-DOTR Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2019-01 in the heavily-silted river channels within the Province of Negros Occidental.

Section 2. Scope of Operations. In order to open up the heavily-silted river channels of Negros Occidental, areas starting from the coastline of river deltas extending all the way upstream, as may be determined by the Provincial Government in accordance with the DPWH Dredging Master Plan, are hereby declared exclusive River Dredging Zones (RDZ). Only dredging activities shall be allowed within the RDZ, quarrying is strictly prohibited.

Section 3. Rationale and Objectives

- The flow of materials and sediment from the upland that flank down the major river channels thereby causing its aggradation became the long-term direct culprit of massive flooding in the various barangays and municipalities of the province of Negros Occidental.
- It is necessary to protect and properly manage the utilization of the sand and gravel in the heavily-silted river channels within the Province of Negros Occidental, to improve the water flow, ensure the integrity of the various protective dikes and infrastructures, thereby reduce risks to lives and properties.
- In order to restore the natural state and water flow of the heavily-silted river channels and improve its hydraulic capacity thereby eliminate flooding, large-scale dredging and desilting operations, based on a comprehensive dredging plan, must be implemented.

Section 4. Declaration of Policies

- The exclusive authority of the province to issue permit to extract sand, gravel and other quarry resources, pursuant to the ordinance of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, under Republic Act No. 7160 is covered by Section 5.1 of JMAC 2019-01 or the Dredging with Commercial Utilization of Dredged Materials in favor of a mining permit holder under the

Let's Go Green!!!

Industrial Sand and Gravel (ISAG) or Commercial Sand and Gravel (CSAG) quarry permit.

- River Restoration through Dredging Activities under Section 5.4 of JMAC 2019-01 does not cover an ISAG or CSAG regime since the activity to be undertaken is dredging and not quarrying. This will not preclude, however, the entitlement of the Province of Negros Occidental to the share from the commercial disposal of the dredged material in addition to the understanding of the permit holder to restore the river thru dredging.
- Local Government Units are entitled to their equitable share derived from the utilization and development of the national wealth within their respective areas under Section 136 of the Local Government Code of 1991.
- The State is allowed by the Constitution to enter into agreements with private sector entities to bolster the national economy through the sustainable utilization of minerals.
- Disposal of dredged or extracted materials under this Order shall be governed by the principle according to which the government expects a reasonable return for its utilization, while holders of dredging clearance expect a reasonable return for its dredging operations while restoring the river to its original state.

Section 5. No Funding from the Government. No funding from the government shall be made for the conduct of dredging activities by the private sector. Holders of Dredging Clearance shall provide the financing, technology, management and personnel necessary to implement dredging activities within the exclusive RDZ.

M.

QUALIFICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE DREDGING OPERATORS

Section 1. Who May Apply. Any citizen of the Philippines or a SEC-registered corporation, partnership, or association established to engage in construction and/or development and/or dredging operations, with technical and financial capability to undertake large-scale flood control dredging and desilting operation in the Province of Negros Occidental, may apply for a dredging clearance with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). To implement efficient and cost-effective large-scale dredging operations, individual corporations may pool their resources, organize themselves and apply as a consortium.

Section 2. Financial Capacity. Applicants must possess the following:

- Individual applicants must possess the financial capacity by showing proof of not less than P250,000,000.00 in net worth through the submission of an Audited Financial Statement, credit lines and/or income tax returns for the preceding three (3) years and other documents that may be required by the concerned DENR agency;
- For a corporation, partnership, association or a consortium, its capital must be at least sixty per centum (60%) owned by citizens of the Philippines. A minimum authorized capital of One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) shall be required, twenty-five percent (25%) of which shall be subscribed and paid up. In no case shall the paid-up capital be less than P250,000,000.00. For consortiums, one of its members must possess these qualifications.

Section 3. Technical Competence. In addition to the above requirements, only applicants capable of implementing large-scale dredging activities for flood mitigation or prevention purposes in the heavily-silted river channels within the Province of Negros Occidental, based on their technical knowledge and verifiable previous track record conducting such activities, as properly vetted, duly certified and approved by the appropriate DENR and DPWH offices, are qualified to apply for a dredging clearance.

Section 4. Other requirements. In addition to the above-stated requirements, the proponent shall:

- Deploy all their equipment within 30 days from the Notice to Proceed (NTP) to be issued by the Provincial Government and the equipment shall be under the name of the company, either chartered or leased, and capable of undertaking large scale dredging activity.
- Post a Cash Bond in the amount of Twenty Million Pesos (P20,000,000.00), to be held in an account of the Province of Negros Occidental, to ensure compliance with this Order and other applicable environmental laws, rules and regulations.
- Secure the required clearances from the appropriate government offices including a certification of no pending case relating to compliance with existing environmental laws, rules and regulations, and an undertaking that it will never be involved in such.
- Undertake protection of the rivers banks from erosion and provide necessary engineering intervention to support the vital infrastructures along the river, pursuant to the dredging clearance approved by the DPWH.
- Secure the necessary permit from the Provincial Government and pay the required National and Local Tax as required by law.

N.

DENR RIVER RESTORATION THROUGH DREDGING ACTIVITIES

Section 1. Prior Determination of Mineral Contents. Upon determination of the RDZ, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) shall conduct a survey of the non-metallic and metallic resources on the RDZ. Once a prior determination of the metallic and other valuable materials in economic quantities is established, the proponent shall, in addition to the payment of taxes, pay the corresponding fees prescribed by the MGB.

Section 2. Application for Issuance of Dredging Clearance. The application for the issuance of Dredging Clearance must be accompanied by the endorsement of the Governor and shall be governed by this Order and other applicable DENR laws, rules and issuances.

Section 3. Prescribed Extraction Method. Holders of dredging clearance under this Order shall adopt the science and mode of extraction approved by the DPWH and implement the same in accordance with the duly approved work program in order to ensure a systematic and responsible extraction/ utilization/disposition of sand and gravel from river channels.

Section 4. Prescribed Dredging Method. In order to restore the natural state and flow of the river and taking into consideration the essential role played by constant sand replenishment, all dredging activities shall be initially conducted at the delta of heavily-silted river channels of Negros Occidental, for a period of six (6) months, with the objective of creating navigational channel and providing more depth for passage of dredging vessels to implement true flood control measures within the RDZ.

IV.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Section 1. Environmental Compliance. All holders of dredging clearance shall comply with the pertinent laws, rules and regulations on environmental protection, the allocation of funds for environment-related expenditures, environmental impact assessment, and setting up of the contingent liability and rehabilitation fund, among others.

Section 2. Programmatic Environmental Impact Assessment or Strategic Environmental Assessment per River Channel. In view of the required issuance of ECC on the one (1) Master Dredging Plan per river channel to be issued/ approved by the DPWH for the heavily-silted river channels in Negros Occidental, the EMS RO-VI shall conduct the Programmatic EA or SEA for each river system in coordination with MGB, DPWH and the Provincial Government. The Provincial Government may be the proponent for the Programmatic EA and SEA.

Section 3. Application for Issuance of ECC. Upon endorsement of the Provincial Governor, all ECC applications for large-scale dredging in heavily-silted river channels in Negros Occidental shall be filed with the LMB RO-VI.

Section 4. Extraction Limit. In view of the large-scale river dredging operations involving the heavily-silted river channels in Negros Occidental within the RDZ from the river delta extending all the way upstream and its high replenishment rate, the issuance of ECC per river channel shall not be subject to any extraction limit, provided that:

- The extraction activities conform with the approved work program in accordance with the DPWH Dredging Master Plan;
- Assessment of the river systems shall be done by the team composed of representatives from PENRO, CENRO and the MGB every two (2) years; and
- The maximum allowable extraction conforms to the designated mitigating measures based on the environmental impact assessment.

V.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH DENR

Section 1. Authority to Dispose. A holder of an approved Dredging Clearance shall enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DENR - Regional Office (RO) VI wherein the holder is granted the authority to dispose materials extracted from the RDZ.

Section 2. Accreditation as Trader. All holders of dredging clearance issued by the DPWH or entities duly authorized or contracted by holders of dredging clearance to market and/or commercially dispose dredged or extracted materials should be accredited as trader/retailer/wholesaler. The Certificate of Accreditation shall be issued by the DENR through the MGB RO-VI.

Section 3. Transport Permit. The Transport Permit (TTP) and/or Mineral Disposal Permit (MDCP) shall be included in the MOA executed between the DENR RO-VI and the holder of the dredging clearance who has been accredited as a trader. Provided, that a written notice prior to shipment or transport of dredged and/or extracted suitable materials shall be furnished to the MGB RO-VI for the purpose of monitoring dredging activities in the RDZ.

Section 4. Excise Tax. The excise tax on locally extracted or produced non-metallic minerals and quarry resources will be based on the actual market value of the gross output thereof at the time of removal. The Excise Tax shall be timely and completely paid to the nearest Bureau of Internal Revenue Office in the province concerned.

Section 5. Work Deviation. Any deviation of more than 15% from the approved work program in any of the activities involved, without the prior concurrence of the DPWH in coordination with the DENR through the MGB RO-VI shall be sufficient ground for the suspension/cancellation of pertinent permits and clearances.

VI.

OPERATIONS PERMIT WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Operations Permit. No Operations Permit, Notice of Award and Notice to Proceed shall be issued by the Provincial Government pursuant to this Order, unless the applicant has a valid MOA with DENR RO-VI, has been duly accredited as a trader, and has secured a dredging clearance for flood control dredging and desilting activities in the RDZ from the Secretary of the DPWH or its authorized representative based on DPWH-issued one river-specific Dredging Master Plan.

Section 2. Monitoring and Supervision Fee. A monitoring and supervision fee which shall not be less than five percent (5%) of the market value of the gross output of the materials extracted from the covered area within the RDZ, exclusive of all other taxes, shall be paid to the provincial government for purpose of monitoring and ensuring compliance with this Order and other related issuances.

Section 3. Extraction Fee. Suitable materials for commercial disposition shall be subject to extraction fee, to be collected by the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental in accordance with the Local Government Code.

VII.

MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

Section 1. Creation of Inter-Agency Committee. An inter-agency committee shall be created, composed of the following:

- Governor of the Province of Negros Occidental as Chairperson;
- DENR Regional Executive Director VI as Vice-Chairperson;
- DPWH Regional Director VI as Member;
- MGB Regional Director VI as Member; and
- EMB Regional Director VI as Member.

Section 2. Powers and Functions of the Inter-Agency Committee. The inter-agency committee shall have the following powers and functions:

- Serve as oversight for the implementation of this Administrative Order and monitoring of the dredging operations;
- Shall recommend the suspension and/or cancellation of permits and/or clearances; and
- Shall propose policies and programs to rationalize the dredging operations.

VIII.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Subjunctively to Other Laws. This Order shall be subject to the Constitution, and all pertinent laws, guidelines and issuances.

Section 2. Repealing Clause. All Orders, issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 3. Separability. The provisions of this Order are hereby declared to be separable. If any part or provision of this Order shall be declared invalid, the remaining portions or provisions shall not be affected thereby and shall be construed as if it did not contain the particular invalid term or provision.

