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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR reports significant improvement of water quality at Manila Bay

Published July 16, 2022, 5:01 PM

by [Jel Santos](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has reported significant improvement in the water quality of Manila Bay, attributing it to the continuing rehabilitation efforts in all river systems and tributaries within the bay region.

As of June 2022, data of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau–National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) showed that the fecal coliform level at the Manila Bay beach nourishment station near the United States Embassy in Manila has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021.

It was also observed by the agency that the two water quality monitoring stations near the Dolomite Beach also registered lower fecal coliform levels – from 7,300 MPN/100mL to 1,700 MPN/100mL, and from 10,200 MPN/100mL to 2,100 MPN/100mL, respectively.

A significant decrease in fecal coliform levels in four Metropolitan Environment Offices was also observed.

The EMB-NCR has also reported that the fecal coliform levels have dropped in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System from 3.7 billion MPN/100mL to 4.8 million MPN/100mL, as well as in the waters near the Navotas Fishport from 920,000 MPN/100mL to 9,200 MPN/100mL.

Michael Drake P. Matias, EMB-NCR regional director, said such are “remarkable gains” in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results.

“Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project,” he vowed.

Matias said that, although the readings show that the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay's water quality to Class SB level, the goal is a big challenge, but attainable through the collaboration of both local and national governments and the public.

Class SB is a DENR classification for coastal areas and waters where the public may safely engage in bathing, swimming, skin diving, and similar recreational activities.

“Reaching the 100 MPN/100mL standard is not impossible through our solid waste management strategies, geoengineering interventions, and with the establishment of our real-time online water quality monitoring system,” he said.

EMB-NCR checks 412 monitoring sampling stations scattered in various water bodies of Metro Manila.



DENR: Manila Bay's water quality has improved

by [Maricel Cruz](#) [July 17, 2022, 12:00 am](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) – Environmental Management Bureau–National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) has cited a significant improvement in the water quality of the Manila Bay, owing to the continuing rehabilitation efforts in all river systems and tributaries within the bay region.

Citing data of the EMB-NCR as of June 2022, the DENR regional director Michael Drake Matias said fecal coliform level at the Manila Bay beach nourishment station near the United States Embassy in Manila has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021.

Two water quality monitoring stations near the Dolomite Beach also registered lower fecal coliform levels

The four Metropolitan Environment Offices also reported a significant decrease in fecal coliform levels within their respective areas.

Matias said fecal coliform levels have dropped in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System. “We have seen remarkable gains in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results. Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project.”

Although the readings show that the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay's water quality to Class SB level, Matias said the goal is a big challenge, but attainable through the collaboration of both local and national governments and the public.

Class SB is a DENR classification for coastal areas and waters where the public may safely engage in bathing, swimming, skin diving, and similar recreational activities.

“Reaching the 100 MPN/100mL standard is not impossible through our solid waste management strategies, geoengineering interventions, and with the establishment of our real-time online water quality monitoring system,” Matias said.

EMB-NCR checks 412 monitoring sampling stations scattered in various water bodies of Metro Manila.

Twenty-three stations, which include stations near the Dolomite Beach, Rizal Park Hotel, and US Embassy, are being monitored three times a week.

Meanwhile, 18 stations—including the Manila Yacht Club sewerage treatment plant and Aristocrat Restaurant monitoring stations—were being checked weekly.

EMB-NCR also conducts monthly monitoring of 133 stations, which include the Manila Bay river outfalls and the Marikina River.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/news/314244330/denr-manila-bays-water-quality-has-improved.html>



Manila Bay water quality improving – DENR

Published 8 hours ago on July 17, 2022 12:20 AM

By **TDI** @tribunephil



Manila Bay's water quality has significantly improved, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said through its Environmental Management Bureau National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) office.

The improvement was attributed to the continuing rehabilitation efforts in river systems and tributaries.

Based on the data of the EMB-NCR as of June, fecal coliform level near the United States Embassy has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL). That number was down from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021.

Likewise, two water quality monitoring stations also registered lower fecal coliform levels — from 7,300 MPN/100mL to 1,700 MPN/100mL, and from 10,200 MPN/100mL to 2,100 MPN/100mL, respectively. Samples were taken near the local tourist attraction Dolomite Beach.

Also reporting a significant decrease in fecal coliform levels within their respective areas were the four Metropolitan Environment Offices.

At the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System, fecal coliform levels have dropped from 3.7 billion MPN/100mL to 4.8 million MPN/100mL, as well as in the waters near the Navotas Fishport from 920,000 MPN/100mL to 9,200 MPN/100mL.

“We have seen remarkable gains in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results. Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project,” Michael Drake Matias, EMB-NCR regional director, said on Saturday.

Nonetheless, the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay's water quality to Class SB level, Matias said.

Class SB is a DENR classification for coastal areas and waters where the public may safely engage in bathing, swimming, skin diving, and similar recreational activities.

“Reaching the 100 MPN/100mL standard is not impossible through our solid waste management strategies, geoengineering interventions, and with the establishment of our real-time online water quality monitoring system,” Matias said.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/07/17/manila-bay-water-quality-improving-denr/>



DENR cites significant improvement in Manila Bay water quality

July 16, 2022, 12:40 pm



KEEPING IT CLEAN. Workers of the Manila Department of Public Services remove trash and other debris from the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach along Roxas Boulevard on July 2, 2022. The environment department reported improving water quality in the bay due to continued rehabilitation. (PNA photo by Rico H. Borja)

MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through the Environmental Management Bureau - National Capital Region (EMB-NCR), has observed a significant improvement in the water quality of Manila Bay, which it attributed to the continuing rehabilitation efforts in river systems and tributaries.

Based on the data of the EMB-NCR as of June, the fecal coliform level at the Manila Bay beach nourishment station near the United States Embassy has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL), down from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021.

Two water quality monitoring stations near the Dolomite Beach also registered lower fecal coliform levels – from 7,300 MPN/100mL to 1,700 MPN/100mL, and from 10,200 MPN/100mL to 2,100 MPN/100mL, respectively.

The four Metropolitan Environment Offices likewise reported a significant decrease in fecal coliform levels within their respective areas.

Fecal coliform levels have dropped in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System from 3.7 billion MPN/100mL to 4.8 million MPN/100mL, as well as in the waters near the Navotas Fishport from 920,000 MPN/100mL to 9,200 MPN/100mL.

“We have seen remarkable gains in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results. Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project,” Michael Drake Matias, EMB-NCR regional director, said in a news release on Saturday.

Although the readings show that the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay’s water quality to Class SB level, Matias said the goal is a big challenge but attainable through the collaboration of both local and national governments and the public.

Class SB is a DENR classification for coastal areas and waters where the public may safely engage in bathing, swimming, skin diving, and similar recreational activities.



“Reaching the 100 MPN/100mL standard is not impossible through our solid waste management strategies, geoengineering interventions, and with the establishment of our real-time online water quality monitoring system,” Matias said.

The EMB-NCR checks 412 monitoring sampling stations scattered in various water bodies of Metro Manila.

Twenty-three stations, which include stations near the Dolomite Beach, Rizal Park Hotel, and US Embassy, are being monitored three times a week.

Meanwhile, 18 stations, including the Manila Yacht Club sewerage treatment plant and Aristocrat Restaurant monitoring stations, are monitored weekly.

The EMB-NCR also conducts monthly monitoring of 133 stations, which include the Manila Bay river outfalls and Marikina River.

Together with the EMB 3 (Central Luzon) and EMB 4-A (Calabarzon), it conducts quarterly monitoring of 206 stations, including the Navotas River Shipyard and Manila Bay shoreline, while 32 stations are monitored semi-annually.

The EMB-NCR has developed and established an online water quality monitoring system to allow easy public access.

The data system will provide information and awareness to the public through the current status and trend of water quality in the creeks and water bodies in Metro Manila, according to Matias.

It will also serve as the basis for crafting policies, plans, and regulations to abate water pollution within the respective areas of jurisdiction of the local government units.

The ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation project is in accordance with the continuing Supreme Court mandamus, directing 13 government agencies, including the DENR, to clean up, rehabilitate, and restore Manila Bay’s waters to make it fit for swimming and other contact recreation activities. **(PR)**



Bumaba rin ang fecal coliform levels sa Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System, dagdag ng DENR.

See Translation

KALIDAD NG TUBIG SA MANILA BAY, GUMAGANDA NA — DENR

Iniulat ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na malaki ang improvement sa kalidad ng tubig sa Manila Bay dahil sa patuloy na rehabilitasyon nito. Ang fecal coliform sa Manila Bay beach nourishment station ay bumaba sa 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL), galing sa from 7,100 MPN/100mL noong 2021.

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DENR-EMB to install trash traps in polluted rivers

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com July 14, 2022 | 4:12pm



A tug boat sails along the Pasig river before high-rise buildings of the Makati business district in Manila on May 29, 2022.

AFP/Maria Tan

MANILA, Philippines — The environment department's Environmental Management Bureau said Thursday it will install 268 trash traps in tributaries leading to the Pasig, Tullahan, Meycauayan, and Pampanga rivers, which are considered to be among the country's most polluted.

EMB Director William Cuñado said the project aims to improve waste collection and disposal within the tributaries, which can help reduce flooding during the rainy season.

The project will support the agency's National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction, and Management of Marine Litter that serves as a blueprint to enhance the current efforts in resource and waste management.

"We need to control the additional leakage of waste into our water bodies," Cuñado said.

Under the memorandum of agreement that will be entered into by the EMB regional office and the recipient local government units, procurement items such as brand new trash traps, manually operated waste lifter, plastic boat, and tools for operations will be distributed to the concerned LGUs.

LGUs will monitor the trash traps installed in their jurisdiction. Local governments will also handle the collection, hauling and proper disposal of waste from the trash traps, and the maintenance and operation of the equipment.

"Engagement of collection and disposal services through the LGUs will also be included to ensure that the collected waste will be properly disposed of," Cuñado said.

A budget of over P250.4 million is allocated for the project.

The Philippines was the largest contributing country to the plastic waste that reaches the ocean, according to a 2021 study of The Ocean Cleanup. The Dutch non-profit identified the 27-kilometer Pasig River as the most polluted by plastics.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2022/07/14/2195385/denr-emb-install-trash-traps-polluted-rivers>



Muntinlupa LGU recognized by DENR-EMB for composting program

Published July 16, 2022, 4:57 PM

by [Jonathan Hicap](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) recognized the Muntinlupa City government's program on composting.

Composting is the "controlled decomposition of organic matter by microorganisms, mainly bacteria and fungi, into a humus-like product," according to Republic Act 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000).



Muntinlupa Environmental Sanitation Center (ESC) head Lorna Misa (third from left) receives the plaque of recognition for Best Practices on Composting Operation awarded by the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau-NCR (Photo from Muntinlupa City government)



The plaque of recognition given to the Muntinlupa City government for Best Practices on Composting Operation (Photo from the Muntinlupa City government)



During the Solid Waste Management Summit held at The Manila Hotel on July 14 and 15, the EMB-NCR conferred a plaque of recognition to the Muntinlupa Environmental Sanitation Center (ESC), led by Lorna Misa, for Best Practices on Composting Operation.

During the event, the ESC presented the city's dual drum composter project in Barangay Poblacion, which was donated by the office of former congressman and now Mayor Ruffy Biazon and fabricated by the Department of Science and Technology.

The EMB-NCR also presented a certificate of recognition to Muntinlupa for its "solid commitment in the implementation of the Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, and for their efforts in providing a Clean and Healthy Environment for everyone within their areas of jurisdiction."

Joining Misa at the event were ESC staff Vincent Alon, Barangay Bayanan staff Jennie Solema, Barangay Sucat staff Carmenchu Rongavilla and Barangay Poblacion staff May Arciaga.



DENR cites Las Piñas for good solid waste management

Published July 15, 2022, 7:19 PM

by [Jean Fernando](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) cited the Las Pinas City government for its implementation of sanitation and environmental programs.

The city government received a certificate of recognition for its commitment in the implementation of the Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Management Act of 2000.

Mayor Imelda Aguilar said the city was also given a plaque of recognition for best practices in composting operation.

Aguilar said that the recognitions, signed by EMB-National Capital Region (NCR) regional director Atty. Michael Drake P. Matias, were awarded to the city during the solid waste management summit held at the Manila Hotel on July 14.

She said the awards only showed that the City Environment and Natural Resource Office (CENRO) team is working hard to keep the city environment clean and healthy

The mayor thanked the DENR-EMB for the citations, as well as the city residents for their continued support in all the activities and programs of the city government in making Las Las Piñas clean and green.

Aguilar also vowed that her administration will continue to promote sanitation and environmental programs.



DENR Search for Mx. Tagis Kalikasan 2022

Friday, July 15, 2022 Journal Online



Winners of the **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)** Mx. Tagis Kalikasan, an all-gender search for stewards of the environment, are named as the agency culminates its celebration of the Philippine Environment Month and Pride Month on June 29, 2022. Jamine Vanessa Saplagio (center) won as Mx. Tagis Kalikasan while Ma. Victoria Somera (fourth from left) and Sandy Lloyd Orlanda (right) were named 1st and 2nd runners-up. The contest was spearheaded by the DENR Gender and Development (GAD) Office in cooperation with the Human Resource Development Service, Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service, Administrative Service, Knowledge and Information Systems Service, and **DENR** Employees' Union. With the theme "Ano man ang kasarian, may lakas ipagtanggol ang kalikasan," the search recognized the ability of all contestants, regardless of gender, to speak up and use their talents to spread awareness on the environment, especially on the prevailing climate crisis.



