

20 FEBRUARY 2021, SATURDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR says Manila Bay water quality improves but still not good enough for bathing, swimming

By Jonathan L. Mayuga
February 19, 2021



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said water quality in Manila Bay continues to improve more than two years after launching the ambitious P47-billion, 7-year “Battle for Manila Bay” rehabilitation program.

Inspired by the significant decline in the level of fecal coliform level in Manila Bay, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, also chairman of the Manila Bay Interagency Task Force, vowed to continue the government’s efforts to clean the waters of the historic bay.

This after water samples were taken last February 8, 2021 from 21 stations surrounding the Manila Bay have shown significantly lower fecal coliform from the annual average of 7.16 million most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml) in 2020 to only 4.87 million mpn/100ml at present.

Cimatu noted that fecal coliform level in the waters near the beach nourishment project has dropped from 2.2 million mpn/100ml last January 4 to 523,000 mpn/100 ml on February 8, based on the average count from three monitoring stations.

Despite the significant improvement in the water quality in Manila Bay, including the dumping of artificial white-sand beach at a 500-meter portion of the “Baywalk” along Roxas Boulevard, swimming and bathing and other recreation activities in Manila Bay remain unsafe.

The standard coliform level for coastal waters which is safe for swimming and other similar recreational activities is at only P100 mpn/100ml.

The DENR continues to strictly enforce the Clean Water Act, requiring commercial establishments to put up a sewerage treatment plants (STP) to reduce the pollution levels of water that drain to Manila Bay.

Last year, the DENR chief inaugurated a solar-powered STP near the Manila Yacht Club, which contributed to the significant decrease in the level of fecal coliform bacteria in the area.

In a news statement, Cimatu said that despite time constraints due to other pressing commitments and the coronavirus 2019 pandemic, the agency still persevered to address the issues in Manila Bay, particularly its water quality.

“Amid the other tasks that we are also seriously taking on and the restrictions brought about by the pandemic, we assure the Filipino people that our focus to clean Manila Bay is crystal clear,” Cimatu said.



“We have doubled, if not tripled, our efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay, especially in bringing down the water’s fecal coliform,” he added.

The DENR chief reiterated his commitment to bring down the fecal coliform of the bay to Class SB to make safe for recreational activities and fishing.

“We will make sure that we continue to clean the waters of Manila Bay until it becomes safe again for contact activities,” he said.

Cimatu also said they will continue to implement necessary interventions to address the water quality of Manila Bay.

He pointed out that additional water quality monitoring stations have been installed along the Manila Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard, apart from the regular stations used in 2019 and 2020, to monitor the fecal coliform level of the waters within the major outfalls.

The DENR chief also cited that the sewage treatment plant constructed along the Manila Yacht Club has sustained its operation, which also notably contributed in lowering down fecal coliform in the outfall that drains into the Manila Bay.



Manila Bay fecal coliform level down

Friday, February 19, 2021 Cory Martinez12

THE level of fecal coliform in the waters of Manila Bay continue to significantly decline. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu said that based on the test results of the water samples taken last Feb. 8 from stations surrounding the Manila Bay, they have shown significantly lower fecal coliform from the annual average of 7.16 million most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml) in 2020 to only 4.87 million mpn/100ml at present.

Cimatu also disclosed that the fecal coliform level in the waters near the beach nourishment project has dropped from 2.2 million mpn/100ml last Jan. 4 to 523,000 mpn/100 ml on Feb. 8, based on the average count from three monitoring stations.

Despite time constraints due to other pressing commitments and the coronavirus 2019 pandemic, Cimatu said the agency still persevere to address the issues in Manila Bay, particularly its water quality.

“Amidst the other tasks that we are also seriously taking on and the restrictions brought about by the pandemic, we assure the Filipino people that our focus to clean Manila Bay is crystal clear. We have doubled, if not tripled, our efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay, especially in bringing down the water’s fecal coliform,” said Cimatu.

Cimatu, chair of the Manila Bay Task Force, said they will continue to implement necessary interventions to address the water quality of Manila Bay.



Manila Bay mas malinis na ngayon ayon sa DENR

By **Bombo Sol Marquez** -February 19, 2021 | 5:03 PM

Ipinagmalaki ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Sec. Roy Cimatu na mas malinis na raw ngayon ang tubig sa Manila Bay dahil sa bumabang fecal coliform level.

Base raw sa kasalukuyang fecal coliform level sa Manila Bay ay nasa 4.87 million most probable number na lang ito sa bawat 100 milliliters. Ito ay mula sa mga samples na kinuha ng 21 stations na nakapaligid sa Manila Bay noong Pebrero 8.

Mas mababa ito sa annual average na naitala noong 2020 na 7.16 million per 100 milliliter. Ibig sabihin lamang nito na ang bumaba na ang fecal coliform level sa nasabing lugar.

Sinabi pa ng kalihim na ang fecal coliform level sa katubigan na malapit sa beach nourishment project mula 2.2 million most probable number noong Enero 4 ay bumaba ito ng 523,000 most probable number noong Pebrero 8. Batay ito sa average count ng tatlong monitoring stations.

Ginawa ng ahensya ang pahayag na ito ilang araw lamang matapos sabihin ni House Deputy Speaker at dating Manila mayor Lito Atienza na mas nakakadiri raw ngayon ang Manila Bay.

Iginiit naman ni Cimatu ang pagtupad ng DENR sa pangako nito na pababain pa ang fecal coliform sa Manila Bay upang mas maging ligtas ito para sa recreational activities at pangingisda.

Ang fecal coliform ay tumutukoy sa isang uri ng bacteria na nagmumula sa intestines ng mga warm-blooded animals.



DENR designates Pangasinan forest as critical habitat

Friday, February 19, 2021 Cory Martinez13

A **4,422-HECTARE** forest in Mangatarem, Pangasinan has been designated critical habitat as part of government efforts to conserve threatened and endemic wild animals and plants in the country. In an Administrative Order issued by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu, the forest area will be called the Mangatarem Critical Habitat. It is located in Barangays Cacaoiten, Cabaluyan II, Calomboyan Sur, Lawak Langka, Catarataraan, Pacalat and Malabobo.

“In doing this, we at the DENR can save habitats which are critical for the survival of threatened species or species at risk of extinction, including other associated wildlife, and at the same time provide this land area a legal framework to protect it from destructive uses,” Cimatu said.

Mangatarem Critical Habitat is a 4,422.80-hectare forest that serves as home to several threatened and endemic fauna species including Philippine deer (*Rusa marianna*), Philippine warty pig (*Sus philippensis*), Philippine duck (*Anas luzonica*), Flame-breasted fruit dove (*Ptilinopus marchei*), Philippine eagle owl (*Bubo philippensis*), Luzon scops owl (*Otus longicornis*), and Rufous hornbill (*Buceros hydrocorax*).

Flora species also include the threatened oi-ói (*Diospyros philippinensis*), kalíngag (*Cinnamomum mercadoi*), malabayábas (*Tristaniopsis decorticata*) and several more endemic species found in the forest.

Cimatu explained that the order will help the DENR work hand-in-hand with the local government, communities and other stakeholders involved in accomplishing the locally-driven ecosystems management approach.

“We need to sustainably manage this certain area, as this is one of the most important and few remaining forest blocks in Pangasinan. Through this, we can both protect the endemic and threatened flora and fauna living in it, while sustaining the ecosystem services and community livelihood dependent on the forest,” said Cimatu.

Under the order, the management of the Mangatarem Critical Habitat shall be under the DENR-Region I (Ilocos Region), together with the local government of Mangatarem and stakeholders.

Also, they will be responsible for the preparation of the Critical Habitat Management Plan to ensure that existing ecosystems in the critical habitat are preserved.

Dumping of waste products detrimental to wildlife; squatting and/or occupying any portion of the critical habitat; mineral exploration and/or extraction; burning; logging; and quarrying, will be also strictly prohibited in accordance with Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

Mangatarem Critical Habitat is the ninth to be included in the list of declared critical habitats across the country.

The others are *Rafflesia schadenbergiana* Critical Habitat, Cabusao Wetland Critical Habitat, Malasi Tree Park and Wildlife Sanctuary Critical Habitat, Carmen Critical Habitat, Adams Wildlife Critical Habitat, Magsaysay Critical Habitat for Hawksbill Turtles, Cleopatra’s Needle Critical Habitat, and Dumaran Critical Habitat.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/news/nation/denr-designates-pangasinan-forest-as-critical-habitat/>



Mga 'illegally reclaimed' area sa Marikina River iimbestigahan

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Feb 19 2021 10:01 PM | Updated as of Feb 19 2021 10:02 PM



Paiimbestigahan na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang mga illegally reclaimed area sa paligid ng Marikina River, kasabay ng pagsisimula ng pagpapalalim at pagpapalapad sa ilog. Iapela naman ni Marikina Mayor Marcy Teodoro sa task force na dapat masunod ang tamang alignment ng ilog sa gagawing dredging. **Nagpa-Patrol, Bianca Dava. TV Patrol, Biyernes, 19 Pebrero 2021**

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/video/news/02/19/21/mga-illegally-reclaimed-area-sa-marikina-river-iimbestigahan?fbclid=IwAR24I5zkMOTaXymFWMLA1xIWusLASW7_SJR6Xbe3bv-4FYk9cIjVSiVrl-M



DENR-Aklan names 5 ENR ambassadors

By Venus G. Villanueva Published on February 19, 2021

KALIBO, Aklan, Feb. 19 (PIA) -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here named five students from various far-flung schools in the province of Aklan as Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Ambassadors.