Section 4. Suppletory Clause. In case of violation and/or non-compliance with the provisions of this Administrative Order, the pertinent penal provisions under RA, 7942, Presidential Decree No. 1586 and other applicable laws, rules and regulations shall be applied suppletory hereto.

Section 5. Effectivity. This Administrative Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in a newspaper of general circulation and registration with the Office of the Administrative Register.

Issued on **JAN 07 2020**, in Cebu City.

ROY A. CIMATU
Secretary





Gov't to still give presidential awards to miners

1 day ago



No pandemic or any unprecedented scenarios can stop the government from giving presidential awards to mining companies.

In a memorandum, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) announced the call for nominees among mining contractors, permit holders and permittees and their operator/s for the 2020 Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Awards (PMIEA), Mining Forest Program (MFP) – Best Mining Forest Contest, and Safest Mines Awards (SMA).

PMIEA seeks to recognize the exemplary practices and commitments of entities involved in underground and surface mining operation, quarry operation, mineral exploration, and mineral processing.

All of these activities contribute towards sustainable mineral development by promoting responsible management of the environment and natural resources”.

Last year’s PMIEA awardees were Agata Mining Ventures Inc., Holcim Mining and Development Corp., Cagdianao Mining Corporation, Republic Cement and Building Materials, Inc., Mindanao Mineral Processing and Refining Corp., and Mt. Labo Exploration and Development Corp.

“Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the various Selection Committees and MGB opted to continue to give recognition to the private sector’s initiatives and exemplary achievements in the protection of the environment and ecology to further promote private sector participation, enhance public awareness on the protection of the environment and ecology, and contribute to the growth of the economy and improvement in the quality of life of Filipinos,“ MGB said.

For this year’s selection, nominees are required to submit PMIEA/MFP write-up, supporting safety and health, environment, and social development as well as and audio-visual presentation.

Offsite validation will be conducted to adhere to the ongoing community quarantine due to COVID-19.

For this year’s selection, the virtual awarding ceremony has been tentatively scheduled in March 2021, MGB said.

Source: <https://bilyonaryo.com.ph/2020/12/14/govt-to-still-give-presidential-awards-to-miners/>



Senate OKs bill simplifying confirmation of imperfect land titles for farmers

Published December 15, 2020 8:22pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

Voting 17-0, the Senate on Tuesday approved on third and final reading a bill seeking to improve the confirmation of imperfect titles by simplifying the procedure and requirements in granting land deeds to farmers.

Under the existing law, a copy of the original classification approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary, as well as a City Environment and Natural Resources Office Certification, and an official publication of the DENR Secretary's issuance declaring that the land is alienable and disposable is being required for the process, Senator Richard Gordon has said.

Under Senate Bill No. 1931, the need for the Environment Secretary's certification and other barriers of proving ownership had been removed.

"A duly signed certification by a duly designated DENR Geodetic Engineer that the land is part of alienable and disposable agricultural lands of the public domain is sufficient proof that the land is alienable," the bill read.

The period of possession required for perfection of imperfect titles was also shortened from 74 years to 30 years.

"The first primary objective of this bill is to address the difficulties encountered in proving ownership since 1945 and the strict standards set by the Supreme Court in the judicial confirmation of imperfect titles," Gordon, sponsor of the bill, earlier said in a statement.

The proposed law shall cover lands which do not exceed 12 hectares.

Moreover, the bill removes the fixed term set on December 31, 2020 for the filing of application of agricultural free patents as stated under Republic Act 9176.

Once signed into law, this measure would prevent a possible impasse wherein unregistered owners of agricultural lands will no longer be able to formalize their ownership, Gordon stressed.

"If no law is passed to extend or remove the period of application, no new agricultural free patent will be issued by DENR and poor rural farmers may not be able to title their lands. Under this proposed bill, we now remove the deadline for the application through free patent, making it available at any time, for qualified beneficiaries," he said.

A measure certified urgent by Malacanang, the bill was approved on second and third reading on the same day.

The House of Representatives approved its counterpart measure last November. **-MDM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/768134/senate-oks-bill-simplifying-confirmation-of-imperfect-land-titles-for-farmers/story/>



Senate OKs bill simplifying land titling for farmers

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 15, 2020 10:29:20 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 15) -- The Senate on Tuesday approved on third and final reading a bill seeking to simplify the procedure and requirements in granting land deeds to farmers.

Senate Bill No. 1931 aims to improve the confirmation of imperfect titles by amending Presidential Decree No. 1529 (Property Registration Decree), Commonwealth Act No. 141 (Public Land Act), and Republic Act No. 9176.

The current law requires a copy of the original classification approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary, a certification from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, and an official publication of the Environment Secretary's issuance declaring that the land title is alienable and disposable.

Once enacted into law, the proposed measure would remove the requirement for a certification from the DENR Secretary and other requirements to proving one's ownership.

Senate Bill No. 1931 also proposes to shorten the period of possession required for the perfection of imperfect titles from 74 years to 30 years.

The bill would also remove the fixed term set on Dec. 31 this year for the filling of application of agriculture free patents as stated in R.A. No. 9176.

A similar bill was also approved on final reading at the House of Representatives last month.



Laguna de Bay to benefit from trade deal with Hungary

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:45 AM December 16, 2020



LAKE LIVELIHOOD Residents in communities surrounding Laguna de Bay, like Binangonan town in Rizal province, depend on the lake's aquaculture industry to support their families. —NIÑO

JESUS ORBETA

SAN PEDRO CITY—The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) is planning to establish a modern and contactless water quality monitoring system across the 90,000-hectare Laguna de Bay as part of the Philippines' \$30-million (P1.44-billion) trade cooperation agreement with Hungary.

Aside from installing 47 water quality monitoring stations, another component of the deal is a comprehensive feasibility study for the rehabilitation of the heavily silted water body.

Laguna de Bay, which covers the provinces of Laguna and Rizal, and parts of Metro Manila, serves multiple uses, both ecologically and economically, one of which is the multimillion-peso “bangus” (milkfish) and tilapia aquaculture.

The rehabilitation of the lake and its tributaries, which overflow during heavy rainfall and flood lakeshore communities, was one of the priority programs of the government early on President Duterte's term.

On Dec. 4, a memorandum of cooperation was signed by the LLDA and the private firm, Hungarian Water Technology Corp., during the second Philippines-Hungarian Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation. The project could possibly be funded by the state-owned Hungarian Eximbank.

Since the deal did not include a grant component, the loan would come at “no interest” against the Philippine government, said Jun Paul Mistica, department manager of the LLDA Resource Management and Development.

The foreign water company is considered an expert in the field, particularly for monitoring and treating the Danube River that cuts across Eastern Europe, he said.

“We are praying for the Department of Finance to iron out [the deal with the Hungarian government]. On the part of the LLDA, we are ready to accept the technology,” Mistica said in a phone interview on Monday.



Fish kill mitigation

The LLDA targets to install the water quality monitoring equipment in 47 locations from where the agency currently looks at the increase or decrease of the lake water level, especially during a weather disturbance, he said.

“Especially now that we are in a pandemic, we want to be contactless when testing the water quality. Traditionally, or what we do now, we send out people in PPE (personal protective equipment) on boats to collect water samples and bring them back to the lab [for testing],” he added.

Another advantage of a centralized system is getting the results in real time. Mistica said it could mitigate economic losses to fish kill, a natural phenomenon triggered by depleting water oxygen level whenever the weather changes.

“It could [detect the] water quality a day or days ahead a fish kill occurs,” he said. —
MARICAR CINCO INQ



Six local bamboo species could clean up metal pollutants from soil — DENR

Published December 15, 2020, 2:53 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Six local bamboo species were found to have the potential to clean up soils severely contaminated by heavy metals, a study by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) showed.

The study titled “Screening of Selected Bamboo Species Capable to Uptake Heavy Metal Pollutants from the Soil,” and conducted by the ERDB’s Toxic and Hazardous Wastes Research, Development, and Extension Center looked into the potential of six bamboo species to absorb heavy metals in the soil, their growth performance, and survival rate.

The species studied were kawayan tinik (*Bambusa blumeana*), buho (*Schizostachyum lumampao*), kawayan kiling (*Bambusa vulgaris Schrad*), anos (*Schizostachyum lima*), giant bamboo (*Dendrocalamus asper*), and bayog (*Bambusa merilliana*).

ERDB’s study results revealed that the local bamboo species can absorb and accumulate certain amounts of heavy metal pollutants from the soil.

The species of bamboo that were studied have been found to survive and tolerate heavy metals from a soil contaminated with lead, cadmium, chromium, and mercury, among others.

The analysis of bamboo tissues reflected that kawayan tinik species samples accumulated the highest amount of lead and mercury in its tissues.

Meanwhile, anos species had the highest amount of cadmium, while buho accumulated the highest amount of chromium.

The study also showed that kawayan kiling and buho had the highest survival rate and tolerance to the said heavy metal contaminants in general.

The results of the study showed that bamboo has the potential to address environmental concerns, as it can be a vital “phytoremediation” tool through its absorption of chemicals from contaminated soil and restore the environment.

Recent phytoremediation studies have also found that bamboo has the potential to absorb pollutants in the air, soil, or water.

Considering the number of native bamboo species available in the country, the study pointed out that it could be advantageous to utilize them for rehabilitation of heavily-contaminated soil.

It also recommended the participation of local governments, plant growers, and other industries to support the continued cultivation and growth of these species of bamboo.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/15/six-local-bamboo-species-could-clean-up-metal-pollutants-from-soil-denr/>



Trash traps set up along rivers in CL

posted December 15, 2020 at 11:40 pm

by [Jess Malabanan](#)

City of San Fernando—Garbage thrown into the river will no longer be drifted to Manila Bay areas as the local government units and environmental authorities in three Central Luzon provinces set-up their respective trash traps along major rivers and tributaries.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office Paquito Moreno said more than 30 tons of domestic wastes have been collected in 50 trash traps in Pampanga, Bataan, and Bulacan.

The project, Moreno said is part of the DENR3 effort to prevent garbage mostly solid waste from drifting towards Manila Bay.

“The trash traps are made of recycled materials and are strategically installed along riverways and tributaries and serve as stopper of floating garbage and prevent from being drifted downstream of Manila Bay,” said Moreno in a statement.

In Bataan, a total of seven trash traps were installed along the riverways of coastal municipalities including Hermosa, Pilar, Orani, Abucay, Orion, Limay and Mariveles. Four were set-up in Meycauayan City major riverways and tributaries while nine in Pampanga mostly concentrated in Guagua town.

“Solid wastes have been trapped reducing the volume of garbage from being drifted downstream to Manila Bay and other areas. Over 30 tons of domestic garbage have been taken out of the waterways since the trash traps have been set-up,” Moreno explained.

He appealed to residents along coastal communities to refrain from throwing domestic wastes into the river to avoid water pollution and.