ABS-CBN News
10h · 🌐

Isang sawa ang namataan sa General Maxilom Avenue sa Cebu City. Agad itong nasagip at nasa pangangalaga na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Isang hawksbill turtle naman ang ibinalik sa dagat ng Claveria, Cagayan Martes. Ayon sa Philippine Coast Guard Sub-Station Claveria, isinuko sa kanila ng isang concerned citizen ang pawikan na tumitimbang nang walong kilo. Nilagyan muna ng tag ang pawikan bago ito pinakawalan sa Marine Protected Area ng bayan.

Daan-daang pawikan hatchlings naman ang pinakawalan sa iba't ibang bahagi ng Mindanao. Higit 80 hatchlings ang pinakawalan sa Aboitiz Cleanergy Park sa Matina Aplaya, Davao City Miyerkoles.

Sa Glan, Sarangani, 89 hatchlings ng olive ridley sea turtle ang pinakawalan noong Hulyo 6 sa beach resort sa Barangay Baliton. Sa Zamboanga Peninsula, pinakawalan din ang 118 olive ridley sea turtle hatchlings at 94 green sea turtle sa mga bayan ng Labangan, Baliguian, at Tukuran noong Hul. 6 at 10. (📷: CDRMO; PCG District North Eastern Luzon; Davao Light and Power Co.; DENR) | via Annie Perez; Harris Julio; Hermel Tocmo

BASAHEIN ang mga kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/patrol/tag/wildlife>

See Translation



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Saksi Ngayon

23h · 🌐

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TINGNAN | Pinakawalan ang isang Philippine Serpent Eagle noong Hulyo 11, 2022. ng Local Government Unit ng Danglas, Abra sa pamamagitan ng Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office at DENR CENRO Bangued

Ang Philippine Serpent Eagle ay nahuli ng isang residente ng Brgy. Nagparan at ibinalik ito sa munisipyo para sa pagpapalaya.

PHOTOS: Munisipyo ng Danglas/FB

#PhilippineEagles

See Translation



👍 17

Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/107427980954216/posts/pfbid0ttUzcVgYb4XwzVRgpqJXm1Cvh6sEAmj7Fe1vZS42ELbdDonApowc5yVoxVnkEZUAI/?app=fbl>



EDITORIAL - Mga sumisira sa kalikasan, sampolan

Pang-masa July 16, 2022 | 12:00am



Si Maria Antonia “Toni” Yulo-Loyzaaga ang bagong kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Kilala siyang climate change advocate. Dati siyang director ng Manila Observatory at technical adviser ng Philippine Disaster Resillience Foundation. Si Loyzaaga ang ikalawang babaing DENR secretary. Una ay si Gina Lopez na naging DENR chief sa termino ni President Rodrigo Duterte.

Sa pag-upo ni Loyzaaga sa DENR, marami siyang kahaharaping pagsubok at ilan dito ay ang paglaban sa mga sumisira sa kapaligiran at likas na yaman. Kabilang dito ang mga salot na nag-ooperate ng illegal mining at quarrying; problema sa air, water at plastic pollution at kasama na rito ang hindi masolusyunang problema sa basura na nagdudulot ng pagbaha.

Haharapin niya ang walang patumanggang pagsira sa kabundukan at watershed na malaking banta ngayon sa maraming bahagi ng bansa. Ang Masungi watershed sa Marikina ay unti-unting winasak ng mga quarrying companies. Kapag hindi napigilan ang mga quarrying companies na ito na pag-aari umano ng mga pulitiko, babaha sa Metro Manila.

Inalis ng nakaraang administrasyon ang ban sa open-pit mining. Ngayon ay nakakatakot ang magiging itsura ng mga bundok na bubutasin. Ang pagbutas sa mga bundok ang dahilan ng landslide. Inililibing nang buhay ang mga taong nasa paanan ng bundok.

Ikatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa mundo na kilalang plastic polluter. Araw-araw, tone-toneladang plastic ang itinatapon sa mga estero at sapa at saka hahantong sa Manila Bay. Sinisira ng mga plastic na ito ang yamang-dagat at pinapatay ang mga balyena. Kinakain ng mga balyena ang plastic at iba pang basurang itinatapon sa dagat.

Sabi ni President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sa kanyang inaugural address noong Hunyo 30, hindi tatalikuran ng kanyang administrasyon ang problema sa plastic pollution. Lilinisin ang mga plastic sa sapa, ilog at karagatan.

Nagbabala kamakailan ang coalition ng environmental groups na kung hindi gagawa ng paraan ang pamahalaan para mabawasan ang paggamit ng single-use plastic, aapaw ang may 59.7 bilyong sachets sa Metro Manila.



Mabigat ang mga kahaharapin ni Loyzaga bilang DENR chief. Naniniwala kami na kaya niya itong gampanan. Kailangang masolusyunan ang mga problemang may kaugnayan sa pagkasira ng kalikasan. Simulan na niya ito para mailigtas ang bansa. Sampolan ang mga salot sa kalikasan at kapaligiran.



Marcos urged to veto extended producer responsibility bill

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com July 15, 2022 | 10:55am



A pile of garbage, including plastic waste, is seen as children play on a bridge in downtown Manila on September 4, 2019.

AFP/George Calvelo

MANILA, Philippines — Environmental groups called on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to veto the proposed legislation on extended producer responsibility (EPR) in waste management, saying it will not fully address the plastic pollution problem in the Philippines.

In a briefing Thursday, groups calling for a plastic-free Philippines warned the bill, which is set to lapse into law this July, fails to control plastic pollution and promotes false solutions such as incineration.

“Actually, it’s a very welcoming approach from our legislators that they finally acknowledge the role of the producers and companies. But the version of this EPR is not really consistent with the principles of EPR, which is to make polluters pay,” said Coleen Salamat, plastic solutions campaigner of EcoWaste Coalition.

EPR, as defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, is a policy approach in which producers are given a significant responsibility for the treatment or disposal of post-consumer products. But EPR, according to global movement Break Free From Plastic, is a policy principle that extends the responsibility of producers over the entire life cycle of items.

Groups stressed that the proposed EPR scheme is limited to downstream interventions such as recovery and offsetting, and encourages thermal treatments such as incineration and pyrolysis or the process of chemically decomposing materials at elevated temperatures without oxygen.

The [proposed law mandates](#) large enterprises to establish EPR programs for the plastic packaging of their products. It sets targets for recovery of plastic product footprint generation: 20% for end-2023, 40% for 2024, 50% for 2025, 60% for 2026, 70% for 2027, and 80% for 2028, and every year thereafter.

Obligated enterprises that fail to comply with the measure can be fined at most P20 million and a suspension of business permit until the law’s requirement is met.

“When the very companies who are supposed to be the target of this law are the ones calling for its passage, and civil society organizations are the ones calling for a pause, I think it will give everyone a reason to doubt whether the EPR bill that is currently being considered is really meant to address the problems of plastic pollution or is it meant to provide businesses a way to continue with business as usual,” said Froilan Gaité, executive director of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives Asia Pacific.



Contribution to climate crisis

Greenpeace zero waste campaigner Marian Ledesma pointed out that plastic production and thermal treatment are major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Plastics generate planet-warming gases at every phase of their life cycle.

“The president must veto this bill because it can affect the government’s climate goals and worsen the situation of affected communities in the Philippines,” Ledesma said.

“If the government is really serious in its climate commitments and its aim to protect Filipinos, the EPR bill should be first vetoed and then be revisited in the 19th Congress to fix the issues that have been identified,” she added.

Dr. Glenn Roy Paraso, executive director of Mary Johnston Hospital in Tondo, Manila, also said that waste burning poses hazardous impacts on human health. For example, waste incinerators produce pollutants such as mercury emissions, and dioxins and furans that contaminate soil, air, and water sources.

BFFP project coordinator for corporate accountability Miko Aliño recommended that a strong EPR scheme should have the following:

- Timebound targets for adopting reuse or adopting refill and recycled content
- Eco-modulation of EPR fees anchored on waste hierarchy that prioritizes waste prevention
- Inclusion of informal waste sector
- Increased transparency and accountability
- Wider policy approach focusing on waste prevention and sustainable product design

“EPR is not a silver bullet so it should be supplemented by other measures,” Aliño said.

In his inaugural speech, Marcos stressed that the Philippines has to play its part in addressing plastic pollution. How he plans to do that remains unclear. — **with report from BusinessWorld/Alyssa Nicole O. Tan**



EcoWaste warns public vs paints with excessive lead content

Published July 16, 2022, 1:37 PM

by [Jel Santos](#)

Environmental group EcoWaste Coalition has warned the public of the perils of purchasing and using five more spray paints with “excessive lead content.”

Lead is a hazardous chemical banned in paints and similar surface coatings.

In a statement, the group’s adviser Manny Calonzo said non-compliant lead-containing spray paints continue to be imported and sold in clear defiance of the country’s ban on such paints.

“Consumers should steer clear of these leaded products and the erring importers, distributors, and retailers, including online dealers, should stop this illegal trade,” he said.

According to EcoWaste, it bought the multi-color “made in China” Automatic Spray Paint products from an online seller for P68 each and screened them for total lead content using an Olympus Vanta M Series X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analyzer.

The group found out that, of the eight variants purchased, five were found to contain lead above the maximum limit of 90 parts per million (ppm) as stipulated under Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Administrative Order 2013-24, or the Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds.

“The orange-yellow Automatic Spray Paint was found to contain a whopping lead content exceeding 100,000 ppm. The lemon yellow, grass green, Jialing red, and grain yellow variants were also found contaminated with 71,110 ppm, 15,130 ppm, 7,483 ppm and 967 ppm lead, respectively,” the non-profit environmental group reported.

Meanwhile, the group noted that lead was not detected on the anti-rust brown, orange-red and signal red variants of the said paint brand.

The EcoWaste Coalition has urged paint manufacturers, including those that export to the Philippines, to obtain third-party Lead Safe Paint® certification to assist consumers in making an informed choice when buying paints.

“We appeal to all stakeholders to join forces and support efforts that will result in decreased children’s, women’s and workers’ exposure to lead from lead-containing paint, dust and soil,” it said.

The government was asked by the environmental group to take concrete steps to improve the enforcement of the regulation banning lead in all paints.

Per the World Health Organization (WHO), the toxic effects of lead include brain and nerve damage, decreased mental ability and learning difficulties, speech, language, hearing and behavior problems, anemia, high blood pressure, kidney damage, digestive problems, and reproductive problems for adults.

It has warned that “there is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe.”

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/07/16/ecowaste-warns-public-vs-paints-with-excessive-lead-content/>



Boracay, Palawan, Cebu hailed as ‘world’s best islands’

[Ghio Ong](#) - The Philippine Star July 17, 2022 | 12:00am



On T+L’s list of “The 25 Best Islands in the World,” Boracay ranked ninth, while Palawan and Cebu landed on the 11th and 16th spots, respectively.

Walter Bollozos

MANILA, Philippines — The islands of Boracay, Palawan and Cebu were listed among the world’s best islands by US-based travel magazine Travel+Leisure (T+L).

On T+L’s list of “The 25 Best Islands in the World,” Boracay ranked ninth, while Palawan and Cebu landed on the 11th and 16th spots, respectively.

The magazine’s “5 Best Islands in Asia” list also included Boracay and Palawan, which earned the fourth and fifth spots, respectively.

Boracay returned on the Asia list “after a hiatus,” according to T+L.

“Two and a half miles of Boracay’s four-mile length consist of the aptly named White Beach, which is dotted with restaurants and lodgings for visitors looking for easy access to ideal snorkeling and diving,” it said.

It added that one of its readers described the tourist spot as “tropical paradise that boasts azure waters, powdery white sand, abundant flora and fauna and diverse marine life.”

Meanwhile, the magazine wrote that the “ever-popular” Palawan, which stayed in fifth place on the Asia list from last year, shared the same praise as Boracay and “offer(s) blissful beachfront experiences.”

T+L said it conducted a survey asking travelers who read the website to rate the tourist islands “according to their activities and sights, natural attractions and beaches, food, friendliness and overall value.”

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia-Frasco praised the inclusion of Boracay, Palawan and Cebu – where she hails from – in the T+L list.

Frasco also thanked tourism stakeholders, government units and the Department of Tourism’s previous administration led by former secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, who is currently Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deputy governor, for their efforts in keeping tourism alive amid the COVID-19 pandemic.



“The Philippines is truly blessed with the unrivaled beauty of our natural resources, coupled with the warmth and endless talent of the Filipinos manifested in this citation of Travel + Leisure that included our Cebu, Palawan and Boracay in their prestigious list,” Puyat said in her statement.



Mutualism: Nature's essential relationship

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JULY 17, 2022



[Gregg Yan and Dondi Mesa](#)

A golden crown flying fox, one of many species of bats, is a keystone species that helps fertilize the forest with its droppings. Keystone species helps define an entire ecosystem. Without keystone species, the ecosystem would be different or cease to exist altogether. And Wildlife conservation advocate Gregg Yan shows a wild pitcher plant that thrives in dense forest.

In rice farms, domestic carabaos are often observed having one or two egrets near them. Scientists explain that like other large mammals and bird species in the wild, the carabao and egret have developed a special relationship wherein they mutually benefit from such interaction.

The egret feeds on the ticks and other pesky insects or parasites that suck the blood or cause irritation to the skin of the carabao.

Besides having a buffet of insects, egrets get some degree of protection provided by the carabao—especially from predators like snakes or large lizards and even domestic animals like cats or dogs. Who would want to go near a carabao with those deadly horns, anyway?

Mutualism

In the wild, this symbiotic relationship is also commonly observed among other plant or animal species.