As such, these students will be the partners of DENR in the promotion of ENR Program for Restoration, Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) through the conduct of Information, Education and Communication (IEC), advocacy, social mobilization, and partnership-building activities related to ENR.



Ruffa Kyla G. Agapito of Libacao National Forestry Vocational High School, Libacao, Aklan is one of the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Ambassadors identified by DENR-Aklan as partner for Program for Restoration, Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) under the Tayo Ang Kalikasan Regional Public Affairs Office (TAK/RPAO) project. (Photo courtesy of DENR-Aklan) The naming of these environment ambassadors is in line with the implementation of the ENR Ambassador Project under the "Tayo ang Kalikasan" Regional Public Affairs Office (TAK/RPAO) of the DENR that aims to involve students/youth in the protection, conservation and management of the environment and natural resources through the above-mentioned activities.

In Aklan, the DENR-Provincial Office identified the five ambassadors from the towns that comprise the Multi-Forest Protection Committee (MFTC), namely Libacao, Madalag, Malinao, Tangalan and Ibajay.

The chosen ENR ambassadors are Ruffa Kyla G. Agapito of Libacao National Forestry Vocational High School in Libacao town; Mercy Jane Z. Garing of Madalag National High School in Madalag town; Ronil Pio I. Iledan of Malinao School for Philippine Craftsmen of Malinao town; Marc CJ M. Silva of Tamalagon Integrated School, Tangalan town; and John Lee V. Labindao of Naile National High School in Ibajay town.



In identifying Aklan's ENR Ambassadors, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Officer-In-Charge Merlene Aborka wrote the respective town's Public Schools District Supervisors requesting them to recommend one indigent but deserving student/youth who will help promote the DENR's programs with the end goal of effecting behavioral change through social mobilization activities using emails and other social media platforms.

The ENR Ambassador Project will be implemented nationwide for one year, according to the DENR.

The DENR added the ENR Ambassador shall strive to be the role model of other students/youth in pushing for a healthy and clean environment.

Aklan's five ENR ambassadors, according to DENR-PENRO, were initially provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Pocket Wifi with which to start performing their roles as environmental advocates. (JSC/VGV/PIA6 Aklan)



Mount Apo faces closure



Photo by Kristian Guimte

[RALPH LAWRENCE G. LLEMIT](#)

February 19, 2021

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR)-Davao Region might order the closure of Mount Apo to trekkers if environmental laws and health protocols will not be strictly observed.

In an issued notice to all stakeholders dated February 17, DENR-Davao Executive Director Bagani Fidel Evasco ordered the officials to further intensify the enforcement of environmental laws within the mountain.

Evasco, together with selected officials and personnel from Davao Oriental and Davao del Sur, recently conducted a trail and camp assessment from February 11 to 14, passing Sitio Paradise Digos trail to Camp Gudi-Gudi then to the summit.

The monitoring team noted the non-observance of proper waste disposal along the trails and campsites, sanitation, and health protocols.

They also noticed vandalism along trails, campsites, engraved on the boulders, peak, and even at the crater.

They also observed unregulated noise along the trails and camps disturbs the wildlife and disrupts the serenity of the trekking experience; presence of alarming cultivation beyond the Strict Protection Zone; possible use of prohibited substances due to presence of marijuana found at the 87-degree trail going to the crater and peak.

DENR-Davao also saw the non-observance of Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) guidelines in terms of social distancing limiting the number of trekkers from 50 regular capacity to 25 climbers per climb per day, which is a 50 percent reduction of trekkers in compliance to Sub-Protected Area Management Board (Sub-Pamb) Resolution 27, Series of 2020 and IATF Omnibus Guidelines.

"If left unabated, the closure of Mt. Apo might be possible in the coming days, when necessary, in order to pave the way for the immediate rehabilitation of the Natural Park's Trails and Campsite," DENR-Davao said in a notice.

The agency urged all stakeholders in Mt. Apo Natural Park "to cooperate collaboratively and unite for the betterment of our Nation's Highest Peak and Asean Heritage Site."

In a recent SunStar Davao report, Evasco, along with some officials and protected area conservationists, went on trekking during the long weekend "to personally observe and assess the condition of the mountain."



"The goal is to assess the trail conditions and campsite situation in order to determine and strengthen preservation and conservation mechanisms for Mount Apo, which was hailed as an Asean Heritage Site in 2011," DENR-Davao said, adding that it is considering putting up facilities for a more convenient trekking experience.

During their activity, they noticed that there were a lot of trekkers during that time despite "rainfalls and strenuous trails."

DENR-Davao reminded the public that Mount Apo is an established protected area by virtue of Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 and Republic Act 9237.

"DENR-Davao is urging the trekkers to be responsible and follow the guidelines and policies set by the PAMB. Otherwise, repercussions will not only entail fines and punishments but also damage to nature. For sure that by now, we have realized that nature's revenge can be 'unforgiving'," the agency said.

It also reminded the public to trek responsibly and to respect all the species in Mount Apo.

The mountain is under the management and regulation of the Protected Area Management Board, composed of members, including DENR's regional executive director as chairman and advisor on technical aspects.

According to the Philippine Official Gazette, Mount Apo, located between Davao City and Davao del Sur province in Davao Region, and Cotabato in Soccsksargen, is the highest mountain in the Philippines.



MGB vows close monitoring of Leyte mining rehabilitation

[RONALD O. REYES](#)

February 19, 2021

A TOP official of Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Eastern Visayas has vowed close monitoring of MacArthur Iron Sand Project Corp. (MIPC) in Leyte amid mounting criticism in its operation.

“With my remaining time in the region, I have to see that rehabilitation (of the mining area),” said MGB Regional Director Leo Van Juguan in response to the apprehension aired by anti-mining groups in MacArthur town led by parish priest Fr. Amadeo Alvero.

While Juguan admitted that MIPC operation is one of the priority mining projects approved by the National Government to help the country’s economy due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic, he said he is also concerned with the town’s food security.

“Right now, the challenge is to show it in the field. Let’s give them a chance to show it,” Juguan told reporters, as the MIPC management also announced its “progressive rehabilitation” plan during a hearing with the Provincial Board members last week.

Januar Ong, MIPC community relations officer, said they hope to see the production of crops in the mined out field in their pilot site “by next quarter.”

Ong said they have partnered with the farm owners in the rehabilitation of their farmlands.

He reiterated that they will not leave any hole unfilled in their mining area for black sand in Barangay Maya, MacArthur.

MIPC had already mined out four of the seven hectares leased to them as a pilot site.

Ong also assured the farm owners of sustainable production in their land.

“We discouraged them to sell their land to us. We only want to lease it and return it to them afterward,” said Ong, adding that they want to “compensate” the economic losses being experienced by the farmers in their field.

MIPC is reportedly investing P500 million for its mining operation in Leyte. **(SunStar Philippines)**



Tulong sa bagsak na ekonomiya 26 MINING FIRMS, AARANGKADA NGAYONG 2021

10 hours ago [jake](#)



WALA nang mga balakid sa pagmimina ng 26 kumpanya, kaya pinahintulutan sila ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) na simulan ang pagkasa sa kani-kanilang mga proyekto ngayong taon.

Ayon kay MGB Director Wilfredo Moncado, naipasa na ng 26 mining firms ang mga rekesito tulad ng “mineral production sharing agreements” (MPSAs) sa ahensiya, kaya pinayagan na silang umarangkada ngayong taon ng kani-kanilang mga proyekto.

Ayaw ilabas ni Moncado ang mga pangalan ng mga kumpanyang pinayagan na sa pagmimina.

Sinabi nitong walo sa 26 kumpanya ay metallic mines ang mga proyekto, samantalang non-metallic mines ang 18 iba pa.

Ayon sa mapagkakatiwalaang source mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), isa sa mga kumpanyang pinaboran ng MGB para magsimula ng operasyon ay ang Philex Mining Corporation, na pinamumunuan ni Manny V. Pangilinan (MVP).

Mayroong proyekto ang Philex sa Surigao del Norte na \$75 milyon ang halaga.

Ayon kay Moncado, kahit na mayorya sa mga proyekto ay non-metallic mines ang produkto, nakaugnay naman ito sa proyektong Build, Build, Build (BBB) ng administrasyong Duterte, dahilan upang pahintulutan ng MGB ang mga ito.

Ayon sa MGB, napakalakas ng demand ng ibang mga bansa sa ginto, tanso at nikel, kaya makatutulong sa pag-usad at pagbangon ng ekonomiya.

Ito ay dahil obligado ang administrasyong Duterte na malutas ang negatibong higit 9.8% gross domestic product (GDP) noong 2020.

Ang negatibong 9.8% ay pinakamababa simula nang makalap ang datos ng pamahalaan noong 1946 para sa GDP.

Batay sa rekord ng MGB, China ang bagsakan ng 90% sa produksyon ng nikel ng bansa. (NELSON S. BADILLA)

Source: http://saksingayon.com/metro/tulong-sa-bagsak-na-ekonomiya-26-mining-firms-aarangkada-ngayong-2021/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR0J--isP_apfSww-24VeOQVx2_MODWMrLf2nc4JAQUwe-w0rqcw37xJxLE



Snakes on travel: Naia customs seizes reptiles bound for Taiwan

By Recto Mercene

February 20, 2021

Airport Customs authorities seized various species of reptiles while being exported to Taiwan through an international cargo forwarder.