“Let us practice proper waste management at home and refrain from throwing garbage in our waterways so that wildlife and other marine species which find home in our water systems may stay,” Moreno added.

The Supreme Court issued a Mandamus on Manila Bay four years ago directing the 13 government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate, preserve, and restore and maintain its water and make it fit for swimming, skin diving and other forms of contact recreations.



Writ of Kalikasan seeks to halt SMC's P735.6-billion Bulacan airport project

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#) and [Joel R. San Juan](#)

December 16, 2020



Artist's rendering of the planned Bulacan airport.

Affected fisherfolk and civil-society groups led by Oceana Philippines filed on Tuesday a petition for a Writ of Kalikasan against proponents of the P735.6-billion New Manila International Airport Project in Bulakan, Bulacan.

Among the petitioners, fisherfolk based in Bulakan, were represented by Teodoro Bacon and Rodel Alvarez.

Together with Oceana, through its Vice President Atty. Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Archbishop Roger Martinez of the Archdiocese of San Jose del Monte, and Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura led by Renato de la Cruz, the group's chairman, the petitioners trooped to the Supreme Court in Manila with the hope of stopping the project, which, they said, will require massive land-reclamation, or dump-and-fill activities.

Named respondents in a 95-page petition are Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Environmental Management Bureau Region III Regional Director Wilson Trajeco, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, San Miguel Aerocity President/CEO Ramon S. Ang, and Silvertides President/CEO Hercules V. Galicia.

The respondents pointed out that it was Silvertides that acquired an environmental clearance certificate (ECC) on June 14, 2019 for land development, but not for the airport project.

At a news conference via Zoom on Tuesday, environmental lawyer Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, vice president of Oceana said the petition for the issuance of a Writ of Kalikasan aims to stop the further destruction of fishing grounds and important habitats, and compel concerned government agencies tasked to implement various environmental laws to protect the environment.

"We take this as a serious duty on our part that our right to a balanced ecology, people's rights, especially fishers and farmers' are protected," said Ramos.

According to the petitioners, the SMC subsidiary had been saying that their project was different from SMC's aerotropolis.

For this purpose, the Writ of Kalikasan is also pushing for the issuance of a court order declaring the DENR's Freedom of Information Manual, which exempts environmental impact statement from public disclosure—as ultra vires and invalid—the agency having continuously refused to provide a copy of the document, they said.

Atty. Gregorio Tanaka Viterbo Jr., Oceana's legal counsel who filed the petition said several Philippine environmental laws were violated, including the Environmental Impact System (EIS) law.



According to Viterbo, one of the violations of the proponents of the project is the lack of an ECC for an airport project.

“What we have on record is an ECC for land development which does not mention the airport which covers the same area,” he said.

He added that the petition emphasized that Manila Bay is a key biodiversity area.

“Based on the parameters even of the area for the airport project, it actually covers forest and permanent forest lands, which are not alienable and disposable. Even the fishponds which they say their acquired from private landowners are not possible because there are laws that say mangrove areas are forest lands,” he said.

Further, Viterbo said that portion of the project site in Barangay Taliptip is protected by 50-year-old law, after having been declared as the Bulacan Fishing Reservation, which makes it a public land that “cannot be disposed of.”

To recall, SMC, with its subsidiary-contractor Silvertides Holdings, bared plans to construct the New Manila International Airport which will be built on a 2,500-hectare foreshore area of Bulakan, Bulacan—classified by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority as forestland and permanent forestland.

The airport is part of an envisioned 12,000-hectare township that features a residential zone, government center, seaport, and an industrial zone.

In attempting to stop the reclamation of Manila Bay, the petitioners hope to save the sardines, shrimps and crabs, endangered migratory birds, and mangroves, marine habitats and ecosystem in Manila Bay, and full compliance with fisheries and other environmental laws, thereby protecting our natural life support systems and the fisherfolk who depend on these for livelihood.

Manila Bay serves as the main source of livelihood for residents in the coastal cities and municipalities of the National Capital Region. It also contributes a sizable portion to the total fish production of the country.

According to the 2018 data of the Philippine Statistics Authority, municipal, commercial, and aquaculture workers of Metro Manila alone yielded an estimated 103,882.87 metric tons of fishery products from Manila Bay. Manila Bay is a rich sardine spawning ground, according to the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute.

“We have to keep on working together in the protection, rehabilitation, and conservation of Manila Bay, not only for its economic importance and contribution to national food security, and for its historical, cultural, and aesthetic value but to make ecosystems and people resilient to the impacts of climate change,” Ramos said.

Just last year, a newly discovered sardine species, *Sardinella pacifica*, was identified from the bay.

Farther out, near the mouth of the bay, the DENR also discovered coral reefs thriving despite the condition of the water.

Mangroves in Bulacan—which have since been reduced to only 27 percent of the original acreage due to rampant cutting—are critical to defending the coastal communities from storm surge, land subsidence, and other impacts of climate change.

“Environmental damage of such magnitude is prejudicial to the life, health or property of inhabitants in two or more cities or provinces, not to mention its impacts on declining fish catch to fisherfolk communities in Manila Bay and even that of passengers and airline owners from possible bird strike,” said Ramos.



Using the conservative global average for sea-level rise (SLR) in Manila Bay of 29 cm by 2050 and the steady rates of land subsidence due to uncontrolled groundwater extraction, the airport tarmac could be back at sea level and at risk of daily flooding by the year 2052.

“This calculation suggests this project is not viable in this location and not worth the massive ecological and socioeconomic impact that it would entail. It is no wonder that the Manila Bay Sustainable Development Master Plan released in June 2020 draws a coastal line of defense that goes way inland than the project covered area,” said Ramos.

The Writ of Kalikasan is a legal remedy that provides protection of a person’s constitutional right to a healthy environment. Article II Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution states that the “state shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.”

“Manila Bay is an active and living bay. It plays host to several species of fishes, seashells, and corals, and even endangered migratory birds. These are affected by this airport and real estate development,” the petitioners said.

Image credits: [Image from San Miguel Corp.](#)



This chapel, on a piece of dry land that residents refer to as "Torres" used to be a church for the fishers of Sitio Kinse and other parts of Taliptip in Bulakan, Bulacan.

[## Taliptip fishers, groups file writ of kalikasan vs Bulacan airport project](http://Philstar.com/Efigenio>Toledo IV</p></div><div data-bbox=)

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - December 15, 2020 - 7:02pm

MANILA, Philippines — Bulacan fishermen and civil society groups asked the Supreme Court on Tuesday to compel the government to protect marine ecosystems and resources in Manila Bay that would be threatened by the construction of a sprawling airport city complex in the province.

Former residents of Barangay Taliptip in Bulakan town, Oceana Philippines and two other petitioners urged the Supreme Court to issue a writ of kalikasan against the San Miguel airport project in Bulacan.

A writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy for persons or organizations whose right to a balanced and healthful ecology is violated or threatened.

The petition asked the Supreme Court to stop the reclamation of Manila Bay, and save fish and crustaceans species, endangered migratory birds, mangroves and marine ecosystems in the area.

“The petition is to stop the further destruction of fishing grounds and marine habitats such as mangroves and wetlands in Manila Bay and for our government agencies, respondent agencies and project proponents to protect our environment and our people’s environmental rights,” environmental lawyer Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, Oceana vice president, said in a briefing.

The respondents are Department of Environment and Natural Resources DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, Environmental Management Bureau Central Luzon Regional Director Wilson Trajeco, Department of Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, San Miguel Aerocity President and CEO Ramon Ang and Silvertides President and CEO Hercules Galicia.

Reclamation of mangroves, wetlands

Spanning 2,500 hectares, the P738-billion New Manila International Airport and its adjacent airport city will be built over Barangays Taliptip and Bambang in Bulakan town, covering the mangrove and mudflat ecosystems, the petitioners said.

“Reclamation, even if it’s not mentioned in the recognized projects of the Philippine Reclamation Authority, is what will happen to the construction of the airport. They really have to reclaim land and partially submerge areas,” Gregorio Tanaka Viterbo Jr., one of the petitioners’ counsels, said.



Residents said the clearing of mangroves in the area, which is part of northern Manila Bay, began in 2018. More mangroves have been trimmed since.

Mangroves provide a number of critical ecosystem services. They help protect communities from waves and cyclones, filter pollution and sediment and serve as a breeding ground for marine species. In the battle against climate change, they also play an important role by sequestering carbon.

The petition stressed that the loss of ecosystem services is both a “short term and long term effect” of reclamation.

“The long lasting effect of reclaiming the entire area on the ecosystem services is that these ecosystem services won’t be there anymore. No more fishing, aquaculture and no more mangroves to protect the coastline. So the area will be subjected to greater natural hazard such as storm surges,” the petition read.

‘Adverse’ effects

The petition said the conversion of Bulakan waters into an airport will also affect the spawning of sardines and will lead to the decline in aquaculture production and fish catch. The airport—which will be built in a “key bird area”—may also adversely affect [migratory and resident waterbirds](#), including endangered species.

Other adverse impacts of the project include land subsidence, storm surges and earthquake-induced ground shaking and liquefaction, the petition pointed out. The reclamation is also seen to exacerbate [flooding](#) in the area.

To address environmental concerns about the project, San Miguel Corp. planted 8,000 mangrove seedlings in a 10-hectare coastal area in Hagonoy. It aims to cover 76 hectares of coastal area. But mangrove expert Jurgenne Primavera said this effort means nothing, as the mangrove reforestation target should be at least 3,100 hectares.

Aside from the adverse effects on bird population, marine habitat and increased risks of climate impacts, the petition stressed that environmental laws required to be enforced and should regulate the airport project have been violated or circumvented.

“Up until public and private respondents address and resolve concerns brought about by the impact of dump-and-fill activities such as aquatic pollution, marine habitat degradation, impairment/loss of a globally important waterbird site, loss of sardine spawning grounds, loss of mangroves and wetland area, storm surges, liquefaction and other earthquake-related hazards, sea level rise, flooding, land subsidence; spirited and scientific opposition will linger,” the petition said.



Group wants writ to stop Aerocity work

posted December 15, 2020 at 10:05 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

A group has asked the Supreme Court to issue a Writ of Kalikasan to stop San Miguel Corporation's construction of a domestic and international airport in Bulacan called the "Aerocity Airport Project."

In a petition, fishermen based in Bulakan, represented by Teodoro Bacon and Rodel Alvarez, together with Oceana through its Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Archbishop Roger Martinez of the Archdiocese of San Jose del Monte, and Aniban ng mga Mangagawa sa Agrikultura led by Renato de la Cruz, the group's Chairman, argued that SMC's airport project should be stopped because it was violating many environmental laws, adversely affecting the resident and migratory bird population and increasing the risks for adverse climate change, thus, adversely affecting the marine habitat.

Oceana is an international advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the world's oceans.

SMC Aerocity, with its subsidiary-contractor Silvertides Holdings, plans to construct the New Manila International Airport that will be built on a 2,500-hectare foreshore area of Bulakan, Bulacan, classified by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority as forestland and permanent forest land.