Parrot fish feed on algae, taking them off from corals and allowing the latter to breathe better. Without the parrot fish to remove the algae, the corals can eventually “choke” to death.

Besides serving as a feeding ground, corals provide fish the protection they need against bigger fish that can snatch and make delicious meals out of the poor little creature.

The discovery of a specific species of insect bats using a specific tropical pitcher plant species to sleep in Borneo in 2019 has inspired scientists to take a closer look at this unique relationship between the Harwicke's wooly bats and pitcher plants.

What a bat!

The Harwicke's wooly bats are known to exist in Asia, including the Philippines. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listed the Harwicke's wooly bats as a “least concern.”

This bat is highly adaptable. While it is generally known to inhabit in almost all types of forests, it is also found foraging in residential areas and roosting on rooftops.

It was also seen roosting on rattan vine leaves and even in bamboo thicket, on hollow trees or dead clusters of leaves.



Hotel for bats

Scientists say the pitcher plant, on the other hand, has evolved as a specialized roost for the Hardwicke's wooly bats.

The plant has developed a lower level of digestive fluid which is tolerable for their visiting special friend to roost.

Scientists say that the plant, which is supposed to be carnivorous, seems to invite wooly bats through an ultrasonic reflector. This allows the bats to easily find them in the forest.

In roosting inside pitcher plants, the bats leave feces and urines that fertilize the plant, allowing it to grow healthy, even when it is eventually deprived of insects to digest.

Inspiring relationship

Jayson Ibanez, director of Research and Conservation at the Philippine Eagle Foundation, described this mutualism between bats and pitcher plants as "a very inspiring nature-based relationship."

Closer to home, Ibanez said there are other mutualism examples for bats in the Philippines with the animal working as pollinators of durian and jade vine, wherein the nectar-feeding bats benefit greatly from the plants as a food source.

Ibanez told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on July 12 that bats are a misunderstood species and they have been put into bad light by the Covid-19 which became a global pandemic.

Natural pollinators

Bats, especially fruit bats, are keystone species and are known as nature's tree farmers. As they feed on fruits, they drop the seeds that eventually grow to add vegetation to forests.

Insect bats, on the other hand, are known to be the silent pollinators in the wild. The bees and butterflies of the forests, whose ecosystem function can never be emphasized.

These hardworking, flying mammals, fly miles and miles away, go from forest to forest, tree to tree, transferring pollen allowing plants to bear fruit, said bat expert Philip Ariola.

Benefits outweighing costs

Ariola, an associate professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), told the BusinessMirror in an interview via Zoom on July 13 that what was discovered in by scientists about Hardwicke's wooly bats and pitcher plants in Borneo more than 10 years ago may be happening in the Philippines, as well.

However, he admitted that there's still no record of such a symbiotic relationship having been documented.

"When the news came up in 2011 or 2012, we were very excited, so whenever we see a pitcher plant, we try to look but we haven't seen it," he said.

What makes such a symbiotic relationship unique is that the benefits to both species outweigh the costs.

Intimate relationship

According to Ariola, it is amazing how the bat is able to sneak into the pitcher plant to roost and leave it unscathed and alive.

Another unique characteristic in such a relationship between the Hardwicke's wooly bat and pitcher plant, he said, is the fact that the bats are more beneficial to the plant.



“Usually, plants provide the food. But in this case, the bats provided the food,” Ariola, who has a Master’s degree in wildlife studies at UPLB, added.

There are other bats that rely on plants, like dried leaves, although this is very temporary, he noted.

Ariola said that in the Philippines, pitcher plants are also known to allow other species like frogs to breed inside the pitcher.

In 2005, he recalled a personal experience when he was doing research in the mountains in Camarines Norte and discovered a frog inside a pitcher plant.

Ariola noted that such amazing relationships between plants and animals should be a subject for more research.

Interconnectedness

When asked for a comment, Asean Centre for Biodiversity Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim shared that mutualism is just one of the symbiotic relationships in the natural world that contributes to the health of an ecosystem.

“Other relationships may not be equally beneficial to the species interacting with each other, such as ‘parasitism’ or ‘commensalism,’ but these demonstrate the interconnectedness of the diversity of species in an ecosystem,” Lim told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on July 10.

Essential relationships

“In a larger context, these relationships are essential to the continued existence of the species involved,” she said.

She explained that the pitcher plant benefits from the bat because the bat provides it nutrients to survive and thrive, while the woolly bat depends on the pitcher to protect itself from the heat and shelter during day time.

“Both have developed distinct characteristics that support their relationship. Another species of bats, for example, will not have the same adaptation that will allow it to fit perfectly into the body of this *N. hemsleyana*, without damaging the plant or hurting itself. So if the Hardwicke’s woolly bat goes extinct, the pitcher plant will lose a major source of its nutrients, and eventually disappear, as well,” she said.

Interdependency

Lim said the characteristics that support these symbiotic relationships between species may take millions of years to evolve, enough reason not to expect an immediate replacement of one that will allow the other to survive for long after its “partner” goes extinct.

“Hence, so it is across species. There is always a level of interdependency that will continue to keep the planet habitable for everyone, including humans,” she ended.

Image credits: [Gregg Yan and Dondi Mesa](#)



AboitizPower set to build binary geothermal plant in Albay



BICOL. AboitizPower Renewables' geothermal power plant in Tiwi, Albay. (Contributed photo)

July 15, 2022

ABOITIZ Power Corporation (AboitizPower) is strengthening its bid to grow its RE portfolio in the next decade with plans to build a binary plant in Tiwi, Albay.

Through its subsidiary AP Renewables Inc. (Apri), the company is set to construct a binary geothermal power plant that will utilize excess heat from spent brine at the Tiwi geothermal facility — the country's first geothermal power plant — generating an additional 17 megawatts (MW) gross capacity of clean and renewable energy for the grid.

“The expansion of our Cleanergy portfolio isn't solely hinged on acquisitions or the construction of big-ticket projects. At AboitizPower, and within the Aboitiz Group, we always seek ways to optimize available resources. This project is a testament to that,” AboitizPower President and Chief Executive Officer Emmanuel Rubio said.

The Tiwi binary plant will be built from the ground up with an entirely new binary plant system, pipes, and transmission line. Last April 29, Apri signed an agreement with its steam provider for the supply of brine that will fuel the binary facility. Construction on the project is targeted for completion at the end of 2023.

Geothermal energy, which is a form of renewable energy, comes from the heat of the earth, produced by drilling holes into the ground to tap steam—or the hot water rising to the surface of the earth—from geothermal reservoirs.

Residual heat from the hot brine side of the geothermal production process that is otherwise discarded is harvested to produce electricity through the binary geothermal power plant.

“We are determined to further grow our Cleanergy portfolio in the next 10 years and will pursue every reasonable opportunity to do so,” Rubio said.

Apri President and Chief Operating Officer Jeffrey Estrella explained that the concept of recovering heat from geothermal brine and converting it into electricity is a novel solution that increases the overall generation productivity from the Tiwi geothermal facility.



“This project is meant to recycle our by-product and turn it into productive energy in the form of electricity, through the addition of a binary plant. We are always keen on investing in improvements and technical innovations that extend the useful life and improve the output of our renewable energy assets,” he said.

AboitizPower’s geothermal, hydro, and solar facilities across the Philippines compose Cleanergy, the company’s clean and renewable energy brand.

Since acquiring the Tiwi-MakBan complexes in 2009, AboitizPower has invested in the rehabilitation of the facilities to improve performance and extend their operating life.

The project took on its first debt financing in 2016, following a successful revamp, with the backing of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) through the issuance of the first Climate Bond in Asia and the Pacific.

AboitizPower envisions a 50:50 balance between its renewable and thermal portfolios by 2030, further growing its Cleanergy capacity along the way in an effort to help build the country’s RE market and contribute to the global RE goals. **(PR)**



Ilocos Norte cleans up waterways to prevent flooding

By Leilanie Adriano July 16, 2022, 3:25 pm



DECLOGGING. Villagers in Laoag City help clean up a creek in this undated photo. The Ilocos Norte government in coordination with various local government units conducts regular mass clean up of waterways to prevent flooding. *(Contributed photo)*

LAOAG CITY – The city government here is declogging its waterways to prevent flooding this rainy season.

One of the main clean-up activities involves the use of a backhoe to remove water lilies that impede water flow to the sea.

Marcell N. Tabije, local disaster risk reduction, and management officer, said Saturday all the floodwater that comes from downtown Laoag goes to the Caoacan creek, hence the need to clear out the debris, particularly the fast-growing waterlilies in this area.

“We are declogging these waterways annually to bring back their depth to prevent overflow that inundates nearby communities,” said Tabije.

In nearby Pila village, local communities living near the waterways are also doing their share in removing debris.

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC) is also assisting different local government units of Ilocos Norte with the simultaneous declogging of waterways.

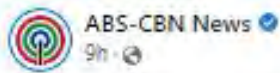
According to Tabije, the heavy equipment of the Ilocos Norte government has been sent to flood-prone and low-lying towns of Batac City and Paoay in the second district to conduct dredging and augment their flood mitigating efforts.

Critical infrastructures such as roads and bridges, flood control structures, and irrigation systems are also being monitored as the southwest monsoon or "habagat" continues to bring rains in this northern part of Luzon.

With the continuing implementation of a community-based aid package that provides emergency assistance to displaced, underemployed, and seasonal workers, the beneficiaries are deployed to work on flood control projects in their respective barangays.

"We appeal to all our *kakailian* (constituents) to always be prepared and pro-active in these times," Tabije said. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1179091>



ABS-CBN News

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Ilang estruktura ang nasira dahil sa landslide sa isang minahan sa Purok 48-B sa Sitio Diat Palo, Barangay Napnapan, Pantukan, Davao de Oro Biyernes.

Sa mga larawan na ibinahagi ni Jhon Bernard Labra, makikita ang mahabang landslide sa gilid ng bundok. Walang naitalang namatay o nasugatan sa landslide, ayon sa mga awtoridad.

Natabunan ng lupa ang dalawang bunkhouse, isang guardhouse, at kalahati ng stockroom ng makina ng isang small scale mining company.

Ayon sa Davao de Oro Provincial Information Office, Huwebes pa lang ay inabisuhan na ang mga residente na lumikas nang magsimulang bumigay ang lupa sa ibabaw na bahagi. Ilang araw nang nakararanas ng pag-ulan ang ilang bahagi ng Davao region dahil sa thunderstorms. | via Heriel Tocmo

BASA HIN ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/.../explainer-how-to-spot-and...>

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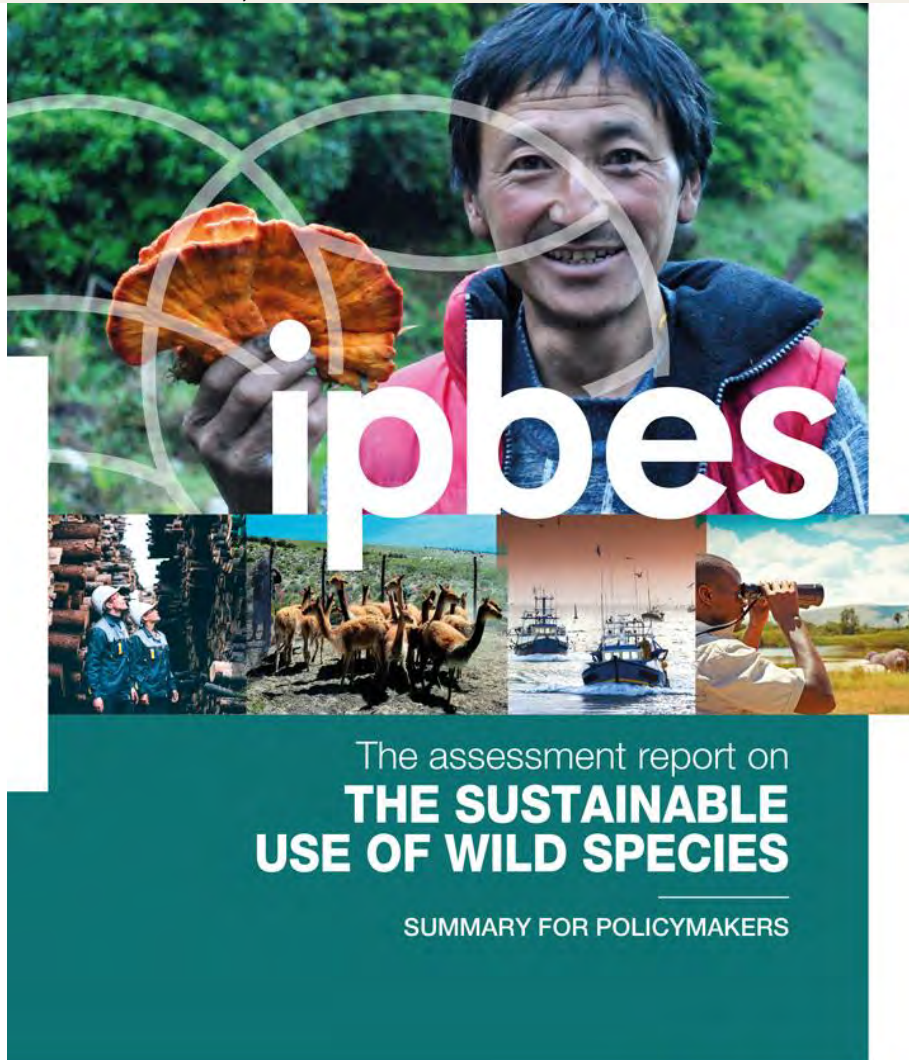
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50,000 wild species meet needs of billions worldwide

BY BUSINESSMIRROR JULY 17, 2022



BONN, Germany—Billions of people, in developed and developing nations, benefit daily from the use of wild species for food, energy, materials, medicine, recreation, inspiration and many other vital contributions to human well-being, a new international report said.