The authorities found spitting cobras, 8 pit vipers, and 15 sailfin lizards concealed in bamboo chimes and lanterns for export to Taiwan in a DHL warehouse.

The package was declared as “souvenir items” by a certain “Adrian Lim” from Pasig City, and was consigned to a certain “Ryan Su” of Taiwan.

The wildlife species were discovered and apprehended through the joint efforts of the Port of Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) and offices under the Export Division, Enforcement and Security Service, Environmental Protection and Compliance Division.

Representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) estimated the seized reptiles could be sold for as much as P300,000.

The Port of Naia said it remains vigilant not only in the interception of illegal drugs but also on illegal wildlife trade.

The Naia Customs district, last March 2019 and September 2020, was commended by the Traffic Asia for the confiscation of 1,529 freshwater turtles and tortoises concealed in suitcases.

The district was also praised by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the interception of a reticulated python concealed in a rattan basket, recently.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/02/20/snakes-on-travel-naia-customs-seizes-reptiles-bound-for-taiwan/>



Officials seize Taiwan-bound snakes package

posted February 19, 2021 at 11:30 pm

by [Joel E. Zurbano](#)

Customs agents at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport have intercepted a shipment of snakes and other wildlife species bound for Taiwan.

Port of NAIA district collector Carmelita Talusan said the shipment of two cobras, eight pit vipers, and 15 sailfin lizards concealed in bamboo chimes and lanterns was discovered at the DHL Warehouse last Thursday.

The exporter identified as Adrian Lim, a resident of Pasig City, declared the package as “souvenir items”, which was consigned to a certain “Ryan Su” of Taiwan.

Talusan’s men intercepted the shipment with the help of personnel from the agency’s Environmental Protection and Compliance Division, X-Ray Inspection Project, Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service and DHL in close coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The seized cobras, pit vipers, and sailfin lizards were immediately turned over to the DENR main office in Quezon City for proper handling and disposition.

The authorities are now conducting further investigation and case build up against the shipper and co-conspirators for illegal wildlife trade.

“Port of NAIA remains vigilant not only in the interception of illegal drugs but also in illegal wildlife trade,” said Talusan.

Late last year, the Port of NAIA won a legal case against a trader responsible for the smuggling of 757 pieces of spiders at the airport.

In a decision dated Nov. 20, Judge Allan Ariola of the Pasay Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 48 found Jesse Camaro guilty of violating the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act or Republic Act 9147 and the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

Aside from the jail term, the court also ordered Camaro to pay a fine of P120,000.

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

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



BoC foils smuggling of live snakes, lizards

February 19, 2021 | Filed under: News | Posted by: Tempo Desk

BY ARIEL FERNANDEZ

Authorities at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) intercepted on Thursday two cobras, eight pit vipers, and 15 sailfin lizards concealed in bamboo chimes and lanterns intended for export to Taiwan at a DHL warehouse, the Bureau of Customs (BoC) announced Friday.

The package, declared as “souvenir items” by a certain Adrian Lim from Pasig City, was consigned to a certain Ryan Su of Taiwan.

The wildlife species, hidden inside native purses of bamboo chimes and lanterns, were seized by customs and airport authorities in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The confiscated wildlife animals can be sold as high as P300,000, the BoC said.

The seized cobras, pit vipers, and sailfin lizards were immediately turned over to the DENR for proper handling and disposition, profiling and case buildup against the shipper and co-conspirators in the illegal wildlife trade. **(Ariel Fernandez)**



25 COBRAS, REPTILES NASABAT SA NAIA

10 hours ago [jake](#)

Photo Courtesy of ipfactly



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NASABAT ng mga operatiba ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) Port of NAIA sa DHL warehouse ang ipinupuslit na dalawang makamandag na spitting cobra, 8 pit vipers at 15 sailfin lizards na itinago sa bamboo chimes at parol na ilalabas ng bansa patungo ng Taiwan noong Huwebes, Pebrero 18.

Ang mga kontrabando ay idineklarang “souvenir items” ng isang “Adriann Lim” mula sa Pasig City, at naka-consign sa isang umano’y “Ryan Su” na taga-Taiwan.

Magugunitang pinuri ng Traffic Asia ang BOC Port of NAIA, noong Marso 2019 at Setyembre 2020 dahil sa pagkakakumpiska sa 1,529 freshwater turtle at tortoises na nakatago sa suitcases.

Ang nasamsam na mga cobra, pit viper at sailfin lizard ay agad dinala sa DENR para sa proper handling and disposition, kasabay ng pagsasagawa ng profiling at case build-up laban sa shipper at mga kasabwat sa illegal wildlife trade, na malinaw na paglabag sa RA 9147 (Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act) at RA 10863 (Customs Modernization and Tariff Act). (DAVE MEDINA)

Source: http://saksingayon.com/metro/25-cobras-reptiles-nasabat-sa-naia/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR0zAtiDVPrtCd9bJ0Hu-FvcvN5P50FHP-B5YgCINKia96M-KwZBLVF5rIY



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY CHING FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribuneph_ton
VENOMOUS snakes and lizards are collected by agents of the Bureau of Customs after several containers of live species were attempted to be smuggled out of the country through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

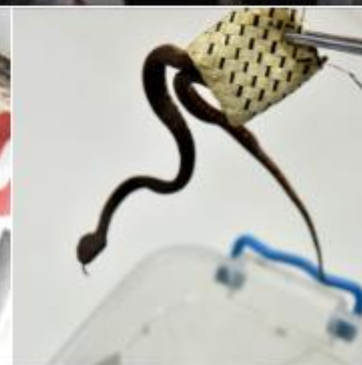


News5

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Nasabat ng BOC-NAIA ang dalawang venomous spitting cobras, walong pit vipers, at 15 sailfin lizards na itinago sa bamboo chimes at lanterns na i-e-export sana sa Taiwan. Itu-turn over ang mga hayop sa DENR para sa proper handling at disposition.

📍: BOC-NAIA



👍 🤔 😱 251

81 Comments 75 Shares



ABS-CBN News

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TINGNAN: Sa loob lang ng isang linggo, dalawang pawikan ang napadpad sa dalampasigan ng Ozamiz, Misamis Occidental.

Nakita ng mga residente sa baybayin ng Barangay Doña Consuelo ang isang pawikan nitong Huwebes at agad ding pinakawalan nang mai-turnover sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Noong Martes lang ay may namataan ding pawikan sa dalampasigan ng Carmen Annex.

Nasa 88 sentimetro ang lapad nito at tinatayang aabot sa 300 kilo ang bigat. Sugatan ito at sinubukang gamutin ngunit namatay rin kalaunan. (📷: Kenz Zoe at Tingog Misamisnon) | via Roxanne Arevalo

BASA HIN DITO ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://bit.ly/3k3ooPS>



👍👎❤️ 586

89 Comments 40 Shares



Converting agricultural land for development use

By: [Ar. John Ian Lee Fulgar](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 03:50 AM February 20, 2021

Dreaming to develop a project but the property is classified as agricultural land?

Your dream might only be a few documents away from becoming a reality given the recent amendments on the 2002 Comprehensive Rules on Land Use Conversion by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).



Authorized housing development projects in the Philippines

Defining land use conversion

Land use conversion is defined as the act or method of modifying the current physical use of a parcel of agricultural land for either a non-agricultural purpose or the same agricultural use but other than soil cultivation as well as growing of crops and trees as approved by DAR.

However, it is important to note that land use conversion is different from reclassification. Compared to land use conversion, reclassification is the act of specifying the potential of agricultural land to be utilized for non-agricultural purposes. However, this doesn't automatically allow a landowner to utilize the same agricultural land for different use. A converted land meanwhile gives the landowner an actual right to use a previously classified agricultural land into its converted, now intended use. This is according to DAR's Section 65 of Republic Act No. 6657, as amended by Executive Order (EO) 129-A, and paragraph (13), Section 3, Title XI of the Revised Administrative Code of 1987, otherwise known as EO No. 292.



Farm lands for sale in the Philippines



Is any agricultural land eligible for land use conversion?

The short answer is no. The long answer, however, is divided into three categories: convertible lands, non-negotiable areas for conversion and highly restricted areas for conversion.

Agricultural lands eligible for conversion should be reclassified into non-agricultural uses such as commercial, industrial and residential through the local government unit or via a Presidential Proclamation, according to RA No. 6657 effective on June 15, 1988. For agricultural lands reclassified before June 15, 1988, however, DAR's guidelines on securing an exemption clearance should apply.

Areas non-negotiable for conversion can be further subdivided into two categories. First are agricultural lands classified under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) as determined by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The second category includes irrigated, irrigable land and agricultural lands with existing irrigation facilities as delineated by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

Lastly, areas highly restrictive for conversion include the following: irrigable lands with firm funding commitment, but are not covered by irrigation projects; agro-industrial croplands; highlands or areas with elevations of 500 meters and above exhibiting potential for growing high-value or semi-temperate crops; lands with notice of land valuation and acquisition, and; lands located within Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) or involved with Environmentally Critical Projects (ECP).

Except for authorized housing projects, agricultural lands highly restrictive for conversion and with areas over five hectares should undergo deliberations by the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) Land Use Technical Committee (PLUTC).