The airport is part of an envisioned 12,000-hectare township featuring a residential zone, a government center, a seaport and an industrial zone.

According to the petitioners, the airport project area and the Airport City Area cover forest and permanent forest land that are not alienable and disposable, thus it violates Republic Act 4701 or An Act Declaring a Portion of the Foreshore Fronting Manila Bay Along the Province of Bulacan as Bulacan Fishing Reservation and Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds Therefor. Rey E. Requejo

They say that portions of the areas covering the project are classified as public forest and fishery reserves and therefore inalienable.

Named respondents in the case were Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, Environmental Management Bureau Region III regional director Wilson Trajeco, Transportation Secretary Art Tugade, San Miguel Aerocity President and CEO Ramon S. Ang, and Silvertides President and CEO Hercules V. Galicia.



Airport land dev't set; Writ of Kalikasan sought

By [Malaya Business Insight](#) -December 16, 2020

By MYLA IGLESIAS and JED MACAPAGAL

San Miguel Corp. (SMC) has awarded a \$1.73-billion contract with Boskalis Philippines Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dutch firm Royal Boskalis Westminster N.V., for land development works that will jumpstart the construction of the Manila International Airport (MIA) project in Bulacan in the first quarter.

This developed as civil society group Oceana and some fishermen affected by the airport project yesterday filed at the Supreme Court a Writ of Kalikasan in a bid to stop the reclamation of Manila Bay.

In a statement, Ramon Ang, SMC president and chief operating officer, said Boskalis was chosen after a rigorous selection process that included the world's biggest and best dredging companies.

"Our selection of a global giant in dredging shows how ready, willing, and committed we are to do everything necessary to make sure this airport project is developed properly and sustainably.

We will make sure it will serve and benefit Filipinos, our host province Bulacan, and the rest of the Philippines, for many generations to come," Ang said in a statement.

Ang added the preparatory works on land development at the airport site in Bulakan, Bulacan will start in the first quarter of 2021 and will be fully completed by 2024. The contract is valued at approximately \$1.8 billion.

Boskalis has committed to ensure the area will be suitable for development. It will be designed with the highest technical and environmental standards, so it can withstand potential large earthquakes, local typhoon conditions, and even future sea level rise.

"During the construction phase, we will contribute to the local economy and the new airport will bring further growth to the whole Manila region," said Peter Berdowski, Boskalis chief executive officer.

Boskalis' workplan and methodology include measures to prevent soil liquefaction in the entire area.

Boskalis, a global dredging contractor with a rich heritage and successful track record spanning more than a century, is known for major projects worldwide such as the ongoing development of Singapore's Tuas Terminal Phase 2 port and its Tekong polder projects.

It is also involved in other landmark projects worldwide, such as the development of the Songdo International City in South Korea, Punta Pacifica Islands in Panama, five islands in Makassar in Indonesia, and the Ijburg residential area in Amsterdam.

Meanwhile, petitioners of the Writ of Kalikasan cited the need to save marine creatures, endangered migratory birds, mangroves, marine habitats as well as the livelihood of fishermen.

Gregorio Viterbo Jr., legal counsel of Oceana, said in an online briefing yesterday the case was anchored on three grounds, including violation and circumvention of environmental laws.



“The proponents lack and Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) for an airport. What they only have on record is ECC for land development which does not mention the airport,” Viterbo said.

Viterbo said the airport will affect the habitat of migratory birds in the area and will subsequently have an impact to the entire ecosystem and will increase the risk of climate change.

The writ also pushes for the issuance of a court order declaring as invalid the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ Freedom of Information Manual which exempts environmental impact statement from public disclosure.

A Writ of Kalikasan is a legal remedy that provides protection of a person’s constitutional right to a healthy environment.

Ang said he will address all concerns raised once they receive a copy of the petition.

But he said SMC has started initiatives to proactively address the social and environmental impacts of the “much-needed project.”

“Even as the airport project itself has yet to start, we have already started a multi-river system dredging initiative—starting with the P1 billion cleanup of the 27-km. Tullahan-Tinajeros river system—as part of long-term solutions to flooding in Bulacan province. The planting of 200,000 mangroves to further protect coastal areas throughout the province and Central Luzon, is also well underway,” he explained.

“We have also commissioned a foreign firm to conduct a comprehensive and independent study of all possible environment impacts, to ensure these will be taken into consideration and addressed in the development stage,” Ang said.



Bulacan airport project sued over environment issues; SMC vows to address concerns

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 15, 2020 9:46:31 PM



San Miguel Corporation said it has begun a project to plant thousands of mangroves in a coastal area in Hagonoy, Bulacan. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 15) — A marine conservation group filed a writ of kalikasan case on Tuesday, saying San Miguel Corporation's ₱734-billion airport project in Bulacan will affect Manila Bay's marine life and migratory bird population.

Oceana Philippines went to the Supreme Court to file the petition that was signed by its vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Bulacan town fishermen Rodel Alvarez and Teodoro Bacon, as well as labor group Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA) and San Jose del Monte Archbishop Roger Martinez.

A writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy available to any person who feels that their constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology has been violated or could be violated.

The petition enumerated the multiple dangers of building the 2,500-hectare airport city. It was waged against San Miguel Aerocity, Inc., its contractor Silvertides Holdings Corp. and the Departments of Transportation, and Environment and Natural Resources.

One of the main concerns cited was the project's adverse effects on Manila Bay's biological diversity. The bay serves as a habitat for marine life, especially for sardines, said Jun Viterbo, Oceana's defense counsel. It is also home to crustaceans and shrimp which makes it a lucrative fishing point for residents. AMA Chairperson Renato dela Cruz said the airport will trample 18 species of marine animals if it pushes through.

"It's not a dead area for fish," said Viterbo in a press briefing. "It's actually a very very profitable area."

Thousands of birds also often flock to the bay as part of its migration route, according to Mike Lu, president of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines.

Lu, who mentioned that his group has worked with environment officials for bird sightings, pointed out that everyday, around 25,000 birds visit Barangay Bambang, by the airport site. The presence of planes in the area could also increase the number of bird strikes, or accidents where birds collide with airplane engines.

SMC's airport project, which was proposed to decongest the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, is expected to feature four parallel runways and a world-class terminal, among other things, and can accommodate up to 100 million passengers annually.

SMC's response

SMC President and COO Ramon Ang said the company will address the issues in the petition once they get a copy of it. He maintained, however, that they have already taken steps to ensure the project will be built sustainably.



These initiatives include mangrove tree-planting after environment advocates in the past raised that the project will severely impact mangroves in coastal communities that are needed to cushion the effects of storm surges and other disasters.

The company earlier vowed to plant 200,000 mangroves in the province and around Central Luzon, which already began in [July](#).

"We have also commissioned a foreign firm to conduct a comprehensive and independent study of all possible environment impacts, to ensure these will be taken into consideration and addressed in the development stage," said Ang in a statement.

SMC also questioned the involvement of petitioners Alvarez and Bacon, claiming that the two informed the company that they were not aware they were cited in the case. It also revealed that Bacon in particular, received financial help from the conglomerate for a new home, with access to water and electricity.

However, in the press conference, Oceana showed a recent video of the two fishermen attesting that they were against SMC's airport project.

"Kaya kami nasama sa kaso na 'to, gusto naming ipaglaban din 'yung aming hanapbuhay na naapektuhan ng proyekto na 'yan," said Bacon in the video. "Sabi nila noong una, pwede pa kami maghanapbuhay dun. Ngayon pinagbabawalan na kami."

[Translation: We joined this case because we want to fight for the source of our livelihood that was affected by that project. They said at first we could still work there, but now we are being prevented from doing so.]

CNN Philippines Digital Producer Janine Peralta contributed to this report.



Samar gov reaffirms stand against mining

By Roel Amazona December 15, 2020, 1:18 pm



NO TO MINING. Samar Governor Michael Tan addresses provincial government workers during a flag-raising ceremony on Monday (Dec. 14, 2020) in Catbalogan City, Samar. The Samar provincial government has expressed opposition to the proposed mining operation in the province since it is contrary to their thrust to develop ecotourism. (Photo courtesy of Michael Tan)

TACLOBAN CITY – The Samar provincial government has expressed opposition to the proposed mining operation in the province since it is contrary to their thrust to develop ecotourism.

Governor Reynolds Michael Tan said on Monday that since the news about the operation of bauxite mining in the province came out, no official from the mining firm has discussed with them about it.

“We are against mining because it is not part of our Samar Spark tourism agenda. In fact, there’s an ordinance prohibiting the operation of mining in Samar,” Tan told reporters.

“Being the governor, I am duty-bound to protect the interest of residents of Samar and the future generation, but if they will insist, if (there is) something good that can help develop Samar then I am willing to listen to them,” he added.

Marcventures Holdings Inc. (MHI) plans to operate a bauxite mine in the towns of Motiong, San Jose De Buan, and Paranas.

Once approved by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), this will make MHI the only firm to extract bauxite mines in the country.

MHI acquired the bauxite mine in Samar in 2016 after a merger with Asia Pilot Mining Philippines (APMPC) and Brightgreen Resources Corp.

It acquired Alumina Mining Phils. Inc. (AMPI) that holds Mineral Production Sharing Agreement 179-2002- VIII (Samar Island Bauxite Reservation) with an area of 6,694 hectares.

It was learned that aside from developing a new mining area, the MHI is also looking at expanding its operation in Surigao.

Bauxite is a rock composed of aluminum-bearing minerals commonly found in a tropical and subtropical climate.

Aluminum alloys are vital to several countries such as China, Australia, and the United States and industries including aerospace, transportation, and construction.

Australia, China, India, and Brazil are the main sources of aluminum in the world.

Mining is one of the identified industries of the national government that will become an economic driver of the country that is badly affected by the present health crisis.

The governor said that even if mining is the thrust of the national government, he is still opposed to it and will explain to the President why he is firm on his stand and the possible damage that mining will cause to the province. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1124756>



Samar gov reaffirms stand against mining

December 15, 2020 3 min read

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Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2020/12/15/samar-guv-reaffirms-stand-against-mining/?fbclid=IwAR3dNY1aj9-af8W2T2gEiAP7dG9YERJfHtCLNU4T7Qtp-FWwqjgyCIFPBho>



Antipolo IPs switch side in UMRBPL land feud

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

December 16, 2020



Aerial photographs of Duyan, one of the attractions at the Masungi Georeserve.

Tribal leaders of the Dumagat-Remontados of Antipolo City has turned the tables against Blue Star Construction and Development Corp., operator of the Masungi Georeserve, and accused its president, Benjamin Dumaliang, of alleged land grabbing activities.

Rublou Inc. and Blue Star, which are both occupying portions of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL) are in conflict over boundary issues.

Blue Star and Masungi filed a complaint before the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) against Rublou Inc., and its subsidiary, Green Atom, for allegedly occupying a portion of UMRBPL.

After putting up fences, Masungi complained that Rublou Inc. and Green Atom deployed security guards in the area.

Masungi Georeserve wants Rublou Inc. and Green Atom out of the area.