However, the accelerating global biodiversity crisis, with a million species of plants and animals facing extinction, threatens these contributions to people.

A new report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services offers insights, analysis and tools to establish more sustainable use of wild species of plants, animals, fungi and algae around the world, IPBES said in a news release.

Sustainable use is when biodiversity and ecosystem functioning are maintained while contributing to human well-being.

The IPBES Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species was the result of four years of work by 85 leading experts from the natural and social sciences, and holders of indigenous and local knowledge, as well as 200 contributing authors, drawing on more than 6,200 sources.



The summary of the report was approved last week by representatives of the 139 member-states of IPBES in Bonn, Germany.

“With about 50,000 wild species used through different practices, including more than 10,000 wild species harvested directly for human food, rural people in developing countries are most at risk from unsustainable use, with lack of complementary alternatives often forcing them to further exploit wild species already at risk,” said Dr. Jean-Marc Fromentin (France), who co-chaired the assessment with Dr. Marla R. Emery (USA/Norway) and Prof. John Donaldson (South Africa).

“Seventy percent of the world’s poor are directly dependent on wild species. One in five people rely on wild plants, algae and fungi for their food and income; 2.4 billion rely on fuel wood for cooking and about 90 percent of the 120 million people working in capture fisheries are supported by small-scale fishing,” Emery said.

“But the regular use of wild species is extremely important not only in the Global South. From the fish that we eat, to medicines, cosmetics, decoration and recreation, wild species’ use is much more prevalent than most people realize,” she added.

The use of wild species is an important source of income for millions of people worldwide.

Wild tree species account for two-thirds of global industrial roundwood; trade in wild plants, algae and fungi is a billion-dollar industry; and even non-extractive uses of wild species are big business.

Tourism, based on observing wild species, is one of the main reasons that, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, protected areas globally received 8 billion visitors and generated \$600 billion every year.

The report identified five broad categories of “practices” in the use of wild species: fishing; gathering; logging; terrestrial animal harvesting (including hunting); and non-extractive practices, such as observing.

For each practice, it then examined specific “uses,” such as for food and feed; materials; medicine, energy; recreation; ceremony; learning and decoration—providing a detailed analysis of the trends in each, over the past 20 years.

In most cases, use of wild species has increased, but sustainability of use has varied, such as in gathering for medicine and logging for materials and energy.

Speaking about fishing as an example, Fromentin said: “Recent global estimates confirm that about 34 percent of marine wild fish stocks are overfished and 66 percent are fished within biologically sustainable levels—but within this global picture there are significant local and contextual variations.”

He said countries with robust fisheries management have seen stocks increasing in abundance.

Fromentin pointed out: “Many small-scale fisheries are unsustainable or only partially sustainable, especially in Africa for both inland and marine fisheries, and in Asia, Latin America and Europe for coastal fisheries.”

“Overexploitation is one of the main threats to the survival of many land-based and aquatic species in the wild,” Donaldson said. “Addressing the causes of unsustainable use and, wherever possible reversing these trends, will result in better outcomes for wild species and the people who depend on them.”



The report said the survival of an estimated 12 percent of wild tree species is threatened by unsustainable logging.

At the same time, unsustainable gathering is one of the main threats for several plant groups, notably cacti, cycads and orchids, and unsustainable hunting has been identified as a threat for 1,341 wild mammal species—with declines in large-bodied species that have low natural rates of increase also linked to hunting pressure.

The report identified drivers—such as land- and seascape changes; climate change; pollution and invasive alien species—that impact the abundance and distribution of wild species, and can increase stress and challenges among the human communities that use them.

Global trade in wild species has expanded substantially in volume, value and trade networks over the past four decades.

While trade in wild species provides important income for exporting countries, offers higher incomes for harvesters, and can diversify sources of supply to allow pressure to be redirected from species being unsustainably used, it also decouples the consumption of wild species from their places of origin.

The report found that without effective regulation across supply chains—from local to global—global trade of wild species generally increases pressures on wild species, leading to unsustainable use and sometimes to wild population collapses (e.g., shark fin trade).

Illegal use and illegal trade in wild species are also addressed in the report—as this occurs across all of the practices and often leads to unsustainable use.

The authors find that illegal trade in wild species represents the third largest class of all illegal trade—with estimated annual values of up to \$199 billion. Timber and fish make up the largest volumes and value of illegal trade in wild species, the IPBES news release said.



UK heatwave: Look out for family and friends, urges new health secretary

By Francesca Gillett

BBC News Published 1 hour ago

Extra measures are being put in place for ambulance services as the UK heatwave approaches, says Health Secretary Steve Barclay.

More call handlers and extra capacity for the 111 helpline are among the steps planned for Monday and Tuesday.

He urged the public to look out for vulnerable relatives and neighbours.

A national emergency has been declared, and the UK's first red extreme heat warning issued, with temperatures possibly reaching 41C (106F).

That would be the highest temperature ever recorded in the UK - above the current high of 38.7C in Cambridge in 2019.

Mr Barclay said: "The clear message to the public is to take sensible steps in terms of water, shade and cover. That's the best way of mitigating against the heat.

"We're asking people to keep an eye out for their neighbours and those who may be vulnerable."

On Saturday, temperatures reached 29.1C in Kew Gardens in west London, and Heathrow Airport, with highs of 31C expected in central England on Sunday.

In east Kent, hundreds of people were left with either no water or low pressure on Saturday after a **power failure on Friday evening.**

- **NI high temperature could be topped**
- **Hot weather in Wales hits Covid jab clinics and rail travel**
- **Scotland heat warning could be extended - minister**

The extra support for health services also includes extra ambulance capacity, and freeing up space in hospitals so patients are not stuck in ambulances outside, said Mr Barclay.

NHS leaders have warned there could be greater demand for ambulances - and said patients **should not be left** outside hospitals in hot weather for more than 30 minutes.

The new health secretary was speaking after an emergency Cobra meeting held by the government on Saturday.

Cabinet Office Minister Kit Malthouse, who chaired it, warned of significant disruption to transport and urged people not to travel unless necessary.

"The heat will affect rails, for example, so the trains have to run slower," he said, adding: "If they don't have to travel, this may be a moment to work from home."

Schools are being given help and guidance to enable them to stay open, Mr Malthouse said.

Meanwhile, Labour criticised the prime minister after he reportedly did not attend the meeting.



"Boris Johnson has gone missing in action again," said deputy leader Angela Rayner. "He's back to his old tricks of skipping important Cobra meetings."



REUTERS

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) told people to take simple steps to stay safe.

"In these exceptionally high temperatures everybody can be affected," said Prof Isabel Oliver, its chief scientific officer.

"Last year we didn't reach temperatures anywhere near the ones that are predicted for next week, [and] we saw over 1,600 excess deaths associated with the period of heatwave. So this is why we are keen that everybody knows what they can do to stay safe."

The Met Office red warning - the highest level - is for extreme heat and covers an area including London, Manchester and York on Monday and Tuesday.

It is the first time it has been issued since the warning system for heat started last year.

Rail passengers in England and Wales **have been warned they should only travel if necessary**, and Network Rail said speed restrictions were likely.

Some schools **will also close early next week** and **some hospital appointments** will be cancelled.

The rest of England, **Wales** and southern Scotland will be under an amber warning for extreme heat - while in Europe, deadly wildfires **have broken out in Portugal, Spain and southwestern France**.



Train tracks are being painted white in some parts of the country to deflect the heat

BBC Weather forecaster Susan Powell said the situation was unprecedented.

She said there was an 80% chance the UK would break its current highest temperature record. Temperatures could reach as high as 41C in England on Monday, with 38C quite widely across England and Wales.



Tuesday is set to see highs of 40C, or above, in eastern England. Northern Ireland and Scotland could also see their temperature records broken, she said.

And on top of that, the temperature overnight on Monday into Tuesday could also hit a new peak - with highs of 25C expected.

"The problem is we have a 48 to 72-hour period where people who are vulnerable have no cooling-off period," she said.

As well as the Met Office warning, the UKHSA has issued its highest level four heat alert to health and care bodies - warning illness and death could occur "among the fit and healthy".

Most deaths during a heatwave are usually heart attacks or strokes caused by the strain of trying to keep body temperatures stable.

17 JULY 2022, SUNDAY



DENR

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DENR cites improvement in Manila Bay water quality

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE continuing rehabilitation efforts in all river systems and tributaries within the Manila Bay region has significantly "improved" the bay's water quality.

Based on the data issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) — through the Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) as of June 2022, the fecal coliform level at the Manila Bay beach nourishment station near the United States Embassy in Manila has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021.

Two water quality monitoring stations near "Dolomite Beach" also registered lower fecal coliform levels — from 7,300 MPN/100mL to 1,700 MPN/100mL and from 10,200 MPN/100mL to 2,100 MPN/100mL, respectively.

EMB-NCR Regional Director Michael Drake P. Matias said four Metropolitan Environment Offices also reported a significant decrease in fecal coliform levels within their respective areas.

Fecal coliform levels have dropped in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System from 3.7 billion MPN/100mL to 4.8 million MPN/100mL, as well as in the waters near the Navotas Fishport from 920,000 MPN/100mL to 9,200 MPN/100mL.

"We have seen remarkable gains in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results. Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project," Matias explained.

Although the readings show that the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay's water quality to Class SB level, Matias said the goal is a "big challenge", but attainable

through the collaboration of both local and national governments and the public.

"Class SB" is a DENR classification for coastal areas and waters where the public may safely engage in bathing, swimming, skin diving, and similar recreational activities.

"Reaching the 100MPN/100mL standard is not impossible through our solid waste management strategies, geoengineering interventions, and with the establishment of our real-time online water quality monitoring system," Matias said.

The EMB-NCR checks 412 monitoring sampling stations scattered in various water bodies of Metro Manila.

Twenty-three stations, which include stations near the Dolomite Beach, Rizal Park Hotel, and US Embassy, are being monitored three times a week.

Meanwhile, 18 stations — including the Manila Yacht Club sewerage treatment plant and Aristocrat Restaurant monitoring stations — are monitored weekly.

The EMB-NCR also conducts monthly monitoring of 133 stations, which include the Manila Bay river outfalls and Marikina River.

Together with the EMB-Region III and EMB-Region IV-A, it also conducts quarterly monitoring of 206 stations, which include the Navotas River Shipyard and Manila Bay shoreline.

It added that 32 stations, which include Estero de Marala, Estero de Magdalena, Estero de Vitas, and Estero de Sunog Apog, are monitored semi-annually.

EMB-NCR has developed and established an online water quality monitoring system on their website to allow easy public access.

Matias explained that the data system will provide information and awareness to the public through the current status and trend of water quality in the creeks and water bodies in Metro Manila.

It will also serve as the basis for crafting policies, plans, and regulations to decrease water pollution within the respective areas

of jurisdiction of the local government units (LGUs).

The ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation project follows the Supreme Court mandamus, directing 13 government agencies, including the DENR, to clean up, rehabilitate, and restore Manila Bay's waters to make it fit for swimming and other contact recreation activities.



Kalidad ng tubig sa Manila Bay, lalong umayos

Lalo pang gumanda ang kalidad ng tubig sa Manila Bay. Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region, (DENR EMB NCR) nagkaroon ng 'significant improvement' sa kalidad ng tubig sa naturang baybayin. Binanggit pa ni DENR-EMB-NCR Regional Director Michael Drake Matias, bunga ito ng patuloy na rehabilitasyon ng lahat ng mga river systems at daluyan ng tubig sa loob ng bay region.

Nabatid na noong Hunyo 2022, ang fecal coliform level sa Manila Bay beach nourishment station malapit sa United States Embassy sa Maynila ay bumaba sa 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) mula 7,100 MPN/100mL noong 2021.

Ang dalawang water quality monitoring stations malapit sa Dolomite Beach ay nagtala rin ng mababang fecal coliform levels - mula 7,300 MPN/100mL ay naging 1,700 MPN/100mL, at mula 10,200 MPN/100mL ay bumaba sa 2,100 MPN/100mL, ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Nakapagtala rin ang apat na Metropolitan Environment Offices ng 'significant decrease' sa fecal coliform levels sa loob ng kanilang mga lugar.

Bumaba ang mga fecal coliform levels sa Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System mula 3.7 billion MPN/100mL ay naging 4.8 million MPN/100mL. Gayundin ang tubig malapit sa Navotas Fishport, mula 920,000 MPN/100mL pababa ng 9,200 MPN/100mL.

"We have seen remarkable gains in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results. Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project," pahayag ni Matias. (Angie dela Cruz)



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Water quality in Manila Bay improves - DENR

By JEL SANTOS

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has reported significant improvement in the water quality of Manila Bay, attributing it to the continuing rehabilitation efforts in all river systems and tributaries within the bay region.

As of June 2022, the fecal coliform level at the Manila Bay beach nourishment station near the United States Embassy in Manila has decreased to 2,400 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) from 7,100 MPN/100mL in 2021, the data of the DENR's Environmental

Management Bureau-National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) showed.

It was also observed by the agency that the two water quality monitoring stations near the Dolomite Beach also registered lower fecal coliform levels - from 7,300 MPN/100mL to 1,700 MPN/100mL, and from 10,200 MPN/100mL to 2,100 MPN/100mL, respectively.

Moreover, a significant decrease in fecal coliform levels in four Metropolitan Environment Offices was observed.