Streamlined processes

Through its Administrative Order (AO) No. 1, Series of 2019, the department has now revised its guidelines and methods aimed at streamlining the long process of land use conversion in the Philippines. This was done by amending specific provisions on AO No. 1, Series of 2002 in hopes of hastening the process of land conversion cases.

To start, only the landowner or his/her duly authorized representative can apply for land use conversion and submit all supporting documents. However, agricultural lands for conversion which were acquired under RA 6657 would only be allowed if the applicant is also the agrarian reform beneficiary. The beneficiary should likewise pay for the full price of the land.

To achieve faster processing, the latest guidelines also eliminated some requirements for land use conversion, such as the Department of Agriculture (DA) Certificate; the DENR's Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC), on certain conditions, and; a Conversion Grant for areas to be used as resettlement or relocation sites for displaced communities after a nationally declared calamity, provided that these are not part of the Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZ).

With the latest amendments, electronic copies of land titles are now being accepted to confirm landholding and its registered owner(s) in place of certified true copies. However, the following localities are not covered by this specific amendment: Basilan (Isabela); Batanes (Basco); Cadiz City; Cagayan (Tuao); Dapitan City; Negros Occidental; Province of Tawi-Tawi (Bongao); Silay City and; Sulu (Jolo).



Towards smoother public transactions

Simplifying major laws such as the 2002 Comprehensive Rules on Land Use Conversion is an excellent executive method, thanks to the department's initiative. However, this isn't merely for avoiding additional yet unnecessary fees in securing individual clearances. Instead, amendments of similar goals will allow the country to develop a comprehensive land policy framework that utilizes agricultural development towards sustainable economic growth.

The author is the principal architect of Fulgar Architects, an architectural firm helping local and international property developers get into unique and diversified planning and design specialties for real estate, hotels, condominiums, commercial and mixed-use township developments with a pursuit for the meta-modern in the next Philippine architecture



PROPERTY RULES

Demolish me not

By: [Ma. Soledad Deriquito-Mawis](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

04:10 AM February 20, 2021

Ernie filed a complaint for demolition before the City Engineer's Office ("CEO") of the City of Pines questioning the ongoing construction of a residential structure and garage extension by Leon, Art and Dan on a parcel of land allegedly owned by Mar and Ernie's father, Juan. The CEO found out that the construction had no building permit. Consequently, the City Mayor issued Demolition Order No. 05, series of 2005 (DO No. 05) directing the City Demolition Team to summarily demolish the said structures erected by the three gentlemen. No amount of plea for a reversal could change the position of the Office of the Mayor.

Aggrieved, the three gentlemen filed a complaint for injunction and prohibition seeking to enjoin the implementation of the demolition order. In their complaint, they applied for a temporary restraining order, which was granted by the RTC. Subsequently, the RTC issued a writ of preliminary injunction pending the final determination of the merits of the case.

During trial, Art testified, among others, that he has a Tax Declaration and a pending application for Ancestral Land Claim over the subject property filed before the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and that he has been paying taxes therefore and occupying the same since 1977. He also testified that Ernie had previously filed a case with the Office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), questioning his possession thereof, as well as, seeking the cancellation of his tax declaration over the said property. The DENR-CAR dismissed the case in his favor, but Ernie appealed to the Office of the DENR Secretary. At the time the appeal was pending, Ernie filed the complaint for demolition before the CEO. Art further testified that the barangay is covered by Proclamation No. 414, series of 1957 (Proclamation 414), which declared the same as mineral reservation, for which reason he was unable to get a title over the subject property despite his possession thereof.

The Punong Barangay also testified in favor the three gentlemen. He testified that by Resolution No.386, series of 1995, the City Council requested for the release of the vast area covered by Proclamation 414, for housing purposes to be awarded to the occupants of the Barangay. Also, he narrated that in a census conducted in 2003, it was found that there were two hundred thirty (230) houses in the subject barangay and none of these houses had building permits.

On the other hand, Ernie's witnesses all testified that the structures of petitioners on the subject property were not covered by any building permit. Ernie also testified that the issue of possession over the said property was the subject of an appeal pending before the Office of the DENR Secretary.

Q: Who are the "new squatters," the "professional squatters," and the "squatting syndicates"?

A: "New squatter" refers to individual groups who occupy land without the express consent of the landowner after March 28, 1992. Their structures shall be dismantled and appropriate charges shall be filed against them by the proper authorities if they refuse to vacate the premises. "Professional squatters" refers to individuals or groups who occupy lands without the express consent of the landowner and who have sufficient income for legitimate housing. The term shall also apply to persons who have previously been awarded home lots or housing units by the Government but who sold, leased or transferred the same to settle illegally in the same place or in another urban area, and non-bona fide occupants and intruders of lands reserved for socialized housing. The term shall not apply to individuals or groups who simply rent land and housing from professional squatters or squatting syndicates. "Squatting syndicates" refers to groups of persons engaged in the business of squatter housing for profit or gain.



Q: Are Leon, Art and Dan considered as “new squatters,” or “professional squatters,” or part of “squatting syndicates”?

A: No, since, although their structures were built after March 28, 1992, they or their predecessors-in-interest had occupied, and were claimants of the subject property long before the said date. Neither have they been identified by the LGU as professional squatters nor members of a squatting syndicate. Thus, since petitioners do not fall under the coverage of the said IRR, the issuance of DO No. 05 (the demolition order) had no legal basis at the onset.

Q: Were the three situations enumerated under Section 28, Article VII of RA 7279 as above-cited present in the case at bar?

A: No. It was not shown that the structures are in danger areas or public areas, such as a sidewalk, road, park or playground; that a government infrastructure project is about to be implemented; and that there is a court order for demolition or eviction. Therefore, the issuance by the City Mayor of an order for the summary demolition of petitioners’ structures finds no basis in the said law permitting summary demolition or eviction.

Q: Does the absence of building permits warrant the summary demolition of the structures?

A: While it is admitted that there were no building permits, P.D. No. 1096, otherwise known as the “National Building Code of the Philippines” (NBCP), provides that the mere fact that a structure is constructed without a building permit, as well as non-compliance with work stoppage order, without more, will not call for a summary demolition, but subjects the violator to an administrative fine under Section 212, Chapter II of the NBCP, or a criminal case under Section 213 of the same law.

Indeed, while Section 301, Chapter III of the NBCP states that “[n] o person, firm or corporation, including any agency or instrumentality of the government shall erect, construct, alter, repair, move, convert or demolish any building or structure or cause the same to be done without first obtaining a building permit therefore from the Building Official assigned in the place where the subject building is located or the building work is to be done,” the remedy of summary abatement against the bare absence of a building permit was not provided for.

Meanwhile, Section 215 of the NBCP, and its corresponding IRR provision states that before a structure may be abated or demolished, there must first be a finding or declaration by the Building Official that the building/structure is a nuisance, ruinous or dangerous.

To this, it bears noting that it is the Building Official, and not the City Mayor, who has the authority to order the demolition of the structures under the NBCP. In fact, in the performance of his duties, a Building Official may enter any building or its premises at all reasonable times to inspect and determine compliance with the requirements of this Code, and the terms and conditions provided for in the building permit as issued.

In this case, none of the foregoing requisites were shown to concur. Plainly, records are bereft of any declaration coming from the Building Official, and it is undisputed that the demolition order was issued by the City Mayor. In fine, DO No. 05, which ordered the summary demolition of petitioners’ structures has no legal moorings and perforce was invalidly issued.

(Source: Alangdeo vs. The Coty Mayor of Bguio, G.R. No. 206423, July 1, 2015)Ma. Soledad Deriquito-Mawis is the Dean of Lyceum of the Philippines University, Board of Trustee at the Philippine Association of Law Schools, founder of Mawis Law Office



Before you dispose your face mask, please cut the straps first

Published February 20, 2021, 3:28 AM

by [Johannes Chua](#)

It is becoming a disaster-waiting-to-happen — the tons and tons of face masks (and other medical related items like gloves and PPEs) piling up all over the world each day as the pandemic continues. The number is so shocking as a study revealed that at least 100 billion face masks (and 65 billion plastic gloves) are discarded each month!



Disposed face masks are finding their way to our beaches, destroying the habitat of sea animals.

Though each face mask is light as a feather (it weighs at least four grams), the sheer volume of waste is catastrophic to the environment. These face masks find their way on the road, in canals, in the mountain, or in bodies of water. When these “infiltrate” the habitat of land or sea animals, disaster happens. The feet and neck of animals can become entangled with the straps of the face mask, preventing their flight or barring their ability to swim, causing avoidable death.

A recent trending post from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) of the UK revealed countless cases of wildlife entangled in straps of face masks. The group launched a campaign to encourage people to “snip the straps” before disposing of the face mask.



The RSPCA organization in UK launched a ‘snip the straps’ campaign to remind people to cut off the straps before discarding a face mask. Otherwise, these face masks pose a real threat to wildlife, including sea life. (Photo from RSPCA)

The chief executive of RSPCA, Chris Sherwood, issued a public statement, calling on the support of the public. “We have dealt with a heartbreaking 900 incidents of animals caught in litter since the start of lockdown – including animals tangled in face masks. For many years, the public have been aware of the message to cut up plastic six-pack rings before throwing them away to stop animals getting tangled in them, and now we are keen to get out the message that the same should be done for face masks, too – as very sadly, animals are susceptible to getting tangled up in them.”