Masungi Georeserve and its operators were given authority by the DENR to conduct reforestation activities within the UMRBPL.

At a news conference via Zoom, the tribal leaders, who claim to represent the Kaksan Ne Dumaget De Antipolo Inc., however, claimed it was Blue Star and Masungi Georeserve that have allegedly encroached in their ancestral land.

The Dumagat-Remontados is claiming 13,000 hectares of the 26,000 hectares UMRBPL as part of their ancestral domain although the tribe has not yet to secure its Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) from the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP).

During the news conference, they also lambasted officials of Masungi and Benjamin Dumaliang, president of the Blue Star, operator of Masungi Georeserve, for labeling them as “land grabbers, squatters and illegal loggers who caused the flood in Marikina recently.”

Ernesto Doroteo, one of 7 tribal chieftains in Antipolo said they were offended by Masungi’s remarks and took the side of Rublou, adding that the Dumagat-Remontados of Antipolo is a longtime friend of Green Atom President Luizo Ticman, a retired general who has been helping the tribe since the 1990s.



He also hit the DENR for its failed National Greening Program (NGP) program in the UMRBPL, and for allegedly allowing private interests and individuals who are the ones to blame for the massive tree poaching and charcoal-making activities in their ancestral land and exploit the natural resources that are supposed to be for the benefit of IP communities in the area.

During the press conference, the tribal leaders admitted selling a 300 hectare portion of their ancestral land, which is alienable and disposable, to Ticman in the 1990s for P5 per sq m but they said the latter “subsumed” the said property back to the IPs.

“Masungi is lying. They are the ones, together with the military, who forcefully intruded into our property and fenced it off as part of the Masungi last October 2020. And if it was not for the help of Retired Gen. Luizo Ticman since the early 1990s, we would have lost by force most of our ancestral homeland,” stressed Doroteo, a 2006 Bayaning Filipino Awardee.

Doroteo said they came forward also to clarify that a written document bearing signatures of 24 Dumagat-Remontados denying their association with Rublou or its security guards has already been scrapped, overturned by a majority of 40 tribal leaders who are siding with Ticman and his company on the issue.

Enrico Vertudez, Kaksaan president; Alex Bendaña, chieftain; and the security guards of the Dumagats who also took part in the press conference corroborated Doroteo’s claim, as they showed the map of their ancestral domain and the areas intruded and fenced off by allegedly by Masungi, which includes their Sacred Grounds somewhere in Barangay San Jose. Doroteo said that the Dumagats and Ticman have long been partners and harmoniously working together to conserve and protect the environment of their homeland through livelihood projects since the 1990s, and now, through the leadership and assistance of the latter’s daughter, Loise Ticman.

He said they formally approached Ticman last 2019 for more help in developing their land sustainably, which resulted in the project called Sustainable Integrated Development Plan (SIDP). He added: “Gen. Ticman is a very kind and honorable man. We hope that there will be more like him in our society who treats us like his family.”

“Through the media, we are seeking the help of President Duterte and the National Commission on Indigenous People and DENR to uphold the rule of law and not to believe the lies peddled by Masungi. We, as the legal and real stakeholders, are culturally and legally bound to preserve and conserve our ancestral domain,” stressed Reynaldo Doroteo, chairman of the Kaksaan.

Loise Ticman, Rublou’s CSR director and project director of the SIDP, explained that she has since replaced her father in the projects for the Dumagats. The SIDP focuses on sustainable livelihood projects, reforestation, and protection and conservation of the environment and the watershed. Then a police major in Rizal in the 1990s, her father, she said, was sought for help by the Dumagats. Through the years, they became friends and allies against land grabbers, intruders, and illegal activities in the area, she narrated.

Image credits: [Billie Dumaliang](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/12/16/antipolo-ips-switch-side-in-umrbpl-land-feud/>



Catmon is located in northern Cebu.

Catmon town's Mt. Kapayyas to be declared protected area

[Le Phyllis F. Antojado](#) (The Freeman) - December 16, 2020 - 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — The Cebu provincial government is now eyeing to declare Mt. Kapayyas in Catmon town in northern Cebu as protected area.

This after concerned citizens reported that a number of visitors are going to the area to pick wild plants.

In a Sugbo News report, Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia has met tourism stakeholders in Catmon where she learned that some tourists have been visiting the area for a certain purpose.

The governor took note of the plant called "bagiang" or "badyang" or the Giant Taro which is under the plant family of Biga or Elephant Ear, now trending in online selling during pandemic.

"Specific ni kay daku kaayo ang interest aning badyang, daghan gyud kaayo. Now, is it illegal? Amo ning i-clear, it will be illegal kung protected area nga kuhaan aning badyang busa importante nga kaning Mt. Kapayyas ma-preserve in its purity," Garcia quoted as saying during the meeting last a week ago.

For residents in the mountain area, this kind of plants is considered as grass as this is abundant in far flung and mountainous areas.

But during the pandemic online sellers post this kind of plants which can be purchased for at least P300 and above depending on the size.

The governor will ask the Provincial Board to pass a measure declaring Mt. Kapayyas as protected area in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Mt. Kapayyas is the second highest peak and one of the key biodiversity areas in the Province of Cebu.

The mountain, which is also known as Torre Peak, is famous among trekkers and those who love adventure since it offers a breathtaking view from the mountain top. —GMR (FREEMAN)

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2020/12/16/2064151/catmon-towns-mt-kapayyas-be-declared-protected-area>



PIDS study reveals 'abundance' of microplastics in Tañon Strait

By [Cai Ordinario](#)

December 16, 2020



A blue rectangular piece of microplastic is shown in this May 19, 2010, photo on the finger of a researcher with the University of Washington Tacoma environmental science program.

A research study recently conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) has bared the abundance of microplastics in Tañon Strait, the country's largest marine-protected area, at levels higher than in similar bodies of water in countries like China.

In a news statement, PIDS said the finding was part of the study titled "Are Marine-protected Areas Sheltered from Plastic Pollution?" done on in the vast strait located between Cebu and Negros Islands.

The author, Maria Kristina Paler, is a grantee of the Philippine APEC Study Center Network's (PASCN) Thesis and Dissertation Program. The PIDS serves as the secretariat and convener of the PASCN. "The relatively high microplastic occurrence in Tañon Strait shows that the Philippines has been contributing a substantial volume of plastic debris into the marine ecosystem. This calls for proper waste disposal to mitigate the problem of plastic pollution," Paler said.

Paler noted, however, that banning single-use plastics may not be "economically sound," considering Filipinos' preference for sachets over bottled products due to economic constraints.

She then called for the provision of economic incentives to manufacturers that use substitutes for these plastic materials.

Another recommendation is for the "prohibition of discarding nets in seas, which is notoriously a common practice in the Philippines." Paler also suggested recycling and energy recovery as ways to treat "residual waste," such as diapers and sanitary napkins.

"As such, policies to reduce single-use packaging, particularly polyethylene-based plastics, should be pursued," Paler urged.

The data showed that microplastics in the waters of the Tañon Strait ranged from 0 to 1.5 items per liter, while its abundance in the sediments ranged from 0 to 39.72 items per kilogram dry weight.

In terms of size, PIDS said the samples suggested that microplastics, with a size smaller than 1 millimeter (mm), were "from larger plastic debris that ended up in the marine environment."

In terms of plastic type, the water tests found that the most abundant was polyethylene, while polyamide was abundant in the sediments.



Polyethylene may come from single-use bags, films for food, or sachet packaging, often used in the country. Polyamides, meanwhile, are mostly from automotive and electronic products.

Paler noted that the polyamides found in the samples are nylon used in fishing nets. She added that the results suggest pollutants were generated from single-use plastic items and plastics largely used in the packaging industry.

Image credits: [AP/Ted S. Warren](#)



Waste importation: An exploitative trade and how we can end it

[ECOWASTE COALITION](#)

December 15, 2020

THE global waste trade, like any economic endeavor, is a numbers game, and unfortunately, those numbers are against the Philippines and other developing countries, which find themselves on the losing end of a billion-dollar industry. This game has always been skewed to be advantageous for Global North countries with the Global South paying a hefty price. It's not just money in the form of waste handling expenses, but consequences like environmental degradation, toxic contamination and the deteriorating health of affected communities.

An entire system of inequitable trade has been exploiting the developing world for decades, taking advantage of poor safety standards, cheap costs, loose laws around hazardous waste, and even looser environmental regulations. The destructive combination of these elements makes developing countries an alluring destination richer nations' waste.

As in any unjust trade system, wealthier states abuse the economic hopes of poorer nations. The industry's shift from mere waste disposal to a thriving economy that includes resource extraction and alternative fuels has made waste trade too lucrative to resist. Developed nations promote trade with its promises of profit and mutual benefits, but in reality, there are no fair bargains in waste trade. The recipient of imported garbage always comes out the loser.

What starts as a cluster of commercial agreements eventually becomes economic dependence. More and more infrastructure and business are built around this unfair trade -- from cement kilns to facilities handling waste -- to the point that a significant number of industrial endeavors rely solely on imported waste. It's ironic how these businesses depend on waste from other countries via a system that incentivizes creating more waste, when we have a domestic issue of having too much trash.

Irony aside, this is a serious problem because local companies and exporting nations fail to see that trading trash is costing poor countries in so many other ways. Or is it that they refuse to see the consequences of their activities? The fact is, the impacts are glaringly obvious and they've been around for as long as the industry has.

Numerous cases of waste trade have led to developing countries shouldering negative externalities they are ill-prepared for. Economists define externalities as a cost or benefit from an activity incurred by an unrelated third party. In the case of waste trade, developing countries and their communities definitely didn't bargain for the negative impacts.

Here in the Philippines, Mindanao citizens contributed nearly P10 million to handle waste to be shipped back to South Korea. There are also multiple incidents in the Global South of intercepted hazardous and non-recyclable waste with little or no economic value finding their way to local landfills, becoming a municipal problem. Data from 2012 showed that local governments in the National Capital Region spent P4.221 billion (approximately \$80.7 million) for waste management that year. Adding foreign waste to already high volumes of domestic waste, which result in a costly and strained waste management system, does not make fiscal sense for a developing country.

People also suffer. With poor safety and health regulations and the prevalent involvement of the informal sector, shipped waste exposes waste workers to potential toxins. Communities are also exposed when toxic runoff or improperly managed waste that's burned contaminates the surrounding environment, which these communities rely on for food and their income.

Ensuing contamination leads to ecosystem degradation and threats to wildlife. Some toxins accumulate in the environment for years for people and animals to absorb through the food chain. Once it reaches our seas, pollution can disrupt reefs' development and ecological functions, speed up algae growth and ruin habitats for fish. On land, pollution affects the soil and crops.



It's clear that waste trade must be stopped. The good news is that it can be, with the right policies and their strict implementation. One example is the Basel Convention Ban Amendment which entered into force on December 5, 2019. More countries have tightened restrictions and placed bans on waste imports. Countries like China, traditionally the destination of scrap waste, have now enforced very strict restrictions and will ban all solid waste imports from January 1, 2021. Local laws that put in place a comprehensive ban on all waste imports are likewise crucial.