The EMB-NCR has also reported that the fecal coliform levels have dropped in the Malabon-Navotas-Tullahan-Tinajeros River System from 3.7

billion MPN/100mL to 4.8 million MPN/100mL, as well as in the waters near the Navotas Fishport from 920,000 MPN/100mL to 9,200 MPN/100mL.

Michael Drake P. Matias, EMB-NCR regional director, said such are "remarkable gains" in Manila Bay based on the water quality monitoring results.

"Rest assured that we will not stop here and will continue our work as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project," he vowed.

Matias said that, although the readings show that the current levels are still far from the fecal coliform standard of 100 MPN/100mL to restore Manila Bay's water quality to Class SB level, the goal is a big challenge, but attainable through the collaboration of both local and national governments and the public.



DENR pinarangalan ang Lungsod ng Maynila

Ni EDD REYES

PINAPURIHAN nina Mayor Honey Lacuna-Pangan at Vice Mayor Yul Servo Nieto ang tanggapan ng Department of Public Services (DPS) dahil sa kanilang tagumpay na mapakinabangan ang mga itatapon na sanang bsura.

Ang papuri ay kanilang ipinaabot matapos na kilalanin ng Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) ang Lungsod ng Maynila bilang "Best Practices on Upcycling" sa ginanap na Solid Waste Management Summit sa Marula Hotel noong Huwebes ng gabi.

Mismong si DPS Officer-in-Charge Kenneth Amurao ang tumanggap ng plake ng pagkilala kay Atty. Michael Drake Matias, ang regional director ng Environment Management Bureau (EMB) ng DENR.

Ipinagkaloob ng DENR ang naturang parangal sa

Lungsod ng Maynila dahil sa pagsisikap nitong gawing kapaki-pakinabang ang mga election paraphernalia sa nagdaang halalan sa pamamagitan ng paggawa ng mga eco bags, pamaypay, fertilizer at iba pa sa ilalim ng proyektong "Tarpaulin mo, Ileresikdo ko".

Bukod sa naturang proyekto, nagkaloob din ng DPS ng proyektong pang-abuhayan sa pamamagitan ng upcycling ng mga straw, plastic wrappers, mga lumang magazine,

papel at iba pa na kanilang ginawang kapaki-pakinabang.

Sa naturang summit, pinagkalooban din ang Lungsod ng Maynila ng sertipiko ng pagkilala ng DENR dahil sa matatag na pangakong ipatupad ang batas sa ilalim ng R.A.9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 at ang pagsisikap na maipagkaloob ang malinis at malusog na kapaligiran para sa lahat ng kanyang nasasakupan.



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Manila Water set to complete ₱2.7-B treatment plant in 2023

By BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT

Manila Water, east zone concessionaire, said construction of its ₱2.7 billion East Bay Water Treatment Plant (WTP), which will draw water from the eastern part of Laguna Lake, considered the cleanest portion of the lake, is expected to be completed by April 2023.

In a statement, Manila Water Senior Project Manager Byder Nangit said the East Bay WTP is part of the East Bay Water Supply System Project that seeks to expand Manila Water's services to more towns in Rizal Province as part of its commitment of providing quality water service to the underserved areas in the East Zone.

Nangit said that once operational, the Phase 1 East Bay WTP is designed

to provide 50 million liters per day of treated water to 390,000 population in the towns of Jala-Jala, Pililla, Baras, Cardona, Morong, and Binangonan in Rizal Province.

Components of the ₱2.7 billion WTP project include an eight-million-liter (ML) capacity reservoir, an intake structure, pumping station, and Water Treatment plant using Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) system, multi-media and granular activated carbon (GAC) filters as well as Reverse Osmosis system, said Nangit.

Manila Water's Project Management Group (PMG) acknowledges that a project as massive as this requires the cooperation and buy-in of key stakeholders to be completed and operational as scheduled.

"Manila Water has been regularly

coordinating with the relevant Local Government Units and the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) to ensure that the project complies with all necessary laws and regulations and is implemented upholding strict safety protocols," Manila Water PMG Stakeholder Engagement Department Head Badet Del Rosario added.

To complement the WTP, two submarine pipe-laying projects are also currently being implemented. One pipe system connecting Morong to Cardona is already 50 percent complete, while another HDPE pipe system connecting Pililla to Morong has already begun construction. These submarine transmission lines will convey treated water from the WTP to the distribution system to safely reach customers once the facilities begin operations.



Manila Water builds another water treatment plant at Laguna Lake

To serve more Rizal towns

TO fulfill its commitment of providing quality water service to the underserved areas in the East Zone, Manila Water is currently building the East Bay Water Treatment Plant (WTP) that will draw water from the eastern part of Laguna Lake, considered the cleanest portion of the lake. The East Bay WTP is part of the East Bay Water Supply System Project that seeks to expand Manila Water's services to more towns in Rizal Province.

"Components of the Php 2.7B WTP project include an eight-million-liter (8 ML) capacity reservoir, an intake structure, pumping station, and Water Treatment plant using Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) system, multi-media and granular activated carbon (GAC) filters as well as Reverse Osmosis system," Manila Water Senior Project Manager Byder Nangit shared.

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Construction is expected to be completed by April 2023, which will be followed by testing and process proving. Once operational, the Phase 1 East Bay WTP is designed to provide 50 million liters per day of treated water to 390,000 population in the towns of Jala-Jala, Pililla, Baras, Cardona, Morong, and Binangonan in Rizal Province.

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Bataan eyes solar energy use

BY MAR SUPNAD

BATAAN – In a bid to contain the worsening climate change and mitigate increasing prices of electricity, a number of government facilities in Bataan will be installed with solar panels through a public-private partnership.

Bataan Governor Joet

Garcia disclosed that government facilities which will have solar panels include the provincial capitol, the Dinalupihan public market, Dinalupihan civic center, Bataan national high school, and Mariveles national high school.

“In the overall objectives of the provincial government to prevent the adverse effects

of worsening climate change, our government tapped the Citicore Power Inc. – the original proponent status – in response to their earlier proposal to use solar energy,” Garcia said.

He explained that the solar panels will be installed to minimize if not totally halt the continued usage of fossil fuels, adding that

the provincial government is now pushing the use of renewable energy to protect the environment.

Meantime, Abucay town Mayor Robin Tagle also said that they are mulling the installation of solar panels in the newly-constructed municipality, public market and others.

“We cannot only save

payment from electricity but also, on our estimate, we can also sell power once these are implemented,” said Tagle.

He added that he wanted to convert Abucay town into what he called a “smart city” by instituting reforms, invite investors to generate income and employment, among others.

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Ilocos Norte waterways cleaned

LAOAG CITY — The city government here is declogging its waterways to prevent flooding this rainy season with the use of a backhoe to remove water lilies that impede water flow to the sea.

Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management officer Marcell Tabije revealed on Saturday that all the floodwater that comes from downtown Laoag goes to

the Caoacan creek, hence the need to clear out the debris, particularly the fast-growing waterlilies in this area.

"We are declogging these waterways annually to bring back their depth to prevent overflow that inundates nearby communities," Tabije said.

In nearby Pila village, local communities living near the waterways are also doing their share in removing debris.

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, on the other hand, is also assisting different local government units of Ilocos Norte with the simultaneous declogging of waterways.

Tabije narrated that the heavy equipment of the Ilocos Norte government has been sent to flood-prone and low-lying towns of Batac City and Paoay

in the second district to conduct dredging and augment their flood mitigating efforts.

He added that critical infrastructures such as roads and bridges, flood control structures, and irrigation systems are also being monitored as the southwest monsoon or "habagat" continues to bring rains in this northern part of Luzon.

With the continuing

implementation of a community-based aid package that provides emergency assistance to displaced, underemployed, and seasonal workers, the beneficiaries are deployed to work on flood control projects in their respective barangays.

"We appeal to all our constituents to always be prepared and pro-active in these times," Tabije said.

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Caloocan conducts simultaneous clean-up drives

THE Caloocan Environmental Management Department (CEMD) and Public Safety and Traffic Management Department (PSTMD) conducted simultaneous clean-up drives on Saturday in the city upon the instruction of Mayor Dale Gonzalo "Along" Malapitan.

Determined to set up a more "pleasant" vicinity in North Caloocan City Hall, the CEMD-North employees performed sweeping and declogging operations to ensure the orderliness of the main roads in South Caloocan, CEMD-South along with PSTMD employees conducted clean-up and flushing operations along Malolos Drive.

Mayor Malapitan expressed his appreciation and praised the employees for putting in extra effort and working weekends to ensure that Caloocan City is as pristine as possible.

"Nagpapasalamatayo sa ating mga kawani na hindi aliniana ang arroy, dumit at maging ang pagpasok ng Sabado para tiyakin na malinis ang Caloocan," he said.

Likewise, Mayor Malapitan called on the citizens to cooperate with the city government's efforts by securing proper waste segregation and disposal.

"Inaasahan ko pa po ang inyong tuloy-tuloy na pakikisa sa ating hangarin. Ito rin ang ating panawagan sa ating mga kababayan na simulan natin ito sa ating mga tahanan, sa tamang pagsisilid at pagtatapon ng basura," the Mayor requested.

Edd Reyes



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Help stop the extinction of a million species

WE have to change, the world has to change, the humans that are controlling the oil, gas and coal industries and power plants have to change. They are the root cause of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that is causing the planet to overheat. Immediate evidence of this is the heat waves at present that are overwhelming parts of the world.

The news is so disturbing. Sometimes I don't want to read about the devastating drought in stricken Somalia and Sudan, Mozambique, Iran, Morocco, and elsewhere in Europe and the United States. If you are a denier of climate change, the summer heat waves may convince you that the world is getting hotter. We can't hide from that truth.

More devastating floods in China and Bangladesh are ecological disasters, homes destroyed, animals drown and millions of creatures in the natural world die, crops are lost. The burning forest fires in Portugal are another ecological disaster. It is heart-wrenching to watch the flames endangering more of the massive 2,000-year-old sequoia trees in Yosemite National Park or in California's Sequoia National Park. In two years, forest fires destroyed 14,000 sequoia trees in California or 20 percent of the world's greatest tree. I have been to Muir Woods to see the giant redwood trees, they are truly awe-inspiring.

We can rightly blame their losses on human greed and selfishness and profligate lifestyles that are based on consuming electric energy coming from burning fossil fuels, gas, oil, coal. Everyone must demand an end to these industries and replace them with renewable energy: wind, solar, geothermal and/or wave-generated electricity.

Many continue to deny that we humans are causing global warming and that we humans are responsible for the heating of



REFLECTIONS

**FR. SHAY
CULLEN SSC**

the planet and the destruction of nature. The resulting fires, floods, loss of habitat to forest destruction and human activities are warming the globe and driving millions of creatures into extinction. Why are we so destructive of the natural world when we are a part of it and depend on it?

Money moguls and tycoons want profits from buying and selling the destructive fossil fuels. Corrupt politicians are benefiting, too. In many countries while lauding the change to renewable energy, they are approving payments of taxpayers' money to the rich oil and coal companies to explore and produce more fossil fuels. Most of the G7 governments pay out as much as \$775 billion to \$1 trillion in subsidies to oil, coal and gas companies. Their ulterior motive is to please their voters and get corporate funding for reelection campaigns. Most likely, the politicians have investments in the corporations, a gross hypocrisy that makes them like white tombs of the dead, looking clean on the outside but rotten and corrupt within.

An important study by the International Monetary Fund in 2015 shows that the collateral damage and unpaid costs of the production of coal, oil and gas fossil fuels are amounting to as much as \$5.3 trillion annually or payouts of \$10 million per minute for these companies. If this money was invested in alternative clean energy sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro and tide generation, the climate crises would be solved.

Yes, we the human species, the ones with the so-called big, intelligent brains, are hell-bent on self-

harm and destruction of the natural world. It's not too late to save the planet, but we must act now. Today, we are causing the third great extinction — a million or more plants and animals will disappear in the coming years as the planet gets hotter. Heat waves could become permanent in places and creatures and plants will not be able to adapt quickly enough to survive.

A new scientific report based on extensive studies and research named The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services says the imminent extinction of almost a million species of plants and animals and fish is caused by climate change and how humans are affecting the planet. The report says:

Globally about 50,000 wild species are used for food, energy, medicine, material and other purposes through fishing, gathering, logging and terrestrial animal harvesting. More than 10,000 wild species are harvested for human food with 1 in 5 people dependent on such species for income and food.

About 70 percent of the world's poor are directly dependent on wild species and on businesses fostered by them. Humans directly consume or use about 7,500 species of wild fish and aquatic invertebrates, 31,100 species of wild plants (including 7,400 trees, 1,500 species of fungi and 7,400 species of wild trees), 1,700 species of wild land-based invertebrates and 7,500 species of wild amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

We make about 8 billion visits to wildlife-protected areas each year, generating about €600 billion in tourism revenue. One-third of humanity — about 2.4 billion people — relies on fuel wood for cooking, including 1.1 billion people without access to electricity. Two-thirds of global industrial roundwood is provided

by wild tree species. Twelve percent of wild tree species are threatened by unsustainable logging.

A total of 1,341 wild mammal species are threatened by unsustainable hunting practices, including 669 species already assessed as threatened. Fifty-five percent to 75 percent of wild meat biomass is derived from hunting large mammals.

Thirty-four percent of marine wild fish stocks are overfished. A total of 449 species of sharks and rays are classified as threatened mostly as a result of unsustainable fishing practices.

The annual value of illegal trade in wild species (especially timber and fish) could be up to €196 billion, making it the third-largest class of illegal trade worldwide.