He added that since face masks are the norm, and may be for some time to come, the group’s message is more important than ever as thousands of these masks are being thrown away every day.

“We’re concerned discarded face masks could become a significant hazard, particularly to wild animals and birds. We have had to rescue animals from getting tangled in face masks and we expect that this may go up as time goes on, so the best thing to do is to simply cut the elastic ear straps in half before throwing it away.”

What can we do to help the environment?

So, aside from cutting the straps of our face mask, what should we do to help protect the environment and prevent this so-called “Green Pandemic” from unravelling? Here is a list we compiled from recommendations of health and policy experts.



Do not dispose face masks in public spaces. Be responsible. Throw them in bins or waste baskets.



A message circulating online asks for this small request—“**Kindly cut used disposable masks into two pieces before putting them in the bin.** There is a huge market where discarded masks are sold to the poor. It will take barely five seconds to cut them into half. Your action can save hundreds from getting infected.” Whether this is true or not, it’s prudent to be extra safe and avert any health crises.

Eco groups, however, say that even though we dispose of our face masks properly in bins, these could still end up in our seas and landfills. They recommend that we “should just **avoid single-use face masks, if possible.**”

A medical expert has this advice: “**Unless you are in the medical field, it is practical to use a reusable face mask,** which can be worn and washed again and again. It also saves you from the cost of purchasing face masks.” So if wearing face masks is now part of our lives, isn’t this a wise (and budget-friendly) advice?



Unless you are in the medical field, it is practical to use a reusable face mask, which can be worn and washed again and again.

In terms of government policy, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) is calling on the implementation of Administrative Order No. 22-2013, issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), **on the proper management and disposal of used masks, PPEs, and other considered hazardous (infectious) waste from hospitals, barangay health centers, and clinics.** “We stress the importance of enacting the Ecological Solid Waste Management (ESWM) Act of 2000, which provides guidance on proper segregation at source, transportation, storage, transfer, processing, treatment, and disposal of solid waste and other waste management activities that do not harm the environment,” the agency said.

Like face masks, **we can also cut our own plastic wastes by refusing disposable plastic cutlery** (especially when having food delivered) and by **supporting businesses that offer more sustainable delivery packaging**, such as cardboard or compostable bags. “The biggest challenge in adopting a more sustainable lifestyle is breaking old habits and making sacrifices for the climate and environment,” says the CCC. “But by slowly incorporating sustainable practices into our everyday activities, we would be able to protect both the health of the people, natural systems, and the planet.”

Source: [https://mb.com.ph/2021/02/20/before-you-dispose-your-face-mask-please-cut-the-
straps-first/](https://mb.com.ph/2021/02/20/before-you-dispose-your-face-mask-please-cut-the-straps-first/)



Here's how you can go zero-waste without spending

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Feb 19, 2021 7:37:43 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, February 19) — Thinking of going zero-waste but worried of its monetary costs? An environment group said you can do so by just looking at what you already have in your homes.

"Kung magshi-shift tayo sa zero-waste lifestyle, hindi natin kailangan bumili ng bagong gamit or bagong environmentally acceptable products," EcoWaste Coalition policy advocacy officer Patricia Nicdao told Newsroom Ngayon.

[Translation: If we will shift to zero-waste lifestyle, we do not need to buy new things or new environmentally acceptable products.]

Nicdao explained old items like bags and containers may be repurposed and reused since purchasing new ones will defeat the purpose of eliminating waste.

She noted that the Philippines has a severe "plastic crisis." Despite some 400 local government units having ordinances on the regulation of single-use plastic, Filipinos still use billions of plastics annually in their daily lives, she said.

She mentioned several alternatives to single-use plastics, some of which are already being used by Filipinos for a very long time like bayongs, fabric bags, water jugs, washable glasses, stainless steel lunchboxes, and reusable bamboo straw.

During this time of the pandemic, the use of plastic products like cutleries, became very prominent especially in food businesses. The advocate said it is safe to also reuse these, according to experts. In effect, this also lessens wastes.

More than the shift, Nicdao said what their group would like to push is to have a circular economy, where citizens will recognize that natural resources are not infinite thus the need to reuse as much as possible.

"We want a change in the system kasi doon talaga natin makikita iyong totoong pag-mitigate ng plastic pollution sa Pilipinas," she added.

[Translation: We want a change in the system because that is when we can really mitigate plastic pollution in the Philippines.]

The group also urged Congress to pass a comprehensive measure that will ban single-use plastics in the country.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/lifestyle/2021/2/19/going-zero-waste-lifestyle-without-spending.html>



Responsible use of open, public spaces in Clark Freeport pushed

By Zorayda Tecson February 19, 2021, 11:30 am



CLEAN-UP DRIVE. A multi-sectoral activity that aims to raise awareness in keeping the environment clean, especially the responsible use of public areas inside the Clark Freeport Zone in Pampanga was launched on Thursday (Feb. 18, 2021). Dubbed as “Keep Clark Clean Drive,” the project is an initiative of the Greater Clark Visitors Bureau (GCVB) that also aims to promote and enforce the “Clean As You Go” culture among park visitors inside Clark. (Photo courtesy of Mabalacat City Government)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – A multi-sectoral activity that aims to raise awareness in keeping the environment clean, especially the responsible use of public areas inside the Clark Freeport Zone was launched on Thursday.

Dubbed as “Keep Clark Clean Drive,” the project is an initiative of the Greater Clark Visitors Bureau (GCVB) that also aims to promote and enforce the “Clean As You Go” culture among park visitors inside Clark.

GCVB president Joy Cruz said outdoor spaces give the people respite from being confined to their homes.

“Sad to say, many do not know how to take care of these places. Many have left their trash in our open spaces,” she said in her social media account post.

Cruz joined the volunteers of the “Keep Clark Clean” drive during the program’s kick-off at the Clark Freeport Picnic Grounds.

The project was also supported by the Mabalacat City government, the Philippine Air Force (PAF), Clark Development Corporation (CDC) Tourism and Environmental Office, Philippine National Police (PNP), Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA), Boysen, CleanX, North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), and the Subic-Clak-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) as well as stakeholders from the arts sector and cycling groups.

Mabalacat Mayor Crisostomo Garbo expressed his full support to the program as he urged park-goers inside and outside the Clark Freeport Zone to observe proper disposal of wastes when visiting public parks and open spaces.

“Our utilization of public spaces comes with the responsibility of keeping it clean and tidy. It is our duty to take good care of our surroundings and make these areas prepared for everybody’s use,” Garbo said in a statement.

The use of public spaces for recreation such as Clark Freeport Picnic Grounds has become popular amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

However, photos of filthy areas inside Clark went viral on social media due to irresponsible use of open grounds inside the freeport.

“This triggered alarm to us for such an act towards our environment is never acceptable,” said Garbo who is also the co-chairman of the Metro Clark Advisory Council (MCAC).

Aside from the clean-up drive, the event also includes a painting activity of repurposed tin drums which will be distributed and situated in public areas inside the freeport. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1131100>

Used syringes washed ashore in Toledo City

By: Immae Lachica, Micah Sophia C. Marcellones - General Assignments Reporter/CDN Digital|February 19,2021 - 05:39 PM



Syringes and medical waste are found on a beach in Toledo City, western Cebu. Local residents are worried about the dangers these syringes pose to them. | Photo courtesy of Manisa Barbadillo

CEBU CITY, Philippines— Usually we see plastic wrappers among many other ocean wastes washed up ashore.

Imagine the horror of a resident in Toledo City when she saw not just plastic wastes but used syringes on a beach in this western Cebu locality.

Manisa Barbadillo, found a number of used syringes washed ashore in Matab-ang Beach, Toledo City on January 25, 2021.

She, together with her partner, was doing their usual beach clean-up routine when they found the used syringes on the shore.

“We didn’t take it seriously at first...but on February 4, when I found more (syringes), my partner said we will keep it and we will report it to the barangay and even the mayor,” said Barbadillo.

On February 19, Barbadillo and her partner have collected a total of 120 syringes.

According to Barbadillo, one fisherman had been injured after accidentally stepping on a syringe needle in the sand.

“It’s even more alarming because we don’t know where it’s coming from,” she added.





Barbadillo and other residents in the area are hoping that this will be investigated by their local government unit to keep their shores and beaches safe for beachgoers.

The collected used syringes are still with the couple as of this posting. /rcg



A Roman Catholic nun sprinkles ash on a cyclist during Ash Wednesday mass at a church in Manila on February 17, 2021, marking the start of Lenten season in Catholic church calendar.

AFP/Jam Sta. Rosa

COVID-19 cases in Philippines rise to 557,058

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - February 19, 2021 - 4:07pm

MANILA, Philippines — Coronavirus cases in the Philippines climbed past 557,000 Friday after the Department of Health recorded 1,901 additional infections.