Unfortunately, the Philippines is far behind in stopping waste trade: the Ban Amendment remains unratified, and a comprehensive waste importation ban is still far from reality. Until these two are acted upon and strictly implemented, the country will not escape the vicious cycle of this unjust trade system and its resulting pollution. **(Marian Ledesma)**

Marian Ledesma is Zero Waste Campaigner of Greenpeace Philippines



Responding to climate change

It is also important for us individually to do our part

Published 5 hours ago on December 16, 2020 02:30 AM

By [Bing Matoto](#)



With the perils of climate change facing us squarely, what should we do? Humanity's response is embodied in the Paris Treaty Agreement of 2015 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda, which had 196 member countries signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with the objective of limiting global warming to not more than 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrialization levels.

UNFCCC requires the economic and social transformation by each country via nationally determined contributions (NDC) to be achieved on a staggered basis and measured every five years. The NDC articulate the individual target reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies to meet their commitments under the UNFCCC.

Recognizing the limited resources of developing countries, the UNFCCC also provides for financial, technical and capacity-building support by developed countries. Pledges of \$100 billion annually, primarily in the form of aid and multilateral development assistance programs from the developed countries, unfortunately are still quite far from being fulfilled.

Making matters worse, of course, are the Covid-induced economic travails of the countries both developed and developing alike that have surely set back even further the fulfillment of these pledges.

Notwithstanding this setback, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is very hopeful that 2021 will herald in "...the year of a quantum leap toward carbon neutrality... that will be a global coalition...."

He cited the following:

— The European Union has committed to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050 and to reduce its emissions to at least 55 percent below pre-industrial levels by 2030;

— The United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea and more than 110 countries have also committed to carbon neutrality by 2050.

— China has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2060.

— America's vigorous support is forthcoming with the recent Biden election.

These countries combined, according to Guterres, represent more than 65 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions and 70 percent of the global economy.



Pledges of \$100 billion annually, primarily in the form of aid and multilateral development assistance programs from the developed countries, unfortunately are still quite far from being fulfilled.

The private sector has also begun to step up.

Guterres cited the UN-initiated partnership of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance and the Net-Zero Asset Owners Alliance who have committed to decarbonize their portfolio holdings.

The partnership has a combined \$5.1 trillion of assets under management (AUM).

He also noted the potential impact of the world's pension funds with an estimated \$32 trillion AUM if it can pivot their investments to SDG-friendly businesses.

This call for a response to climate change has also been heeded by the Vatican.

Last 8 December, the Council for Inclusive Capitalism, a partnership between the Vatican and the world's largest investment and business leaders, was established in response to the challenge of Pope Francis to "...apply the principles of morality to business and investment practices... organizations to create a more equitable, sustainable and trusted economic system."

The movement has already secured 231 commitments from 31 organizations.

The Council is led by a core group of global leaders known as "Guardian CEO" whose companies have \$10.5 trillion AUM; \$2.1 trillion in market capitalization; and 200 million workers spread over 163 countries.

Indeed, the numbers from all these organizations are impressive.

But it is also important for us individually to do our part.

What then are the more practical actions we can take?
The work-from-home mode is a huge emission-saver.

Fuel expense savings! Minimizing the use of air-conditioning is another.

Save on Meralco bills! Consider switching to solar roofing for power.

Goodbye Meralco bills! Bike na lang for your neighborhood errands. Healthy pa! Switch to a more vegetable-oriented diet from meat.

Cows are major methane emitters! Lower consumption of paper.

Internet na lang and save trees! Plant more in your backyard.

Plantita, plantito na tayo! (Let's develop out green thumbs.)
I also asked some millennials (my daughter Pilar and her bosom buddy Renee) for their thoughts. I quote:

"Millennials have always been the in-betweens. Unlike Gen Z kids, we still knew what it was like before the world became digital.

But we've adapted and learned to live in these changing times.



As climate change continues to be a pressing issue globally, we know that there are still ways to curb its impact.

Choose to carpool.

Be a responsible consumer.

Know the source and process of stuff you purchase.

Know what your money is supporting.

Be thrifty.

Avoid fast fashion and opt for secondhand, thrift-shop or locally-sourced handmade clothing from small local businesses.

“You don’t have to have the latest gadgets.

Live out your iPhone or laptop’s life cycle. When participating in 11/11 or 12/12 or similar sales, support small local businesses that have a smaller carbon footprint.”

Truly, if these various initiatives can indeed be followed through, the world has a good chance of breathing easier in the future.

Until next week... One big fight!

For comments, email bing_matoto@yahoo.com



City of Forests



December 15, 2020 @ 10:06 AM 20 hours ago

MANILA, PHILIPPINES – Inilunsad sa Maynila sa mga pader ng Gregorio Del Pilar High School sa Recto at Abad Santos street ang environmental theme murals na tinawag na “City Forests.” Likha nina Pinoy artist Blic, A.G Saño at RJ Saquian ang mural na nagpapakita ng ‘Solidaty, Inclusivity, Climate and Environment’ na tema. Pinangunahan nina Mayor Isko Domagoso at Vice Mayor Honey Lacuna ang nasabing paglulunsad. *Crismon Heramis*



Source: <https://www.remate.ph/city-of-forests/>



#BattleForManilaBay #BasecoBeach #TatakDuterte

BASECO BEACH GANITO NA PALA KALINIS AT KAGANDA! MAPAPA "SANA-ALL KANA LANG TALAGA!

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MANILA BAY WHITE SAND BEACH

MANILA BAY UPDATE TODAY / DOLOMITE SAND PROJECT UPDATE DECEMBER 15, 2020

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Hi kababayans. Here is my latest update today at Manila Bay white sand project.. Thank you for watching and please like and subscribe..

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Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Koiqsi-OP1k&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=JiNGNoBoundaries



COVID-19 cases sa Pilipinas 451,839 na; patay mahigit 8,800 na — DOH

(Philstar.com) - December 15, 2020 - 4:01pm



Kumakain ang batang ito habang nakasakay sa isang tricycle habang nakapila ang ilang taong naka-face mask para makakuha ng libreng pagkain sa gitna ng krisis dulot ng COVID-19, ika-24 ng Nobyembre, 2020

AFP/Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — Walang-tigil pa rin ang pagdami ng bilang ng tinatatamaan ng coronavirus disease sa Pilipinas sa pagpapatuloy ng ika-40 linggo ng community quarantine restrictions na ipinatutupad laban sa pandemya.

Humataw na kasi sa 451,839 ang nadadali ng karamdaman sa Pilipinas, pagkaraang madagdagan pa ng 1,135 ang sariwang kaso ng sakit, ayon sa Department of Health ngayong Martes.

Sa kabila ng mas maliit na bilang ng bagong kumpirmang kaso ngayong araw, 13 laboratoryo pa ang hindi nakapagpasa ng kani-kanilang datos sa pamahalaan nitong ika-14 ng Disyembre.

Narito ang listahan ng mga lugar na may pinakamaraming bagong kaso ng COVID-19 ngayong araw:

- Rizal (117)
- Bulacan (84)
- Lungsod ng Quezon (71)
- Isabela (39)
- Laguna (38)

Kasalukuyan namang nagpapagaling pa ang nasa 24,160 pasyenteng dinapuan ng SARS-CoV-2, ang virus na nagsasanhi ng COVID, bagay na nagdudulot ng COVID-19.

"Samantala ay mayroon namang naitalang 173 [bagong] gumaling at 56 [bagong] pumanaw [ngayong araw]," ayon sa pahayag na inilabas ng DOH.



"Sa kabuuang bilang ng mga naitalang kaso sa bansa, 5.3% (24,160) ang aktibong kaso, 92.7% (418,867) na ang gumaling, at 1.95% (8,812) ang namatay."

Tinanggal naman na mula sa total case count ang 29 na duplicates sa ngayon, matapos mapag-alamang siyam sa kanila ay gumaling na.

Kaugnay niyan, ni-reclassify naman bilang deaths ang mga naunang naibalitang paggaling ng 20 katao mula sa COVID-19.

Kanina lang nang ianunsyo ni presidential spokesperson Harry Roque na bawal nang lumabas ng bahay ng hindi nagsusuot ng parehong face mask at face shield, bagay na noo'y nire-require lang sa mga shopping malls at ilang saradong lugar.

"Dahil malapit na po ang Pasko at Bagong Taon, alam naman natin na dadami ang mga tao na lalabas para mabawasan ang panganib na dala ng hawaan ng mga tao," awika ni Roque sa isang press briefing kanina.

"Nire-require na ng inyong IATF ang pagsusuot hindi lang po ng face shields [kundi pati ang] face masks."

May kaugnayan: [Lalabas ng bahay? Bawal na walang face shield sa ibabaw ng mask, sabi ng IATF](#)

Ayon sa [World Health Organization](#), halos 71.1 milyon na ang nahahawaan ng nasabing sakit sa buong daigdig. Sa bilang na 'yan, 1.6 milyon na ang pumanaw. —

James Relativo



At a press briefing yesterday, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) issued a resolution requiring Filipinos to wear full face shields and masks.

Michael Varcas

Government orders wearing of face shields in public places

[Christina Mendez](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 16, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — To prevent a possible surge in COVID-19 infections during the Christmas season, the government has ordered the mandatory wearing of a face shield on top of a face mask for all people who step out of their homes.

At a press briefing yesterday, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) issued a resolution requiring Filipinos to wear full face shields and masks.

“People going out of their homes are mandated to wear full face shields together with masks, whether reusable or do-it yourself masks and other protective gear,” the IATF resolution read.

Previously, face shield is only required to be worn when entering malls and riding public transportation.

Roque said full face shields, which cover the forehead to the chin, should be used.

“Anything shorter than that is not allowed,” he said. “It’s not an issue of cost anymore. I doubt kung meron pang walang face shield ngayon.”

Roque said a face shield now sells for as low as P5.

He said penalties for people caught without face shields and masks while outside would depend on local government units.

The IATF issued the new policy as the country braces for a spike in COVID-19 cases during the holiday season.

The pandemic task force also enjoined local governments to use the contact tracing and monitoring applications StaySafe.ph and TanodCOVID to lessen the transmission of the virus.

Roque, meanwhile, welcomed the order of Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Gen. Debold Sinas to arrest partygoers who would violate health protocols.

While President Duterte did not issue the directive, Roque said the PNP is mandated to enforce laws on peace and order.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/12/16/2064087/government-orders-wearing-face-shields-public-places>



SALAPI SA SIMBANG GABI AT KAPASKUHAN



December 16, 2020 @ 12:30 AM 6 hours ago

NAMAMASYAL ang ating Uzi sa mga Katoliko at Aglipayanong simbahan sa kanilang pagsasagawa ng misa kaugnay ng Simbang Gabi.

Unang nakita niya ang pagsunod ng mga tao sa social distancing at pagsusuot ng face mask.

Mangilan-ngilan ang walang face shield.

Mismong ang mga nagsisimba ang gumagawa ng paraan na masunod ang mga minimum na health protocol na ito.