This list is based on rigorous scientific research that cannot be ignored. We have to change our way of life to make human survival sustainable. What the research shows is that hundreds of millions of people depend for survival on the natural world of living animals, fish and plants. We humans are devouring these resources and creating an atmosphere that is destroying life upon which we depend. It is self-destruction with more catastrophic consequences yet to come unless we work together to save the natural world of plants and animals from climate change.

I'm off with the Preda Foundation ecological/organic team to plant 863 mixed fruit tree saplings (no GMO) provided by a partner with the Aeta Indigenous people in the Zambales mountains. They will care and nurture and benefit from them in the years to come. This is the first of several planned plantings this rainy season. If you want to join, contact our Preda Foundation team and let's plant trees to save the biodiversity of the planet.



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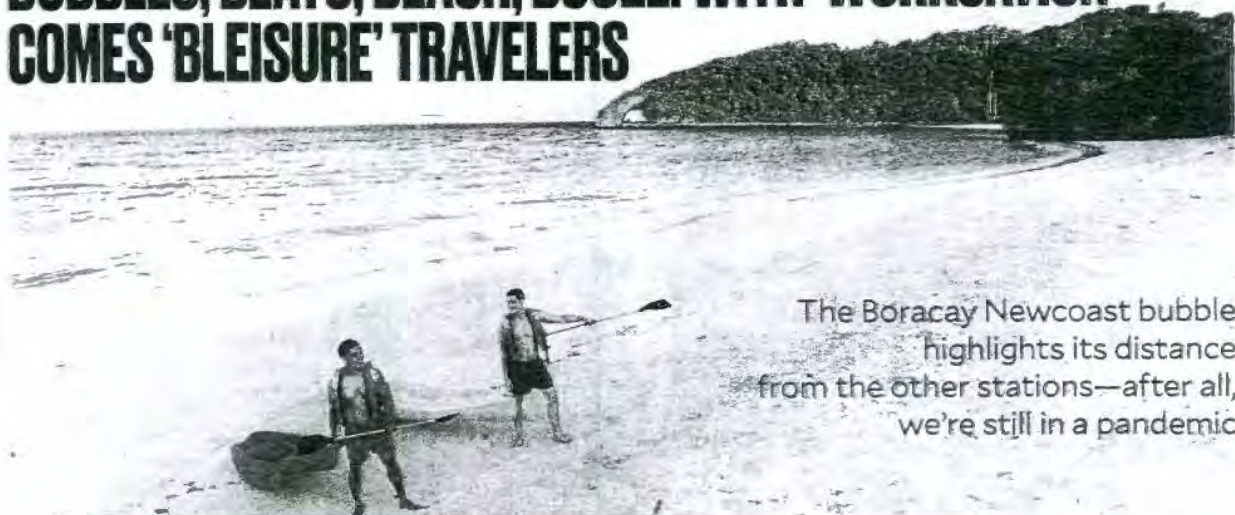
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THE ISLAND'S NEW PLACE TO BE

BUBBLES, BEATS, BEACH, BOOZE: WITH 'WORKCATION' COMES 'BLEISURE' TRAVELERS



The Boracay Newcoast bubble highlights its distance from the other stations—after all, we're still in a pandemic

The early morning sun view and the private beach are the attractions of the Newcoast station.



The Friday night themed pool party at the Savoy Hotel attracts guests from all over Boracay.



Remote workers make the beach their office with high-speed connection.

By Marge C. Enriquez
@Inq_Lifestyle

Bubbles, beats, booze and balloons turn the Savoy Hotel Boracay into the lit place of the island on a Friday night. Cascades of sting-free bubbles, a DJ spinning club music onstage, a bartender shaking cocktails and disco lights make it a playground for guests who want something different from the usual bar scene in Stations 1 and 2.

The themed pool parties at the Savoy Hotel are among the many curated experiences in Boracay Newcoast, an emerging township whose biggest come-on is the private beach.

With a modest entrance of P 300, the #SavoyPoolFridays has been a hit with the locals and guests from all over Boracay. A P599 package of beer bucket and bowl of nachos is one of the party's bestsellers.

For early risers, the sunrise on eastern Boracay is more captivating than the sunsets in the other stations. Groups from Savoy and the adjacent Belmont Hotel make the effort to catch the orange-gold rays that are about to blaze over the waves.

In three different coves, people wait quietly on the beachfronts as the sky eases from mid-night blue to pastel sky blue while the sun casts its beams through the trees and rocks to light up the beaches. The climax of the sunrise tour is usually a selfie in front of the Keyhole, a fissure of a rock formation overlooking the blue waters.

But the Friday pool parties, the sunrise and the exclusivity of the beach aren't the only come-ons to Boracay Newcoast. After more than two years, the Savoy Hotel has reopened. This young, upbeat homegrown brand of Megaworld is not to be confused with The Savoy, Britain's pioneer international luxury chain.

Newcoast 'bubble'

The Savoy Hotel positions itself as the place where you want to be in Boracay, resplendent

with spacious rooms overlooking the golf course, more corporate and meeting facilities for business travelers, a ballroom, several dining options including an upcoming steak house, a large party pool beside a lap pool, and extensive outdoor activities for the leisure traveler.

Likewise, it's a hotel where you can get engaged, or elope.

The Savoy Hotel's selling point is the Newcoast bubble for working guests as it highlights its distance from the other stations; the "phygital"

experience, the rearrangement of the hotel spaces according to their physical and digital requirements and the high-speed internet connectivity, and the bar on the beach.

As the travel market emerges from the pandemic, most hotels in Boracay including the Savoy Hotel offer friendly rates averaging at P3,888 for a deluxe room with breakfast for two until the end of September.

The Savoy Hotel's Work and Play package rates start at P14,180 which includes room accom-

modations for three nights with breakfast. If guests work on different time zones, their breakfast can be served according to their convenience. It also covers P1,500 worth of food and beverage credits and free use of the meeting room for four hours.

"Workcation (a portmanteau of work and vacation) became prevalent during the pandemic, and it continues to become a lifestyle for young professionals," observes Toffy Bartolome, area head for revenue and e-commerce for the

Savoy Hotel and Belmont.

"We elevated the experience of the 'workcation' market by infusing wellness activities such as yoga, aqua Zumba and facilities such as the gym and spa."

Blurring boundaries

Back in the aughts, "bleisure" (a portmanteau of business and leisure) travel was a corporate conference getaway with good deals from resorts and more perks.

The pandemic ushered in the rise of remote workers and



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digital nomads—people living online in different locations—that led to a new kind of hybrid travel. During the intermittent lockdowns, virtual assistants, remote workers from the pharmaceutical and insurance industries, chose to work on the beach and enjoy Boracay's offerings instead of getting cooped up in their city condos.

At Newcoast's beachfront, the professional and personal boundaries are blurred. In a workcation, the guest's laptop is plugged to the lounge chair facing the sea view while his beer is hidden from the camera during a Zoom meeting.

Aside from the corporate groups and bleisure individual travelers, The Savoy Hotel has been receiving inquiries from travel agents, planners, suppliers, and corporate partners on its Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions (Mice) deals due to the hotel's proximity to the new Boracay Newcoast Convention Center.

The Savoy Boracay's general manager Elmar Lina adds, "While a family member is at work, we offer many activities for the rest of the family such as biking trails, the sunrise tour on the private beach coves, frisbee, volleyball, kayaking, snorkeling, boating. Our partners can provide access to other experiences and tours. If you check the review sites, many of the guests value the privacy and exclusivity. We are still in a pandemic, and they don't want to be with the crowds in the other stations."

Guests can request special decorations to celebrate an occasion such as petals on the bed and bath, rituals leading to a marriage proposal on the hotel grounds or a corporate gift or pastry by the bedside during turn-down service.

Meanwhile, persons with disabilities can be assisted if they want to take a dip on the pool.

"That's how we delight our guests, with little gestures," says Lina. —CONTRIBUTED INQ



How Palawan's Underground River literally became a 'river of life'

No, it's not just its biodiversity, but about how this natural wonder helped sustain four barangays during the COVID-19 lockdowns

By **Alya B. Honasan**
@Inq_Lifestyle

The Puerto Princesa Underground River in Palawan has been a famous, formidable natural wonder and tourism destination for a long time, since 3,901 hectares of the area were named the St. Paul Subterranean Park by Presidential Proclamation No. 835 in 1971.

The attention has not waned. In 1992, park management was transferred to the Puerto Princesa city government and its own Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

On Nov. 16, 1999, PP No. 212 expanded the area to 22,202 ha, including the river's catchment and neighboring important forests, deemed essential for biodiversity conservation. It was also renamed the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP).

On Dec. 4 of that same year, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) inscribed the park on its list of natural World Heritage Sites, based on "superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance," and for being home to "the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity."

By 2003, it was a National Geological Monument; by 2011, the river was declared one of the New 7 Wonders of the World, after a campaign that saw Filipinos worldwide working for the honor. In 2012, the park was declared a Ramsar Site, based on the global Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

Spectacular

It doesn't hurt that the river is, well, spectacular. Mind-boggling karst limestone formations surround an 8.2-kilometer stretch of brackish water that flows into the sea, covering a truly "mountain-to-sea" range of ecosystems.

It's an otherworldly experience, as visitors on paddleboats are taken on 45-minute tours to view breathtaking stalactites and stalagmites, massive caverns and natural formations with names like the Candle and T-Rex. Tiny bats and swiftlets fly around as the guides shine powerful lights on the karst, adding to the drama. An excellent audio tour now encourages a more respectful, reverent silence; after all, the river is estimated to be between 15 and 20 million years old.

"*Nakakawala ng pagod* (The tiredness disappears), no matter how many times you see it," says Beth Maclang, the feisty protected area superintendent of the PPSRNP for the last nine years. "My favorite part is the Cathedral"—she's referring to

a huge cavern with a high ceiling and what look like religious icons on the walls—"because it is still always amazing every time you see it."

What few people realize, however, is that because of its expanded "influence," as it were, the river, located on the northwestern end of Puerto Princesa City, is the flagship

feature of an area that is home to four barangays and some 7,000 people. These barangays are Tagabinet, Cabayugan, Pangangan and Marufinas, which also include a large population of the indigenous Tagbanua tribe, living in three ancestral domains.

Sustainable tourism

The river actually started receiving visitors in the 1990s, but only about 50 people a day, since roads were rough and it was not yet properly marketed, Maclang reveals. By the time she joined the team in 2013, recruited from another environmental nongovernmental organization (NGO) by Puerto Princesa Mayor Lucilo Bayron, it was a thriving enterprise, and she was able to focus on community development and capacity building for local people's organizations.

"It was our goal to strengthen them, especially financially," she says. "No matter how good park management is, if there is no sense of ownership among the people, *wala*."



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The karst limestone formations inside the Underground River are estimated to be 15 to 20 million years old. —YVETTE LEE



Protected Area Superintendent Beth Maclang, guardian of the Underground River
—ALYA B. HONASAN

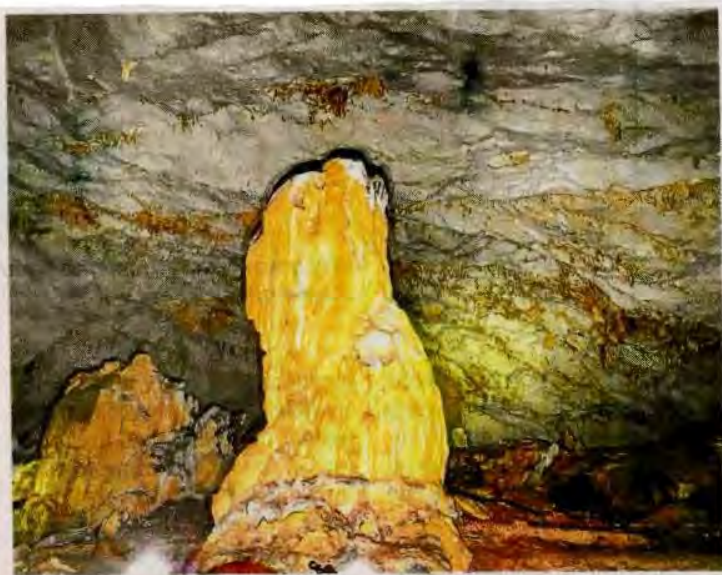


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A massive stalagmite called the Candle —CHRISTINE ENRILE CHUA

The PPSRNP did get help from NGO partners who shared the same vision. Among these was the Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI), whose ex-

ecutive director, Marvi Rebueno-Trudeau, launched the Tandikan program, named after the Palawan peacock pheasant that appears on the province's seal.

"Tandikan" stands for Turismo at Negosyo Dulot ng Ingat Kalikasan, and is focused on the development of several community-based sustainable tourism (CBST) sites in communities in the park.

"We started in 2015, and we realized that even if we focused on tourism, we had to consider the needs of the communities, so all projects were integrated," says Rebueno-Trudeau. "That's why we also have upscaling of organic farming, nutrition and skills training for the people."

As a result, visitors to the Underground River also had the option to go caving in the Hundred Caves in Tagabinit, paddle through mangroves in Sabang, or go snorkeling in Isla Filomena, for example. PSFI provided the barangays with basic infrastructure and supplies, safety training, and equipment.

Before the pandemic, the river was attracting as many as 1,200 people a day, wisely controlled by park management to minimize impact, despite a total capacity of 2,500. There were 304 employees, including a park biologist, marine biologist and cave management specialist trained by Italian scientists

Counting bats

And then, COVID-19 happened. "Closed! The airport was closed, so we had zero tourism," recalls Maclang.