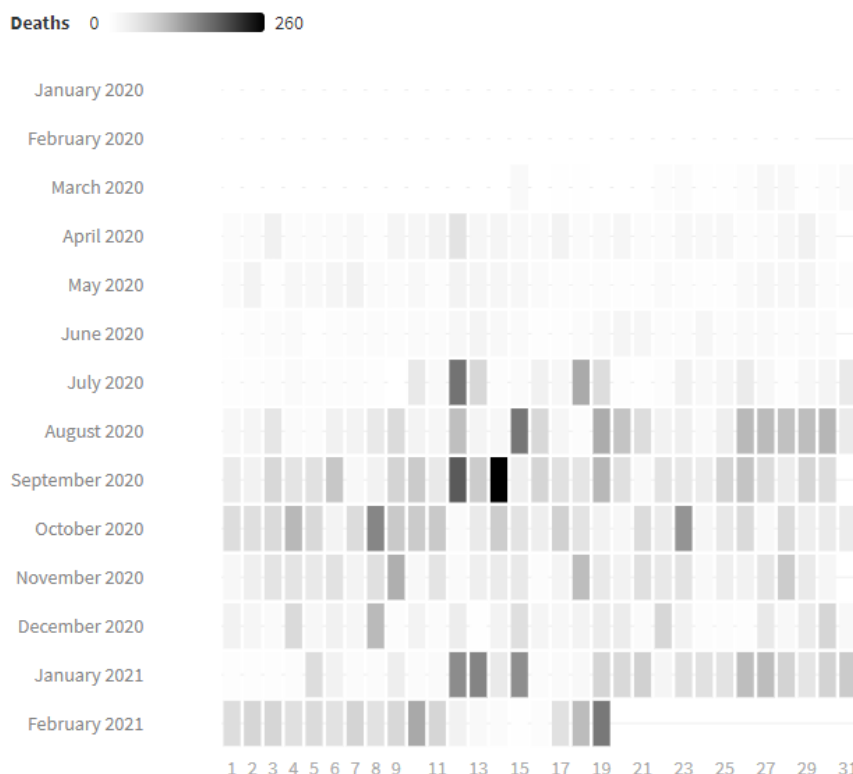
Of the 557,058 total confirmed cases, 32,440 or 5.8% are active.

Recoveries rose to 512,789 after 537 additional patients recovered from the respiratory illness.

Meanwhile, 157 more COVID-19-related deaths were registered—the highest since September 14, when 259 fatalities were recorded This pushed the fatality count to 11,829.

COVID-19 deaths in the Philippines

The Philippines recorded the most number of COVID-19 deaths in a single day on September 14, 2020.



Source: Department of Health - As of February 19, 2021, 4 p.m.



What's new today?

- The DOH confirmed the [detection of mutations of SARS-CoV-2](#), the virus that causes COVID-19, in Central Visayas. The mutations identified as E484K and N501Y have been found in the variants that emerged in United Kingdom, South Africa and Brazil. The agency stressed that “current available data are insufficient to conclude that mutations found in the local samples will have significant public health implications.”
- Belgian drugmaker [Janssen Pharmaceutica](#) has started the local clinical trial for its COVID-19 vaccine, the Department of Science and Technology said.
- Malacañang expects the country will be placed under [modified general community quarantine](#) by March, saying President Rodrigo Duterte may be swayed by the recommendations by the government’s pandemic task force and by a majority of mayors in Metro Manila.
- Congress is expected to [pass on Monday a bill](#) expediting the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and providing for compensation to people who experience adverse effects after getting the jab.

— with report from Xave Gregorio



Duterte might be convinced to declare nationwide MGCQ: Palace

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos February 19, 2021, 10:15 am



President Rodrigo Duterte. (Presidential photo)

MANILA – There is a chance that President Rodrigo Duterte might be convinced to impose the most relaxed modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) in the entire Philippines, Malacañang said Friday.

This, after the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) and Metro Manila mayors have agreed to recommend the implementation of MGCQ status nationwide.

“Inaasahan naman natin dahil meron ng ganitong kasunduan sa panig ng IATF at ng mga Metro Manila mayors eh baka naman po sumang-ayon ang ating presidente (We expect that since both IATF and Metro Manila mayors have sought [the imposition of MGCQ in the country], perhaps the President might also agree),” Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said in an interview with PTV-4.

He said Duterte might decide on the new quarantine classification in March during a Cabinet meeting on Monday.

However, the President’s decision will be announced before the end of February, Roque said.

He said the IATF-EID is now preparing for the possible declaration of MGCQ.

He said the “special rules” imposed in GCQ zones like Metro Manila would be lifted, in case Duterte decides to place the entire country under MGCQ.

“*Wala na ‘yung* special rules sa GCQ dahil lahat po tayo ngayon covered ng mga rules under MGCQ at least pagsimula ng a-unong Marso at kung papayagan ng Presidente (There would be no special rules imposed in GCQ, once the President agrees to declare MGC by March 1),” Roque said.

Apart from Metro Manila, other areas under GCQ in February are Cordillera Administrative Region, Batangas, Tacloban City, Iligan City, Davao del Norte, Davao City, and Lanao del Sur.

The rest of the country has stayed under the least restrictive MGCQ this month.

Duterte is currently studying Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua’s proposed shift to MGCQ status to balance health and economy amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

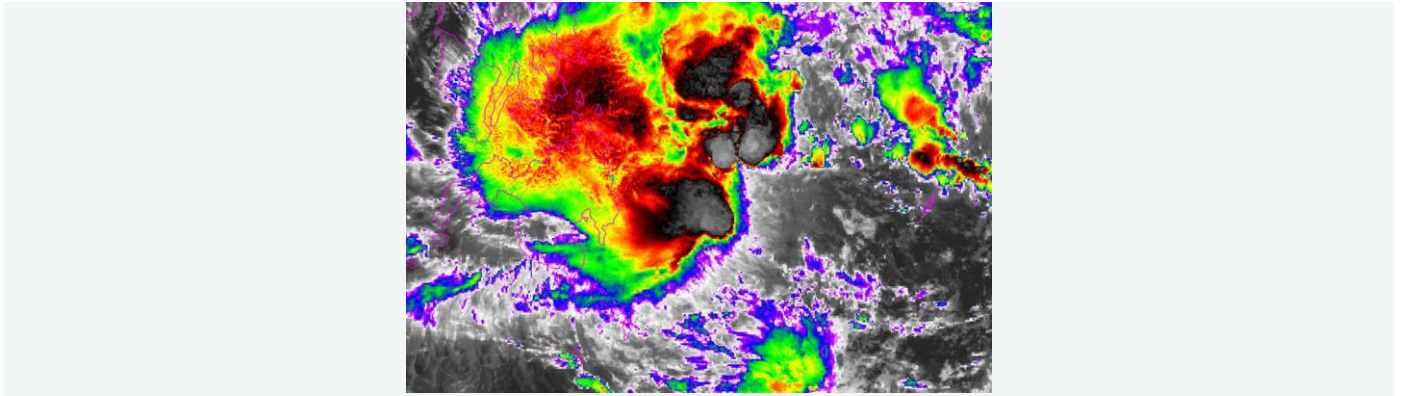
A study by the National Economic and Development Authority found that prolonged lockdowns in the country due to Covid-19 have caused 23.7 million people more to go hungry, 4.5 million more to fall into poverty, and 2.6 million to lose their jobs.

Roque on Thursday said the two-week growth rate and the daily attack rate would still be considered in determining the community quarantine classification in March. (PNA)

'Auring' maintains strength, to bring more rains over Visayas, Mindanao

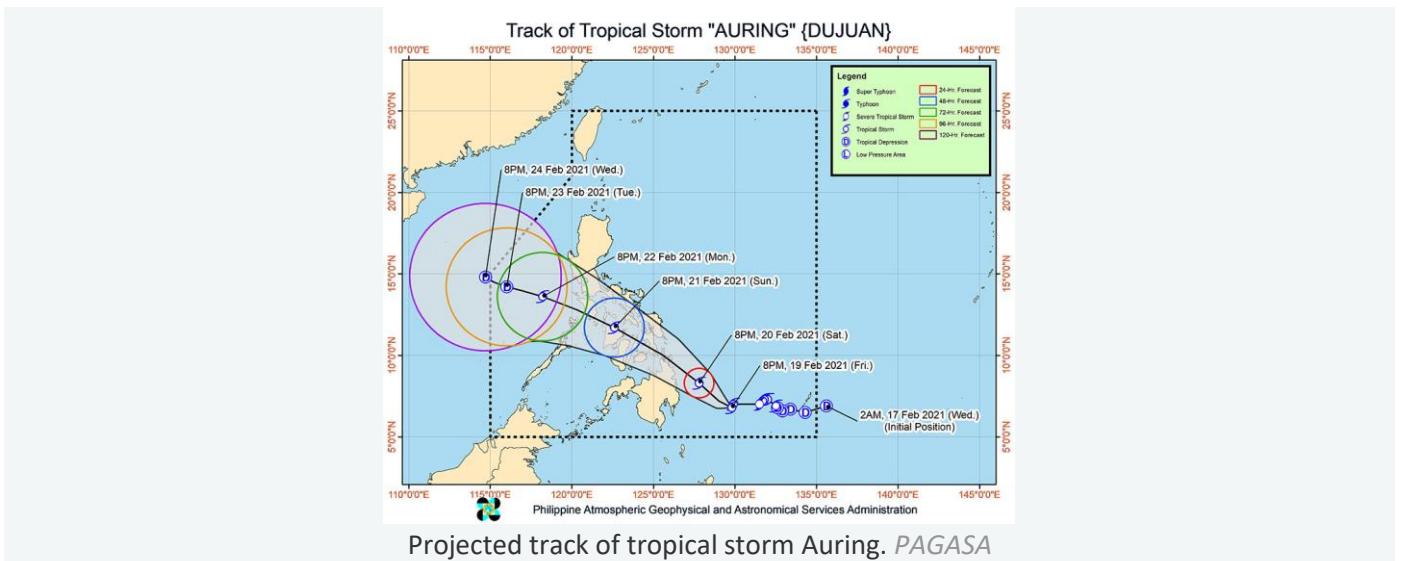
ABS-CBN News

Posted at Feb 20 2021 12:32 AM | Updated as of Feb 20 2021 05:37 AM



MANILA - Tropical Storm Auring maintained its strength as it moves towards the Philippine landmass, the state weather bureau said Friday night.