Hindi na kinakailangan ng obispo, pari at sakristan o ng mga manang na pagsabihan ang mga tao.

Ito ang malinaw na halimbawa ng sinasabi ng pamahalaan na malaki ang papel ng mga mamamayan sa giyera sa COVID-19.

Maraming salamat po sa inyo.

SIMBANG GABI NA

Maiiba kaya ang sitwasyon ngayong Simbang Gabi na sinisipag ang mga tao na magsimba?

Sa Simbang Gabi kasi, sa mga nakaraang taon at wala pang pandemya, masahol pa sa sardinas ang siksikan ng mga nagsisimba.

Siksikan na ang mga may edad, may bitbit pang mga baby at menor-de-edad.

Kasama kasi sa diwa ng Pasko ang nakamulatan at turo ng Bibliya na ipinanganak sa sabsaban si Jesus kaya karay-karay ng mga magulang ang kanilang mga sanggol at maliliit na anak sa pagsisimba.

May misteryo at saya silang nadadarama kung matalsikan sila ng holy water na binabasbas ng mga pari sa lahat ng nagsisimba.

Sana naman, mapanatili pa rin ang pagsi-Simbang Gabi nang may minimum health protocols at huwag isama ang mga bata at senior citizen.

Habang tinitipa natin ito, heto ang isang sumbong.

May health protocol nga sa loob ng mga simbahan, sa labas naman, kahit sa mga dingding ng mga ito, kumpol-kumpol ang mga nagsisimba.



Totoo kaya ito, ha?

Dapat bantayan ‘yan at ipakiusap sa kanila na huwag lumabag sa batas sa COVID-19!

PAANO SILANG SENYOR SA LIDERATO NG SIMBAHAN?

Ang isang tanong: Paano ang mga matatandang pari, manang na kolektor, assistant sa misa na matatanda gaya ng mga miyembro ng Knight of Columbus?

Marahil pagbawalan na ang mga matatandang pari na magmisa at kung payagan man sila, sa zoom na lang sila sasali.

Ganito rin dapat kina manang kolektor, matatandang lider ng mga organisasyon at menor-de-edad na sakristan, bell boy at iba pa.

Dapat na gumawa ang mga lider ng simbahan ng paraan para makapagtayo ng mga zoom o katulad nito na paraan ng pagmimisa na roon sasali sina manang, mga lay minister, sacristan at bellboy.

O kaya’y daanin na lang sa mga telebisyon, radio at social media ang pagmimisa para sa mga ito.

COVID-19 WALANG SINASANTO

Walang sinasanto ang COVID-19.

‘Yun bang === Huwag nilang hintayin na may matamaan ng COVID-19 gaya ng nangyari mismo kay Cardinal Luis Tagle at iba pa.

Huwag nilang gawin ang katwirang “if COVID-19 is everywhere, God also is everywhere!”

Sa katwirang ito nagkandapeste-pesto ang maraming Pastor, Rabbi, Ministro at Pari sa United States.

Kabilang sa mga kamamatay lang si Bob Bryant ng Water of Life Community Church sa Fontana sa Southern California.

Ipinagbabawal doon ang pagsamba nang maramihan at kung pupwede ay sa labas pero binalewala niya ito.

Hayun kinuha na siya ni Lord at naidagdag sa mahigit nang 70 rabbi ng mga Israelita, paring Katoliko, at iba pang mga Obispo at ministro na namatay sa COVID-19 na naiulat noong Mayo 2020.

Huwag po tayong gumaya sa mga ito.

KAILANGANG TALAGANG MAGPA-SIMBANG GABI

Sabi ng ating Uzi na gumagala-gala ukol sa Simbang Gabi at Kapaskuhan, umamin ang ilang pari, pastor at ministro na nakausap nito na kapos sa salapi ang kani-kanilang mga simbahan dahil sa pandemya.

Tulad ng lahat, nagbabayad din umano sila ng kuryente, tubig, sahod sa mga empleyado at iba pa na puro delayed na.

At dapat din silang kumain, magkaroon ng kasuotan, magandang kalusugan at iba pa.



Para sa mga may-asawa na pari, ministro at iba pa, kailangan din nila ang panggastos sa pag-aaral ng kanilang mga anak.

Kung magpapatuloy na sarado umano ang mga simbahan at bawal ang magsagawa ng mga sakramento, kasama ang pagmimisa, may krisis sa pananalapi mismo hindi lang ang simbahan nila kundi maging ang mga pari, pastor, ministro at iba pa.

Sa US, kinakailangan mo umanong magdeklara ng pagkabangkrap para magkaroon ng batayan ng hindi pagpapasahod sa mga empleyado at konsiderasyon sa pagbabayad ng mga tubig, ilaw at iba pa.

At upang mabigyan ka ng pagkakataon na makabangon muli.

Dito sa Pinas, hindi uso ang deklarasyon ng bankruptcy.

Pero malinaw raw na kung walang pera, “no money, no honey” lalo na sa mga pari o pastor o ministrong may-asawa.

Magtanong na lang din kayo kung totoo.

SIMBANG GABI: ROOT OF MONEY

Ang pagdaos ng simba o pagsamba ang isang pinag-uugatan o pinagmumulan ng salapi.

Kaya kailangan ang pagdalo rito ng mga tao para may maghulog ng mga tithe, limos at iba pa para sa pangangailangan ng mga lider ng simbahan at simbahan mismo.

Masakit mang aminin, hindi mabubuhay ang mga lider ng simbahan at mismong simbahan sa dasal lamang.

At kung sa puro zoom mass at prayer na lang dadalo ang mga mananampalataya.

Prayer and money ang kailangan kaya dapat may Simbang Gabi na may mga taong dadalo.

Sa rami ng nakaiisip o feel magsimba o sumamba sa Kapaskuhan, kalakip na rin dito ang pabinyag at pakumpil.

Kahit papaano, magkakaroon ng kita ang mga lider ng simbahan para panggastos sa kanilang mga batayang pangangailangan mula sa pagkain, edukasyon ng mga anak, kasuotan, magandang kalusugan hanggang sa mga kuryente, tubig at iba pa, lalo na kung na-COVID-19 sila na napakamahal, kasama ang nasa P100,000 na cremation kung minamalas sila.

O tara, mag-Simbang Gabi po tayo nang maranasan at maging buhay sa atin ang diwa ng Pasko.



LOOKING BACK

A pandemic Christmas

By: [Ambeth R. Ocampo](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:04 AM December 16, 2020

Simbang Gabi literally means “night Mass,” but it actually occurs at daybreak. The Simbang Gabi or Misa de Aguinaldo refers to the nine-day countdown to Christmas Eve that traditionally begins on Dec. 16 and ends on Dec. 24. Do not confuse the novena Masses with the Christmas Eve Mass or Misa de Gallo (literally “Rooster’s Mass”) that is traditionally held around 11 p.m. of Dec. 24 to tide over to 12:01 a.m. of Dec. 25, Christmas Day.

When churches in the city made concessions and had Simbang Gabi at night, traditionalists scoffed at it, insisting that the real sacrifice was waking up early to hear Mass for nine days and get a wish or intention granted. Things are likely to get easier after the pandemic, with people having grown accustomed to the many choices for livestream Masses. One can follow the Pope in Rome, or various churches in Manila, via Zoom or FB Live. Today, the online Mass-goer has a choice of language, celebrant, sermon, and length of service. Furthermore, the online Mass-goer has the power to rewind, fast forward, pause, stop, or delete the religious service.

It is not only teachers and students that needed to adopt to online learning. We now also have online praying. Some of my friends were scandalized when I asked them to recommend rosary apps that would allow one to pray the rosary hands-free, because I wanted to multitask morning exercise and prayer. It all depends on how one phrases the question. You will get a frown if you ask “Can I exercise while praying?”, and a high-five if you ask “Can I pray while exercising?”

Pre-pandemic Makati would be gridlocked around the shopping malls at this time of year, but last Sunday evening, Ayala Avenue was a breeze. Have people shifted to shopping online? Or are they wary of staying too long inside an air-conditioned mall? Or maybe they are turned off by the requirement to fill up contact tracing forms in establishments that seem to take these things seriously? With office Christmas parties banned in the metro and families thinking twice about the health risks of Noche Buena 2020, this year will really be different from anything we have ever experienced before.

Three months into quarantine, I wrote off 2020 and just looked forward to 2021. When I went to the bank to stock up on crisp banknotes for Christmas and Chinese New Year envelopes, I tried to recall all the folk beliefs on making your money grow better than the interest rates offered by banks these days.

First, we are told to spend on Christmas and New Year’s. We are taught that if one gives, one can expect a return in good fortune. All debts, big and small, have to be settled before Dec. 31 so that you enter the New Year with a clean slate. However, you should never count money at night or give or exchange money at night, not even to pay a debt, because these are considered inauspicious.

Money received as gifts on Christmas or New Year (both the Gregorian and Lunar Chinese New Year) are not to be spent, but kept in a bag or wallet for good luck or prosperity in the next year. Speaking of wallets, if you decide to give a wallet, purse, or bag as a Christmas gift, make sure it is not “empty.” Placing a banknote or coin inside brings good luck. It is also said that you must keep a coin or banknote inside your wallet or purse that is never spent, so that you are literally never out of money. Don’t forget to arrange the banknotes in your wallet face side up, from lowest to highest denomination, and if you are up to it, with ascending serial numbers, too.



If you are to give shoes or a pointed object as a Christmas gift, you have to ask the recipient to “buy” or “pay” for these. One does not need to pay the cost of the gift; rather, a token sale or exchange is made with a coin or the lowest denomination banknote, P20, to insure that the receiver will not walk away from the gift-giver or, worse, stab him or her in the back.

To avoid the hassle of remembering all these reminders, it is simpler to give food. Fruitcakes are the traditional Christmas gift, but in recent years there have been more choices: ensaimadas, cookies, and other sweets. There was a year when scented candles were the gift of choice; this year it’s probably hand soap, hand sanitizer, or face mask.

We all hope for a better 2021, when we will look back with relief on our having survived 2020 and the pandemic.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu



May LPA na posibleng mabuo ngayong linggo – PAGASA

By Angellic Jordan December 15, 2020 - 06:29 PM



Inihayag ng PAGASA na posibleng mayroong mabuong low pressure area (LPA) sa loob ng teritoryo ng bansa ngayong linggo.

Ayon kay PAGASA weather specialist Benison Estareja, mamumuo ang LPA sa Silangang bahagi ng Mindanao sa araw ng Huwebes o Biyernes.

Sa darating na weekend, tatawid ang LPA sa northern Mindanao – southern Visayas area patungo sa Sulu at Palawan hanggang makalabas ng West Philippine Sea sa araw ng Linggo.

Sinabi ni Estareja na malabo namang maging bagyo ang mabubuong LPA.

Dahil dito, asahan aniyang makararanas ng maulang panahon sa mga susunod na araw.

Epekto aniya ito ng LPA, tail-end of frontal system, Northeast Monsoon o Amihan at Easterlies.