To attract local tourists, the park lowered its entrance fee to P100, but the staff still had to be streamlined. In consultation with the PAMB, Maclang opted to put any infrastructure building on hold and used the park's savings for salaries, as research and maintenance continued—"We still had to count our bats!" Some 64 staff members were deployed to COVID-related activities, but remained on the park's payroll.

Maclang worried that protected areas would be in danger when people went hungry, and indeed, in 2020, one of her park rangers was shot by poachers caught cutting trees in a protected forest. The ranger survived, and was reassigned to new work—as a lifeguard at the Sabang pier, Cabayugan's busiest area, where visitors book tours and boats.

Community members who went back to planting rice and vegetables and fishing for a living got a boost from the Tandikan project in 2020, when PSFI provided seeds and tools—then proceeded to buy all their produce and catch for distribution to front-liners for the next few months.

Alternative sources

Whatever was left from savings after two years, meanwhile, had to be used again when many CBST sites were pummeled by Typhoon "Odette." The local boatmen's organization, for example, lost many of their vessels.

Some of the sites, however, already had people's organizations that had successfully established alternative income sources, like a community store for the Hundred Caves site in Tagabinit, and a local bakery in Isla Filomena. Tribespeople were allowed to harvest forest products like honey for their own subsistence.

The Underground River reopened on Jan. 2 this year, and when we visited in June, the tourists were back. Maclang is breathing a sigh of relief that income is returning just as the savings had run out, but vows that park management must learn its lesson and be more prepared for such calamities in the future.

"We have to manage our funds well so that we are prepared for emergencies, and we do not need to depend on our forests," Maclang is also pushing for security of tenure for staff members of the PPSRNP, so that the sustainable management of this national treasure is not vulnerable to the winds of political change.

The pride in Maclang's face is unmistakable when we paddle through the river. "I feel like crying when people say how beautiful it is, because I also remember all the heartaches and sacrifices," says this avowed environmental activist, wife and mother. "But when we think of all the people who depend on us, then we know we must do it." INQ

Visit the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park & World Heritage Site on Facebook for information.



07-17-22

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BANANA FRUIT STALKS GOOD FOR COMPOSITE BOARDS

WHAT can be done with banana processing wastes? A researcher from the Department of Science and Technology-Forest Products Research and Development Institute (DOST-FPRDI) said that if these wastes are banana fruit stalks, also called peduncles, they can be used to make thermal insulation boards.

"Our study shows that fibers from the fruit stalk of the saba banana (*Musa paradisiaca*) are promising material for composite insulation boards,"

according to Engr. Gilberto N. Sapin of DOST-FPRDI.

"Such boards can be used in tropical countries to keep heat outside of homes and buildings. The sample panels we produced are not yet perfect. We still need to make a few adjustments on them, but our initial findings are very encouraging," Sapin said.

The Philippines is one of the world's top producers of banana, therefore, one of the top generators of banana fruit stalk wastes. In Mindanao alone, some 1.35 billion kilograms of the stalks

are produced every year and left in the fields to rot.

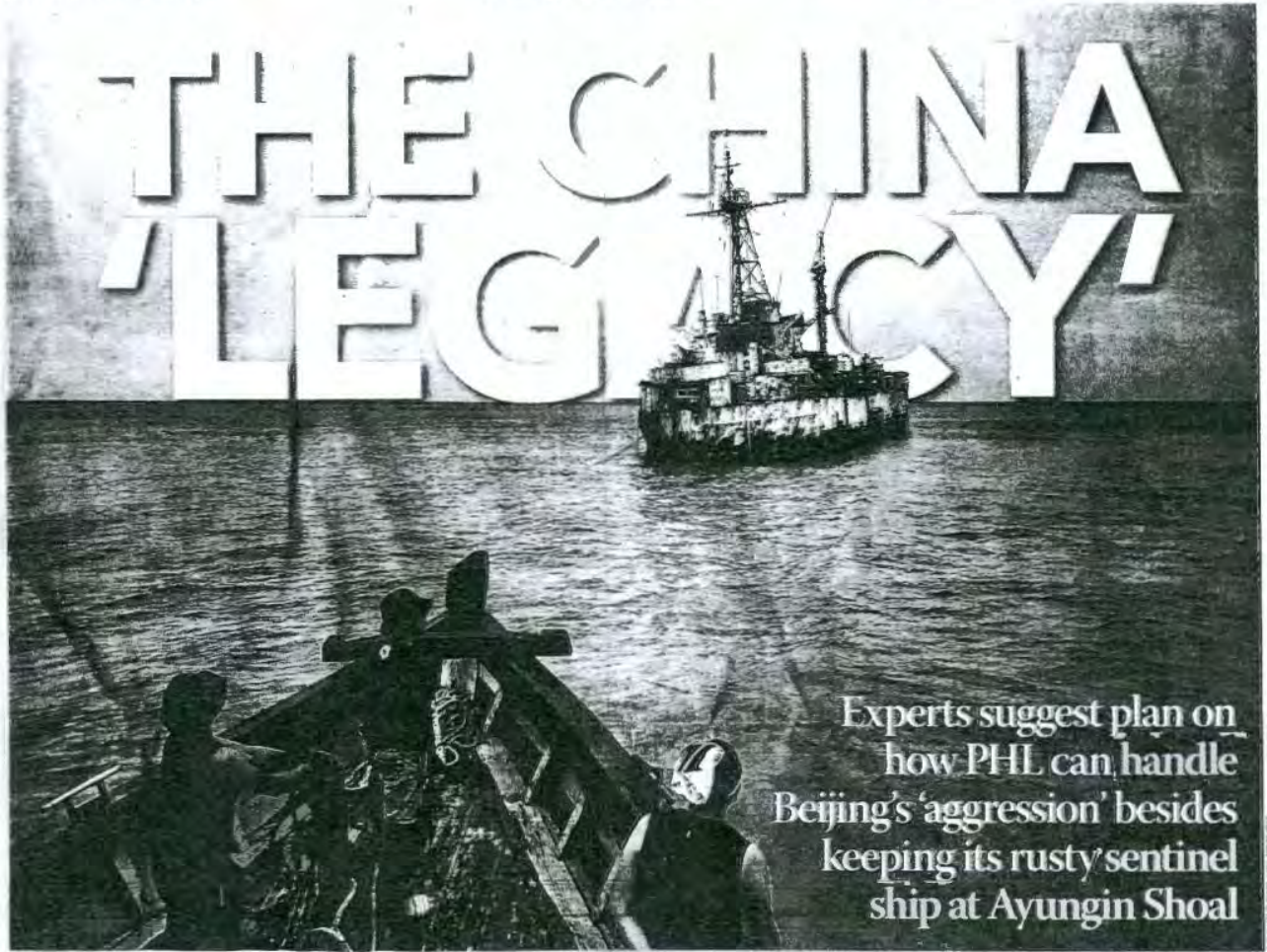
Sapin reported: "Mixed with the right amount of fibers and binders, the banana peduncle fibers we studied gave us boards suitable for thermal insulation. For tropical countries like the Philippines which are getting hotter temperatures due to the climate crisis, insulation panels will be very useful as they keep heat outside of homes and buildings."

The findings formed part of Sapin's thesis for his MS in Material Science

at the University of the Philippines Diliman under the supervision of Dr. Leslie Joy L. Diaz.

At DOST-FPRDI, Sapin also learned through an initial study that the peduncle fibers of lagkitan banana (*Musa acuminata*) are also promising material for composite boards.

At present, natural fiber composites are commonly used worldwide for walls, ceilings, floors and cabinets, crates and car parts. **Rizalina K. Araral/S&T Media Services**



Experts suggest plan on how PHL can handle Beijing's 'aggression' besides keeping its rusty sentinel ship at Ayungin Shoal

BY RENE ACOSTA

THE BRP *Sierra Madre* could very well be the "best" visual representation of how the Philippines deals with China and how Manila responds to Beijing's aggressive behavior in the occupied Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) and West Philippine Sea (WPS), a retired Philippine Navy official said.

The rusting and partly sunken vessel, which has seen better days but remained officially in the service of the Navy, is being used as an outpost for Filipino troops guarding the Ayungin Shoal, where Beijing's attacks, harassments and intimidations of Filipinos, both soldiers and civilians alike, have taken place in the past.

"The BRP *Sierra Madre* is the best metaphor of the Philippines' defense against China in the West Philippine Sea," said retired Navy Rear Admiral Rommel Jude Ong, who is now with the local think tank Security Reform Initiative as its executive director.

While the ship symbolizes the country's resistance against Beijing, it also reflects the utter "absence of political will" by the country's past leaders in dealing with China's encroachment and behavior under a supposed Philippine independent foreign policy in exchange of economic benefits.

"For six years, the country en-



"THE BRP *Sierra Madre* is the best metaphor of the Philippines' defense against China in the West Philippine Sea." — Retired Navy Rear Admiral Rommel Jude Ong FACEBOOK.COM/PHILIPPINENAVY

dured a popular President with a defeatist stance," Ong said, referring to former President Rodrigo R. Duterte, who was succeeded last month by President Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr. The former Navy official asserted that security and economy are intertwined.

Ong was among the presenters during the international confer-



THE BRP *Sierra Madre* during the last re-provisioning of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Western Command for troops aboard the partly sunken Navy ship at the Ayungin Shoal.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE, NAVAL FORCES WEST



THE BRP Sierra Madre during the last re-provisioning of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Western Command for troops aboard the partly rusted Navy ship at the Ayungin Shoal. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE, ARMED FORCES WEST

THE CHINA 'LEGACY'

ence titled "Redefining Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in an Age of Uncertainty" organized by the Stratbase ADR Institute on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration that junked China's expansive claims.

Six years after the decision was issued by the Hague-based body in favor of the country, the award has not been pushed and moved by the government, thus emboldening China in the KIG and WPS by strengthening its presence in those maritime territories, swarming it with both military and paramilitary ships.

A year before he stepped down, Duterte, who kept invoking his friendship with Chinese officials and the country's friendly relations with Beijing, even declared that China is already in physical control of the WPS and parts of the KIG because of its strong presence there.

Next to impossible?

FROM the time of former President Fidel V. Ramos up to Duterte, dealing with China in those territories and booting them out has been a problem for the government, a situation exacerbated by the lack of a national security strategy for the KIG and WPS and their defense.

Kicking out the Chinese from the WPS is, however, already next to impossible as Beijing has already built fortified bases out of man-made islands in parts of the territory. Retired General Gregorio Pio Catapang, former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, declared as early as nine years ago, that such has put the island of Palawan within China's "striking distance."

According to Deia Salle University Professor and Stratbase ADR Institute Trustee Renato de Castro, while the government came up with a paper on national security strategy in May 2018 and during the administration of Duterte, it was not concrete, "well-thought and comprehensive" and it did not even mention China.

He said the country should come up with a strategy that is based on the 2016 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling.

Building alliance, modernizing the military

DURING the term of the late former President Benigno Aquino III, the government drew up a strategy to deal with Beijing and its behavior in the WPS. The tack mainly involved the internationalization of the issue, building alliances with like-minded countries and strengthening the capability of the military to defend those clusters of islands.

Efforts to build partnerships and modernize the military in order for the country to defend its stake in the territories were supported, encouraged and are again being pushed for the young Marcos government by international experts, who are perhaps inspired by the initial pronouncements of the new President on the WPS issue.

Rebuild 'symbiotic' ties

LIZA CURTIS, director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), a US-based think tank, said the United States views the Philippines, which sits within China's so-called "first island chain" as a "critically" important ally.

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Upon the assumption into office of Marcos Jr., CNAS made several recommendations to the US government as to how it could strengthen the US-Philippine security alliance and help the Philippines navigate the reality of Beijing's increased maritime activity.

Among the recommendations was to "elevate, strengthen and reinforce" the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), the arrangement that supports the pivot of US forces in the Philippines and allows them to station their assets and equipment in the country.

Curtis said a strengthened

and reinforced EDCA should allow the Philippine military to acquire state-of-the-art firepower from the US, while, on the other hand, it will boost Washington's security posture in the region.

"The Philippines must push back as necessary to avoid conflict," she said.

Murray Hiebert, senior associate at another US think tank, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and director for research at Bower Group Asia, said the administration of US President Joe Biden is firm in boosting and strengthening the alliance, as shown by the recent pronouncements of several packages of assistance to the region, which included the \$150-million funds on maritime security cooperation.

"And the Philippines should benefit from that package," Hiebert said as he encouraged the Philippines to work with its allies in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe to put up a united front against China.

The Philippines should leverage the European Union's great interest and involvement in the Indo-Pacific region, which was exemplified by the EU's adoption in April last year of a resolution that emphasized the need to uphold freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and for states to adhere to a rules-based order.

Early this year, the EU also moved to strengthen its strategic cooperation and involvement in the region through its so-called Pacific strategy, part of which deals with the area of defense and security.

Jana Sediva, the Czech Republic's ambassador to the Philippines and whose country is the current president of EU's council, said the EU would increase its naval presence in the Indo-Pacific region, which includes Southeast Asia, and will expand its defense and security dialogue.

"We have already conducted military exercises in the region and we are seeking to conduct more multilateral exercises," she declared during the conference.

Alistair White, deputy head of mission of the British Embassy in the Philippines, said the United Kingdom is also boosting and building its engagement in the region through naval deployment, cooperation and by providing capacity training and dialogue.



He said the country should soon see military ships from the UK docking at its harbors.

The Philippines, according to some analysts, should follow Australia's course in its diplomatic and economic spat with Beijing by talking less, but acting more against China on the issue of the KIG and WPS. Australia is a key military ally of the country where both observed a Status of Visiting Forces Agreement.