The center of country's first tropical cyclone this year was last estimated 435 kilometers east southeast of Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur as of 10 p.m., almost stationary, while packing maximum sustained winds of 85 kilometers per hour near the center and gusts of up to 105 kph, PAGASA said in its 11 p.m. weather bulletin.



PAGASA said Auring will move generally northwestward and will accelerate over the next three days.

It is expected to make landfall over the eastern coast of Caraga region by Sunday, and will traverse the rest of Visayas and Mimaropa from Sunday to Monday.

Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal No. 1, where winds of 30 to 60 kph, which may cause light damage high risk structures, may be expected within 36 hours, was raised over the following areas:

- Northern Samar
- Eastern Samar
- Samar, Biliran
- Leyte
- Southern Leyte
- Cebu
- Negros Oriental
- Bohol
- Siquijor
- Dinagat Islands



- Surigao del Norte
- Surigao del Sur
- Agusan del Norte
- Agusan del Sur
- Davao Oriental
- Davao de Oro
- Davao del Norte
- Davao City
- Camiguin
- Misamis Oriental
- Misamis Occidental
- Lanao del Norte
- Bukidnon
- Lanao del Sur

PAGASA said light to moderate with at times heavy rains may persist over Caraga, Davao Oriental, Davao de Oro, Davao del Norte, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental and Southern Leyte until Saturday morning.

From Saturday to early Sunday morning, heavy to intense rains may be experienced over Surigao del Norte and Dinagat Islands, while moderate to heavy with at times intense rains may persist over the rest of Caraga, Davao Oriental, Davao de Oro, Misamis Oriental, and Camiguin.

Light to moderate with at times heavy rains may also be experienced over Eastern Visayas, Central Visayas, the rest of Northern Mindanao, Lanao del Sur, Cotabato, and Davao City.

Residents in flood-prone and landslide prone areas are advised to monitor the weather bulletins and take appropriate action should flooding occur.

Auring is expected to stay within the Philippine Area of Responsibility until Tuesday.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), earlier cited a "high risk" of flooding and landslides in various areas in Mimaropa, Visayas and Eastern Mindanao as the country is still experiencing La Niña on top of the tropical storm.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/02/20/21/auring-maintains-strength-to-bring-more-rains-over-visayas-mindanao?fbclid=IwAR2sbKL9IB4Cx1WuQVXPzpvICs3NG0yIgvUok-kBznq2-0UisRBbEDEw-WA>



MAG-INGAT, MAGHANDA SA BAGYONG AURING; BASURA LABANAN



February 19, 2021 @ 8:28 AM 21 hours ago

GUMAGAPANG ang bagyong Auring sa 10 kilometro nitong takbo patungong Caraga Region at may dala itong hanging nasa pagitan ng 50-80 kilometro kada oras habang tinitipa natin ito.

Pero sa araw na ito, Biyernes, maaaring lalakas pa ang hangin nito at kakambalan nito ng malalakas na pag-ulan hanggang Lunes sa Caraga, Northern Mindanao, Visayas, Bicol Region, Calabarzon at Mimaropa.

Mismong ang Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration ang nagsasabing malakas na hangin at malakas na ulan ang darating kaya naman, dapat lahat ay maghanda at mag-ingat.

Bawal ang mangisda sa mga karagatang sakop ng bagyo, delikado ang mga mahihinang bahay, magkakaroon ng mga landslide, magkakaroon ng mga baha ang ibig sabihin ng PAGASA.

Palagi namang kalakip nito ang paghinto ng mga hanapbuhay at pagbiyahe at tiyak na may mga itatakbo sa mga evacuation center.

‘Yang gutom at paghihirap dahil sa mga dalang kalamidad ng bagyong Auring ngayon pa lang ay dapat na ring paghandaan.

Isang partikular na usapin, nalinis ba natin mula sa mga basura ang mga dadaluyan ng tubig na sanhi ng mga pagbaha?

Sana naman po at pangunahing responsibilidad ito ng mga lokal na pamahalaan at sa tulong na rin ng mamamayan at mga pambansang ahensya ng pamahalaan.

SAPILITANG PAGBABAKWIT SA TAAL VOLCANO

Isa pang dapat na intindihin, mga Bro, ang napipintong pagsabog muli ng Taal Volcano na ang nakaraang pagsabog ay nitong lang Enero 2020.

May mga lindol na nagaganap na isang kilometro lang ang lalim at nagtatagal sa loob ng 5-12 minuto.

Wala sanang problema lalo’t hindi natin mapipigilan ang ganitong ngitngit ng kalikasan.

Pero natagpuang may mga nagsibalikan mismo sa paligid ng bulkan kahit matagal nang ipinagbabawal ang paninirahan dito.



Itong ganitong sitwasyon, mga Bro, ay dapat na maulit nang maulit.

Bagama't maaaring bumalik sa lugar para sa ilang hanapbuhay, ang paninirahan ay dapat na hindi ipilit.

Matatandaan natin, may mga lumikas na talaga at marami pa ngang housing unit na para sa mga pulis at sundalo ang naibigay sa mga napinsala ng pagsabog nitong nakaraang taon.

Naiintindihan natin ang problema sa paninirahan.

Pero para maresolba ito, ang mamamayang apektado ay dapat na magbukas ng saloobin sa pamahalaan, kahit sa mga lokal na pamahalaan dahil tiyak na aksyon sina kapitan, mayor at gobernador sa mga pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan.

Ang naalala natin, kumilos hindi lang ang mga opisyal ng Batangas kundi mismo ang mga taga-Laguna at Cavite upang mabigyan ng puwang sa paninirahan ang mga sobrang napinsala sa pagsabog ng bulkan.

Ang mga nagsibalikan sa isla ng Taal, pwedeng lumapit sa mga lokal na pamahalaan at tiyak naman kikilos ang mga ito para tumulong.

BASURA SA BUONG MANILA BAY

Hindi lang Metro Manila ang sumasaklaw sa Manila Bay.

Kasama sa mga nakapaligid ang mga lalawigan ng Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga at Zambales.

Kaya naman, ang paglilinis sa Manila Bay ay hindi lang nakasalalay sa iisang lugar o rehiyon gaya ng Metro Manila bagama't sa Metro Manila matatagpuan ang pinaka sa lahat ng pinanggagalingan ng mga basura mula sa kabahayan hanggang sa mga establisimyento.

Konektado pa nga maging ang mga lalawigan ng Rizal at Laguna dahil sa koneksyon naman ng Laguna de Bay sa pamamagitan ng Pasig River.

Kapag marumi ang Pasig River sa mga nakalalasang kemikal, dumi ng tao at basura sa paligid, papasok ang dumi sa Laguna de Bay kung high tide at palabas naman ang dumi patungong Manila bay ang dumi kung low tide.

Kasama sa mga bumibiyaheng dumi mismo ang mga galing sa Manila Bay at Laguna de Bay.

LOKAL NA BASURAHAN

Kabilang sa mga binabantayan natin ang mga basurahan ng mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Kung may open dumpsite at hindi inaalagaan ang pagtatapon ng basura sa mga ito at basta lang pinagkakakitaan ng gustong kumita kahit nakasisira sa kalikasan, isinasara natin ang mga ito.

Hindi pupwedeng mamamayani ang mga negosyante sa basura sa interes ng mga mamamayan na maging basura-free sa paligid.



Alam naman natin na kung nagkalat ang mga basura, nagiging sanhi ang mga ito ng mga pagbabara sa mga daang-tubig na sanhi ng pagbaha.

Kakalat din ang mga lason, kasama ang mga virus, bacteria, fungus na nakasasama sa kalusugan ng mga mamamayan.

At kung hindi makontrol ang mga maling pagbabasura, mananatiling sira ang buong kapaligiran at kasama na riyang ang Manila Bay, Laguna de Bay at maging ang lahat ng daluyan ng tubig gaya ng mga ilog na pinagkukunan pa mandin natin ng mga pagkain.

Ayaw nating magkaroon ng mga fishkill, may lason at lasang gilik ang mga shell, alimango, hipon at isda na ating inaalagaan, hinuhuli, ibinebenta at nilalantakan.

Magtulong-tulong po tayo lahat laban sa maling pagtatapon ng basura.



It is official: US back in the Paris climate club

Valerie Volcovici, Reuters

Posted at Feb 19 2021 08:49 PM



An aerial view of floating ice taken by a drone launched from Greenpeace's Arctic Sunrise ship in the Arctic Ocean, September 15, 2020. Picture taken September 15, 2020. *Natalie Thomas, Reuters/File*

WASHINGTON — The United States officially rejoined the Paris climate agreement on Friday, reinvigorating the global fight against climate change as the Biden administration plans drastic emissions cuts over the next three decades.

Scientists and foreign diplomats have welcomed the U.S. return to the treaty, which became official 30 days after President Joe Biden ordered the move on his first day in office.