Patuloy aniyang lumalakas ang Amihan na nagdadala ng malamig na panahon sa Northern portion ng Luzon.

Easterlies naman o hangin galing sa Pacific Ocean na nagdudulot ng mainit ng temperatura o bahagyang pag-ulan sa Southern Luzon, Visayas at Mindanao.

Samantala, ang tail-end of frontal system ang nagdadala ng maulap na kalangitan at pulo-pulong pag-ulan sa Eastern section ng Northern Luzon.



Fed joins global club of peers in climate change fight

Published December 15, 2020 11:35pm

By KATANGA JOHNSON, Reuters

WASHINGTON - The US Federal Reserve said on Tuesday it has formally joined an international group of central banks working to understand and reduce climate change risk, a signal that the Fed could move to incorporate the impacts of global warming into its regulatory writ.

The Fed's membership in the Network of Central Banks and Supervisors for Greening the Financial System (NGFS) comes after a yearlong collaboration, the Fed said. It had been the only major global central bank besides the Reserve Bank of India that is not a member of the NGFS.

"As we develop our understanding of how best to assess the impact of climate change on the financial system, we look forward to continuing and deepening our discussions with our NGFS colleagues from around the world," Fed Chair Jerome Powell said in a statement announcing the move.

For years, the Fed has stayed on the sidelines or behind the scenes as other central banks pushed to use their regulatory and research clout to mitigate the effects of global warming, including potentially abrupt price changes from climate-related disasters that could reverberate through financial markets.

But that has been changing recently. Last month, the Fed included climate change for the first time in its regular assessment of financial stability vulnerabilities. Powell has said that making sure the financial system is "resilient" against risks, including climate change, fits with the Fed's congressionally assigned mandates. Climate change is a contentious political issue in the United States. Republican President Donald Trump has called it a "hoax," and he exited the Paris Accord that Democratic predecessor President Barack Obama had signed on to. Democratic President-elect Joe Biden has said he will rejoin the climate pact.

The Fed's decision will likely draw criticism from Republicans concerned that increased attention to the impact of climate change on the financial system could make it more difficult for oil and gas companies to access capital.

Last week, 47 Republican lawmakers wrote to Powell urging him not to join the group or implement climate-change stress test scenarios for banks. — **Reuters**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/768159/fed-joins-global-club-of-peers-in-climate-change-fight/story/>



Pope commits Vatican to net zero carbon emissions by 2050

Published December 16, 2020 12:44am

By PHILIP PULLELLA Reuters

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis urged countries on Saturday to work towards net zero carbon emissions and committed Vatican City - the world's smallest state - to reaching the target by 2050.

Francis, who has championed environmental causes since his election in 2013, told a U.N. climate summit the 108-acre (44-hectare) city-state surrounded by Rome would be doing its bit to fight climate change.

"The current pandemic and climate change, which are not only environmentally relevant, but also ethically, socially, economically and politically, affect, above all, the lives of the poorest and most fragile," he said in a video message to the summit.

"In addition to adopting some measures that cannot be postponed any longer, a strategy is needed to reduce net emissions to zero," Francis said.

He committed the Vatican "to reducing net emissions to zero by 2050," as well as intensifying environmental management efforts and furthering the rational use of natural resources such as water and planting more trees.

A Vatican statement said the city-state was moving ahead with plans to substitute all its combustion engine cars with electric or hybrid vehicles.

It said the Vatican, which began installing solar panels in 2008 and banned single-use plastic bags last year, was now recycling 65% of its waste and aimed to reach 75% in 2023.

In his address, Francis said the Holy See was committed to promoting, in Catholic schools and elsewhere, "an education for integral ecology" to favour development and sustainability and encourage economic policies that respect the environment.

In 2015, Francis wrote a landmark encyclical "Laudato Si" (Praised Be) on the need to protect nature. It backed scientific evidence that human activity was to blame for global warming.

Francis also strongly backed the Paris agreement to limit the global rise of temperatures and has said he was saddened by U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from it. -- **Reuters**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/768162/pope-commits-vatican-to-net-zero-carbon-emissions-by-2050/story/>



Heavy equipment moves coal into piles at PacifiCorp's Hunter coal-fired power plant outside of Castle Dale, Utah on November 14, 2019. George Frey/AFP

Accounting for carbon footprint changes view of human progress —UNDP

Published December 15, 2020 9:07pm

UNITED NATIONS — Dependence on fossil fuels has an impact on the assessment of human progress, according to a report published Tuesday by the United Nations Development Programme that takes carbon footprints into account for the first time.

The report presents world leaders with a choice: take "bold steps to reduce the immense pressure that is being exerted on the environment and the natural world," or risk stalling humanity's progress, said a UNDP statement summarizing the findings.

The evaluation of countries' standard of living, progress in health and education, are modified by including criteria on carbon dioxide emissions and carbon footprints, the UN agency said.

As a result, some 50 countries have left the group of nations with high human development, reflecting their dependence on fossil fuels and their carbon footprint.

At the same time, countries such as Costa Rica, Moldova and Panama have moved up at least 30 places, according to the report. This is proof that "lighter pressure on the planet is possible," the UNDP said.

"By tackling inequality, capitalizing on innovation and working with nature, human development could take a transformational step forward to support societies and the planet together," said Pedro Conceicao, a UNDP director and the principal author of the report.

UNDP administrator Achim Steiner noted that "humans wield more power over the planet than ever before.

"In the wake of COVID-19, record-breaking temperatures and spiraling inequality, it is time to use that power to redefine what we mean by progress, where our carbon and consumption footprints are no longer hidden," he said. — **Agence France-Presse**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/768138/accounting-for-carbon-footprint-changes-view-of-human-progress-undp/story/>



Solar Panel Waste: The Dark Side of Clean Energy

Tons of solar panels installed in the early 2000s are reaching the end of their lifecycles, posing a serious problem for the industry to contend with. Current solar panel disposal practices are far from being environmentally friendly.

By Conor Prendergast December 15, 2020 2:28 AM



Credit: anweber/Shutterstock)

On paper, solar energy seems more promising than ever. Solar cells are becoming easier to produce, along with becoming increasingly compact and portable. But there are a few problems with solar energy that's seldom talked about. Questions remain about whether their production and waste creates more pollutants than the fossil fuels they aim to replace.

Manufacturing solar panels often requires the use of several noxious chemicals. To add to that, solar panels have an [operating lifespan of around 20 to 30 years](#). Since they were first introduced in the 2000s, literal tons of solar panels are reaching the end of their lifespan. Because it's not easy to properly dispose of the toxic metals inside the solar cells — and there's an overall lack of oversight — it is often cheaper to discard them in [landfills or send them to developing countries](#). As solar panels sit in dumps, the toxic metals they contain can leech out into the environment and possibly pose a public health hazard if they get into the groundwater supply.

What's in a Solar Panel?

[A solar panel](#) is essentially made up of several sheets of silicon crystals called cells. Each cell making up a solar panel is sandwiched by an aluminum and glass layer. Together, they form the energy-producing components that convert sunlight into electricity.

The cells require [very pure silicon](#) to work properly. When silicon atoms are hit with sunlight, an electron gets ejected and creates a spark that's similar to what happens when you microwave metal. These electrons are carried through the cell via traces of metal impurities added to the silicon, and copper wires carry it away as electrical currents.

[Very pure silicon](#) must be used because the crystal structure it forms is most conducive to letting electrons flow. Production commonly includes nitrogen trifluoride and sulfur hexafluoride, some of the [most harmful greenhouse gases](#) around.

Normally silicon is recyclable, but to improve the solar cells' electrical efficiency, metals such as cadmium and lead are added. This makes solar cells difficult to recycle, since it will take considerable energy to extract hazardous metals. In fact, it often costs companies more to recycle a solar panel than to produce a solar panel.

The Problem With Solar Panel Disposal

Most solar recycling plants simply remove the valuable silver and copper from the cells and then recycle the contaminated glass and plastic casing by [burning them in cement ovens](#). Since the process is costly and time-consuming, it's more convenient for solar companies to drop the dead



While a properly-built landfill should contain most hazardous material in the waste, a developing country may not have the infrastructure or regulations to properly dispose of imported solar panel waste. Potential leaching of these metals into the surrounding environment can pose a public health problem, especially in a nation without the necessary disposal infrastructure. As society continues to adopt solar power, this problem may worsen in the coming decades, [with almost 80 million tons of solar waste projected by 2050.](#)

Studies have shown the heavy metals in solar panels — namely lead and cadmium — can [leach out of the cells](#) and get into groundwater, as well as affect plants. These metals also have a record for [detrimental effects on human health](#). Lead is commonly known to impair brain development in children, and cadmium is a carcinogen.

Solar panel recycling could mitigate the risk that they pose, and luckily, effective methods do exist. [First Solar, America's largest solar company](#), has facilities that can extract 90 percent of the material in the panels, which is then recycled back into new solar panels or electronics. Veolia, a French waste company, has opened the first plant in Europe solely dedicated to recycling solar cells. The problem is persuading companies to use these methods, instead of opting for the cheaper method of tossing panels into landfills.

Currently, China and the U.S. are the largest users of solar panels, but only Europe has taken measures to hold manufacturers responsible for their waste. The European Union requires solar companies to collect and recycle their panels, with the [cost of recycling built into](#) the selling price. This way, the panels' waste and impact on the environment is minimized with only a marginal increase in solar panel price for consumers. The U.S. and China aren't poised to adopt a similar mandate anytime soon. To date, [Washington is the only state](#) that mandates manufacturers to dispose of panels at a specialized facility.

Solar Innovations

Mandated recycling isn't the only way to make solar energy greener. Many technology startups have pursued ways to make the actual manufacturing process cleaner. Several scientists are exploring new ways to purify silicon for solar cells or are experimenting with lower-grade silicon solar cells.

Additionally, a recent discovery in solar technology may do away with silicon altogether by using [a material called perovskite](#). Instead of silicon crystals, perovskite solar cells are made of metal crystals, usually lead. The raw materials and synthesis for lead perovskite cells are much cheaper than the high-purity silicon needed for traditional solar panels. This means they are much more cost-effective to make. China is actually making them with lead from [recycled batteries](#).

There are only a few ways to make silicon solar cells, but there are many ways to make perovskite cells, yielding unique solar panels for different applications. But what's most promising is that even though they're easier and greener to make, perovskite cell efficiency already rivals that of [silicon cells](#). And there's no need to worry about the lead content, either. Research already shows that perovskite cells based on nontoxic metals like tin or germanium are approaching the efficiency of the ones with lead.

Regardless of their composition, solar energy is poised to be a [significant part of our](#) future as society transitions away from fossil fuels. As a result, we can expect increased production of solar panels in the coming decades, and potentially, large amounts of hazardous waste to boot. Although solar energy holds great promise as a renewable energy source, society also must stand to address and solve the waste problems it poses, or else harnessing light energy might leave us in a darker place than before.

Source: <https://www.discovermagazine.com/environment/solar-panel-waste-the-dark-side-of-clean-energy>