"Deterrence should be boosted," John Blaxland, professor of international security and intelligence studies at the Australia National University, said. "We should speak softly but with a bigger stick."

He said the Philippines should be "hard-nosed" in its interests, warning that "weakness invites adventurism."

WPS will define Marcos presidency

WHETHER he could continue the legacy of his father, the late strongman former President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr., in making the KIG a part of the Philippine territory by keeping it free from the Chinese—or will be made to pay for the bold and daring move of his elder and namesake, the issue of Kalayaan and WPS will help define the presidency of Marcos Jr.

When Marcos Sr. made the Kalayaan Island Group a part of Palawan, partly, by virtue of necessity, he declared then that any efforts by any other states to claim it will be considered as an attack against the Philippines.

Compared with Duterte's term, the assumption into power of Marcos Jr. has left experts and allies brimming with optimism that the new Commander in Chief will veer away from what is deemed by some as the "sold out" policies of his predecessor with China.

Curtis said that CNAS, in its recommendations to the US government, viewed the election of Marcos as an opportunity for America to build a stronger and firmer alliance with the Philippines; as such, the Biden administration must elevate its diplomatic engagement with the country to a "ministerial" level, which would increase the level of strategic consultations and operational planning for both countries.

On the other hand, Hiebert said the assumption of Marcos Jr. to the presidency should accord the US the opportunity to "energize" its alliance with Manila that has "become wobbly under Duterte."

"Unlike Duterte, he is not coming to office blasting the US and firmer in its stance with China," Hiebert said.

The US optimism on Marcos could not be more pronounced with the invitation of Biden to his Philippine counterpart to visit Washington.

Referring to international laws and the UN Award, Blaxland also said: "It is interesting [to see] how Bongbong Marcos will move it."

Filipinos pin hopes on Marcos Jr.

THE positive pronouncements and outlook of international allies of Marcos on the territorial issue are supported by strong local national sentiments, with Filipinos also believing that the Commander in Chief will rise from the ashes of the "flawed" China policy of his predecessor.

During the conference, Prof. Victor Andres Manhit, president of Stratbase ADR Institute, shared

the results of a survey conducted in October 2021 by the Social Weather Stations, wherein 82 percent of Filipinos believed Marcos will best defend the KIG and WPS against China; and 85 percent wanting the country to build alliances with states in defending its territorial and economic rights in the WPS. At least 80 percent also wanted the military's capability to be strengthened and modernized.

In another survey taken less than a week before the official assumption of Marcos Jr., the results were even higher, with 89 percent wanting the Commander in Chief to defend the country and its rights against Beijing; and 84 percent pushing for alliances with other states. Some 90 percent also wanted the government to invest in the capability of the military.

Questions arose whether Marcos Jr. can withstand China at the expense of economic considerations, which de Castro responded to in the affirmative.

De Castro said the Marcos Jr. administration could pursue economic relations with Beijing by not allowing it to dominate as a single economic partner and donor, stressing that the key is "diversification."

Way forward

SINCE the government is bereft of measures on how it checks China in the KIG and WPS, Ong said it must restore and strengthen the EDCA and the Visiting Forces Agreement with the US and go into trilateral arrangements with other claimant countries in the South China Sea, using as template the existing trilateral patrols that it has with Malaysia and Indonesia.

It can also discuss developments in WPS and even in the Philippine [Benham] Rise with bigger countries like the US, France and Australia, and develop Coast Guard exercises in the South China Sea with partners and allies.

The immediate concerns now for the Marcos administration, according to Ong, is to make sure that Ayungin Shoal will not fall to Beijing and to return economic activities in the WPS through oil explorations and fishing by Filipinos.

The retired Navy official pushed for the modernization of the military in order that it can defend the maritime territories. However, the local defense industry should also be developed in order to make the modernization sustainable.

On the other hand, De Castro said the country's defense and security budget and spending should be raised to at least 2 percent of the gross domestic product, which is already the benchmark for other militaries. The modernization program should also be connected with the country's allies.

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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DOH: Active COVID-19 cases near 19,000

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 16 2022 08:04 PM



People buy school uniforms in Divisoria, Manila on July 14, 2022. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA - The Philippines logged 2,578 new COVID-19 cases Saturday, data from the Department of Health (DOH) showed.

Active cases are at 18,990, the highest since April.

This brought the country's total COVID-19 caseload to 3,730,545.

This is also the third straight day that cases breached 2,000, and the second- straight day cases breached the 2,500 mark.

Of the new cases, 916 or almost a third of the cases came from Metro Manila.

The positivity rate from July 10 to 15 is at 11.8 percent, ABS-CBN Data Analytics head Edson Guido said.

The national government earlier said current alert levels are at "status quo," as the Inter-Agency Task Force sought to review the classification system amid a rise in cases.

"The status quo holds for our alert levels, which the IATF will be reviewing on Monday," Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles told reporters in a text message.

The country is currently experiencing a rise in new COVID-19 infections amid the presence of a more transmissible omicron subvariant.



Active COVID-19 cases rise in Manila, Caloocan

[Ghio Ong](#) - The Philippine Star July 17, 2022 | 12:00am



People enter a polling station before casting their votes during the presidential election in Manila on May 9, 2022.

AFP / Chaideer Mahyuddin

MANILA, Philippines — The cities of Manila and Caloocan reported an increase in active COVID-19 case as of Friday.

In Manila, 172 or half of the 344 beds at the city government's COVID-19 Field Hospital were occupied as of Friday.

Mayor Honey Lacuna said 165 or 96 percent of the 172 patients were returning overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), with only nine of them confirmed as Manila residents.

The remaining seven patients were not OFWs, with two of them certified as Manila residents, she added.

Lacuna said all COVID-19 patients, Manila resident or otherwise, would be admitted at the field hospital at the Quirino Grandstand.

She said that from 20 active cases on June 7, before she took over as city mayor, there were 100 active cases as of Friday.

Meanwhile, she noted the city's six district hospitals recorded only 16 COVID-19 patients equivalent to a five percent bed occupancy rate.

A similar trend was also observed in Caloocan City.

From 28 active cases on July 8, there were 46 active cases on Friday.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/07/17/2195950/active-covid-19-cases-rise-manila-calooacan>



Metro Manila, other areas stay under Alert Level 1

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos **July 16, 2022, 11:56 am** **Updated on July 16, 2022, 1:51 pm**



MORNING TRAFFIC. Morning traffic along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on July 5, 2022. More than half of the Philippines, including Metro Manila, will stay under the most lenient Alert Level 1, pending the review of the alert level classifications, Malacañang announced on Saturday (July 16, 2022). (PNA photo by Joey O. Razon)

MANILA – More than half of the Philippines, including Metro Manila, will stay under the most lenient Alert Level 1, pending the review of the alert level classifications, Malacañang announced on Saturday.

This means the Marcos administration will retain the existing coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) alert levels until the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) makes a recommendation to implement a new alert level system.

The members of the IATF-EID are set to meet on July 18 to discuss the imposition of alert levels in the country, Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles said in a press statement.

"The status quo holds for our alert levels, which the IATF will be reviewing on Monday (July 18)," Cruz-Angeles said.

The announcement was made as the Covid-19 alert level status in the country was supposed to lapse on July 15.

Regarding the alert levels on Covid-19, the President will be conferring with Department of Health Officer in Charge Rosario Vergeire on Monday for any action to be taken.

Meanwhile, the IATF-EID will continue to monitor the status of the pandemic, Cruz-Angeles said in a separate statement.

A total of 85 of 121 provinces, highly urbanized cities (HUCs), independent component cities (ICCs), as well as 166 of 744 other component cities and municipalities, have been placed under Alert Level 1 from July 1 to 15.

Apart from Metro Manila, the following provinces, HUCs, and ICCs are currently under Alert Level 1:

- Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR): Abra, Apayao, Baguio City, Kalinga, and Mountain Province
- Region 1 (Ilocos): Dagupan City, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan



- Region 2 (Cagayan Valley): Batanes, Cagayan, City of Santiago, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, and Quirino
- Region 3 (Central Luzon): Angeles City, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Olongapo City, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Zambales
- Region 4-A (Calabarzon): Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Lucena City, and Rizal
- Region 4-B (Mimaropa): Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, Puerto Princesa City, and Romblon
- Region 5 (Bicol): Albay, Catanduanes, Naga City, and Sorsogon
- Region 6 (Western Visayas): Aklan, Bacolod City, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, and Iloilo City
- Region 7 (Central Visayas): Cebu City, Lapu-Lapu City (Opon), Mandaue City, and Siquijor
- Region 8 (Eastern Visayas): Biliran, Eastern Samar, Ormoc City, Southern Leyte, and Tacloban City
- Region 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula): Zamboanga City
- Region 10 (Northern Mindanao): Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro City, Camiguin, Iligan City, Misamis Occidental, and Misamis Oriental
- Region 11 (Davao region): Davao City and Davao Oriental
- Region 12 (Soccsksargen): South Cotabato
- Caraga: Butuan City, Surigao del Sur, and Agusan del Norte
- Bangsamoro Autonomous Region In Muslim Mindanao (BARMM): Cotabato City

The following component cities and municipalities are also under Alert Level 1:

- CAR: Buguias and Tublay in Benguet; and Kiangan, Lagawe (Capital), and Lamut in Ifugao
- Region 4-A (Calabarzon): Atimonan, Candelaria, City of Tayabas, Dolores, Lucban, Mauban, Pagbilao, Plaridel, Polillo, Quezon, Sampaloc, San Antonio, Tiaong, and Unisan in Quezon
- Region 4-B (Mimaropa): Calintaan, Looc, Lubang and Rizal in Occidental Mindoro; and Cagayancillo and Culion in Palawan
- Region 5 (Bicol): Basud, Capalonga, Daet (Capital), San Vicente and Talisay in Camarines Norte; Bombon, Cabusao, Camaligan, Caramoan, Goa, Iriga City, Pamplona, Pili (Capital), Presentacion (Parubcan,) San Fernando, San Jose and Tigaon in Camarines Sur; Balud, City of Masbate (Capital), and Mandaon in Masbate
- Region 6 (Western Visayas): Anini-Y, San Jose de Buenavista (Capital), Sebaste, and Tobias Fornier (Dao) in Antique; and Cadiz City, Candoni, City of Talisay, City of Victorias, Enrique B. Magalona (Saravia), La Carlota City, Pontevedra, Pulupandan, Sagay City, San Enrique and Valladolid in Negros Occidental



- Region 7 (Central Visayas): Batuan, Calape, Corella, Dimiao, Duero, Garcia Hernandez, Jagna, Lila, Loay, Loboc, Maribojoc, San Isidro, San Miguel, Sevilla, Sikatuna, and Tagbilaran City (Capital) in Bohol; Alcoy, Borbon, City of Talisay, Oslob, Pilar, Santander, and Tudela in Cebu; and Amlan (Ayuquitan), Bacong, Dauin, Dumaguete City (Capital), Valencia (Luzurriaga), and Zamboanguita in Negros Oriental
- Region 8 (Eastern Visayas): Albuera, City of Baybay, Dulag, Javier (Bugho), La Paz, Matag-Ob, Matalom, Palo, Tunga, and Villaba in Leyte; Allen, Capul, Lapinig, Lavezares, San Antonio, San Jose, and Victoria in Northern Samar; and Marabut, Pagsanghan, Paranas (Wright), Tarangnan, and Zumarraga in Western Samar
- Region 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula): Dapitan City, Dipolog City (Capital), Jose Dalman (Ponot), Labason, Manukan, Piñan (New Piñan), Polanco, Rizal, and Salug in Zamboanga del Norte; Kumalarang, Labangan, Lapuyan, Mahayag, Molave, and Ramon Magsaysay (Liargo) in Zamboanga del Sur; and Alicia, Buug, Diplahan, Ipil (Capital), Siay, and Tungawan in Zamboanga Sibugay
- Region 10 (Northern Mindanao): Bacolod, Baroy, Kauswagan, Lala, Linamon, and Tubod (Capital) in Lanao del Norte
- Region 11 (Davao region): Mawab, Montevista, Nabunturan (Capital), and New Bataan in Davao de Oro; and Padada in Davao del Sur
- Region 12 (Soccsksargen): Antipas, Arakan, City of Kidapawan (Capital), and President Roxas in North Cotabato; and City of Tacurong, Kalamansig, and Lebak in Sultan Kudarat
- Caraga: Cagdianao, Dinagat, Libjo (Albor), Loreto, and Tubajon in Dinagat Islands; and Claver, Dapa, General Luna, Mainit, and Tagana-An in Surigao del Norte
- BARMM: Bumbaran, Ditsaan-Ramain and Wao in Lanao del Sur; South Upi and Upi in Maguindanao; and Turtle Islands in Tawi-Tawi

Alert Level 2 status is implemented in the following areas:

- CAR: Benguet and Ifugao
- Region 4-A (Calabarzon): Quezon
- Region 4-B (Mimaropa): Occidental Mindoro and Palawan
- Region 5 (Bicol): Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Masbate
- Region 6 (Western Visayas): Antique and Negros Occidental
- Region 7 (Central Visayas): Bohol, Cebu, and Negros Oriental
- Region 8 (Eastern Visayas): Leyte, Northern Samar, and Samar (Western Samar)
- Region 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula): City of Isabela, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay
- Region 10 (Northern Mindanao): Lanao del Norte



- Region 11 (Davao region): Davao de Oro, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, and Davao Occidental
- Region 12 (Soccsksargen): Cotabato (North Cotabato), General Santos City (Dadiangas), Sarangani, and Sultan Kudarat
- Caraga: Dinagat Islands and Surigao del Norte
- BARMM: Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi (**PNA**)

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


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


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