Since nearly 200 countries signed the 2015 pact to prevent catastrophic climate change, the United States was the only country to exit. Former President Donald Trump took the step, claiming climate action would cost too much.

U.S. climate envoy John Kerry will take part in virtual events on Friday to mark the U.S. re-entry, including appearances with the ambassadors to the UK and Italy, U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres and U.N. climate ambition envoy Michael Bloomberg.

Biden has promised to chart a path toward net-zero U.S. emissions by 2050. Scientists have said that goal is in line with what is needed, while also stressing that global emissions need to drop by half by 2030 to prevent the most devastating impacts of global warming.

Kerry along with Biden's domestic climate adviser, Gina McCarthy, are crafting new regulations and incentives aimed at speeding the deployment of clean energy and transitioning from fossil fuels.

Those measures will form the backbone of Washington's next emissions reduction goal, or Nationally Determined Contribution, to be announced before a global climate leaders summit Biden will host on April 22. The next U.N. climate conference is in November in Glasgow.

Biden also has also signed more than a dozen executive orders related to climate change, and has mobilized every federal agency to help shape the government's response.

Despite the excitement over the U.S. return to global negotiations, climate negotiators say the path forward will not be easy. Biden's climate goals face political challenges in the United States, opposition from fossil fuel companies and some concern among foreign leaders about U.S. flip-flopping on climate policy.

"There's a lot of ground to make up, but the hope of Paris is alive and strong," said Rachel Cleetus, policy director at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

(Reporting by Valerie Volcovici; Editing by Cynthia Osterman)

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/02/19/21/it-is-official-us-back-in-the-paris-climate-club>



Environmental degradation poses triple threat to humans: UN

Published February 19, 2021, 7:35 AM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution pose a triple threat to human health and prosperity that may be averted only by transforming how we power our economies and feed ourselves, the United Nations said Thursday.



A scientific assessment by the UN Environment Programme found that decades of economic growth has come at a devastating cost to the planet

(Raul ARBOLEDA AFP/File / MANILA BULLETIN)

A scientific assessment by the UN Environment Programme found that galloping economic growth has come at a devastating cost to the planet and urged governments, businesses and people around the world to act to reverse the damage before it is too late.

Drawing on findings from other major assessments on climate and biodiversity from expert international panels, the report titled “Making Peace With Nature” said a rapid shift to renewable energy and eliminating habitat loss are essential to preventing “unacceptable risk” for future generations.

“For too long, we have been waging a senseless and suicidal war on nature,” said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

“The result is three interlinked environmental crises: Climate disruption, biodiversity loss and pollution threaten our viability as a species.”

Lead report author Robert Watson told AFP that the three crises threatened far more than nature. “They undermine food security, water security and human health,” he said.

The report found that the global economy had grown nearly fivefold in the last 50 years fuelled by a tripling in extraction of natural resources and energy.

Yet amid such prolific growth, the burden of the environmental fallout is borne by the poorest and most vulnerable, it said.

Although average prosperity has doubled over the last five decades, around 1.3 billion people are classed as poor and 700 million go to bed hungry each night.

The assessment said that environmental degradation was undermining progress on ending poverty and hunger and warned that pandemics such as Covid-19 were increasingly likely in future as we continue to strip away species’ natural habitats.

“This is not the first pandemic caused by animal to human infection, so we really have to think how we can prevent the next one,” said Watson, a veteran climate and biodiversity researcher.

“By cutting down vegetation, we humans go into areas we didn’t used to go into and therefore we interact with wild animals.”



'Low-hanging fruit'

Despite a record drop in emissions last year as the pandemic curbed international travel, the world is on track to be at least three degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by 2100.

That is a far cry from the aims of the Paris climate deal, in which nations promised to limit warming to “well below” 2C and to a safer cap of 1.5C if possible.

None of the goals the world set itself a decade ago for halting nature loss has been met, with one million species of plants and animals currently threatened with extinction.

The assessment recommended that protected areas be expanded to allow for more space for wild species, as well as addressing the drivers of forest loss, such as unsustainable farming and food waste.

It also found that governments pay out a staggering \$5-7 trillion in subsidies to fossil fuel and large-scale farming operations.

These contribute to air pollution that kills an estimated eight million people each year.

Co-author Ivar Baste said that reducing fossil fuel subsidies — which after all most benefit richer, high-polluting firms — should be considered “low-hanging fruit” in the fight against climate change.

“We have to do the obvious,” he told AFP, while noting that “vested interests” are pushing for continued fossil fuel use.

With 2021 set to see two major UN summits on biodiversity loss and climate change, the authors said “piecemeal and uncoordinated” responses would fall well short of what the planet needs.

“While I applaud all the countries in the world that have set zero net carbon dioxide emissions by 2030, the real issue is what will countries do between now and 2030,” Watson said.

“Action really is needed in the short term, not just aspirational goals for the middle of the century.”



Endangered na hayop binuhay sa clonning

By Abante News Online — Last updated Feb 19, 2021

NEWS



10 0

Makasaysayan ang buhay ng isang black-footed ferret, na kabilang sa endangered species sa Amerika, dahil sa pag-clone sa nasabing hayop na nasawi 30 taon na ang nakaraan.

Sa ulat mula sa US Fish and Wildlife Service, pinanganak ang hayop noong Disyembre 10 at pinangalanan na Elizabeth Ann.

Pinalaki ang ferret sa breeding facility ng ahensya sa Fort Collins, Colorado. Nagmula umano siya sa genetic copy ng ferret na si Willa, na kabilang din sa mga huling wild species, na namatay noong 1988.

Sa pamamagitan ng cloning, mapapanumbalik ang mga species na naging extinct o tuluyan nang nawala.



Making peace with nature is possible, if we start now

posted February 20, 2021 at 12:10 am

"Our environmental, social and economic challenges are interlinked."

By Inger Andersen
Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme

Even amid a pandemic, 2021 can go down as the year we made peace with nature and set the planet to healing.

As COVID-19 upends our lives, a more persistent crisis demands urgent action on a global scale. Three environmental crises—climate change, nature loss, and the collapse of nature, and the pollution of air, soil and water add up to a planetary emergency that will cause far more pain than COVID-19 in the long-term.

For years, scientists have detailed how humanity is degrading Earth and its natural systems. Yet the actions we are taking—from governments and financial institutions to businesses and individuals—fall far short of what is needed to protect current and future generations from a hothouse Earth, beset by mass species extinctions and poisonous air and water.

In 2020, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) announced that, despite a dip in greenhouse gas emissions caused by the pandemic, the world is still headed for global warming of more than 3°C this century.

This month, the Dasgupta review reminded us what UNEP has long warned: the per capita stock of natural capital—the resources and services nature provides to humanity—has fallen 40 per cent in just over two decades. And we know that a staggering 9 out of 10 people worldwide breathe polluted air.

Finding answers to such daunting problems is complex. It takes time. But experts have developed solutions. The economic rationale is clear. And the mechanisms and institutions to implement them are already in place. There are no more excuses.

This year, the UN will bring governments and other players together for crunch talks on climate action, biodiversity and land degradation. COVID-19 has delayed these summits and complicated their preparation. Again, this is no excuse for inaction. These summits must show that the world is finally serious about tackling our planetary emergency.

To guide decision-makers toward the action required, the UN has released the Making Peace with Nature report. The report pulls together all the evidence of environmental decline from major global scientific assessments, with the most advanced ideas on how to reverse it. The result is a blueprint for a sustainable future that can secure human well-being on a healthy planet.

Our environmental, social and economic challenges are interlinked. They must be tackled together. For example, we cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including ending poverty, by 2030 if climate change and ecosystem collapse are undermining food and water supplies in the world's poorest countries. We have no choice but to transform our economies and societies by valuing nature and putting its health at the heart of all our decisions.

If we did this, banks and investors would stop financing fossil fuels. Governments would shift trillions of dollars in subsidies to nature-positive farming and clean energy and water. People everywhere would prioritize health and well-being over consumption and shrink their environmental footprint.



There are signs of progress, but the problems are escalating faster than our responses. We all need to not step up, but leap up, in 2021.

The number of countries promising to work towards net-zero emissions stands at 126. The ask is for all countries to deliver stretched nationally determined contributions ahead of the climate COP and immediately kickstart the transitions to net-zero. At the climate COP, governments must also finally agree on the rules for a global carbon trading market. The USD 100 billion that developed countries promised to provide every year to help developing nations cope with the impacts of climate change must finally flow.

As we also seek to agree an ambitious post-2020 biodiversity framework that ends fragmentation of our ecosystems, the ask is for us is to feed the world without destroying nature, felling forests and emptying our oceans.

We can create an amazing economy by moving to circular economic systems that reuse resources, reduce emissions and weed out the chemicals and toxins that are causing millions of premature deaths – all while creating jobs.

Addressing our planetary emergency is a whole-of-society effort. But governments must take the lead, starting with a smart and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that invests in the right places. They must create opportunities for future industries that generate prosperity. They must ensure that transitions are fair and equitable, creating jobs for those who lose out. They must give citizens a voice in these far-reaching decisions, even if it is virtual.

We can do it. The pandemic has shown humanity's incredible ability to innovate and respond to threats, guided by science. In the three planetary crises of climate change, nature loss and pollution, we face an even greater threat than COVID-19. This year, we must make peace with nature and, in every subsequent year, we must make sure that this peace lasts.

20 FEBRUARY 2021, SATURDAY



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