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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Cimatu tells LGUs to 'invest' in climate change mitigation efforts

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by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

“Investments” need to be made at the local government level if the country wants to be successful in mitigating the impact of climate change.



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

Thus, said Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu as he urged local government units (LGUs) all over the Philippines to be more proactive when it comes to their risk resiliency projects.

“As we seek to build back better from the COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) crisis and build the resiliency of our communities to the impacts of climate change, investments on the protection and restoration of our environment are imperative so we can deliver significant economic and environmental benefits at a time when both are urgently needed,” Cimatu said in a statement Tuesday, April 20.

Citing reports, the DENR noted that 70 percent of all cities in the country are already dealing with the effects of climate change. Moreover, 90 percent of urban areas lie in coastal regions, making them more vulnerable to sea-level rise and other climate-related threats compared to others.

The typhoon “Yolanda” disaster that struck Eastern Visayas in November 2013 is a notable example of extreme weather events that are consistent with the effects of climate change.

“These impacts threaten to undermine decades of developmental milestones. Only through integrating climate and disaster risks, as well as potential opportunities into our development planning and budget can we build resilient and sustainable societies,” the DENR chief stressed.

Cimatu made the call during a recent virtual meeting on the Risk Resiliency Program-Program Convergence Budgeting (RRP-PCB).

The RRP-PCB is a significant innovation adopted by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) via National Budget Memorandum No. 138, Series of 2021. It provides an opportunity to strengthen convergence among national government agencies as well as support climate response efforts.

Formulated by the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR) Cabinet Cluster, the RRP is geared toward improving the resilience of the country’s natural systems and the adaptability of the communities living in climate hazard-vulnerable provinces and major urban areas.



The DENR enjoined the LGUs to consider in their plans and budget allocation the key investments under the RRP, such as community livelihood and enterprise continuity project, integrated water resources management project, enhancing coastal protection project, climate information services, and seismic resiliency.

Taking part in the meeting were representatives from DENR field offices, League of Provinces of the Philippines, League of Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Philippine League of Local Environment and Natural Resources Officers, and Cabinet Cluster on CCAM-DRR member-agencies.

Cimatu chairs the particular Cabinet Cluster.



Cimatu hinikayat ang LGUs na mamuhunan sa risk resiliency projects



April 20, 2021 @ 4:50 PM 15 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Upang makatulong sa kahandaan ng bansa na mapagaan ang epekto ng climate change hinikayat ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang mga local government units (LGUs) na mamuhunan sa Risk Reduction Program (RRP).

Ang panawagan na ito ng kalihim ng DENR na siya ring chair ng Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR) ay upang makapaghanda ang mga komunidad sa pagharap sa mga darating na problema tulad ng coronavirus pandemic at climate crisis.

“As we seek to build back better from the COVID-19 crisis and build the resiliency of our communities to the impacts of climate change, investments on the protection and restoration of our environment are imperative so we can deliver significant economic and environmental benefits at a time when both are urgently needed,” sabi ni Cimatu sa ginanap na virtual meeting ukol sa Risk Reduction Program-Program Convergence Budgeting (RRP-PCB).

Ayon sa DENR ang pulong ay dinaluhan ng DENR field offices, League of Provinces of the Philippines, League of Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Philippine League of Local Environment and Natural Resources Officers, and Cabinet Cluster on CCAM-DRR member-agencies.

Sinabi ng DENR na 70 percent ng mga lungsod sa bansa ay nakararanas ng epekto ng climate change.

Bukod dito, 90 percent ng urban areas ay nasa coastal regions na maaaring maglagay sa kanila sa panganib ng pagtaas ng sea-level at iba pang banta na climate-related.

“These impacts threaten to undermine decades of developmental milestones. Only through integrating climate and disaster risks, as well as potential opportunities into our development planning and budget can we build resilient and sustainable societies,” saad pa ni Cimatu.



Ang RRP-PCB ay ang makabagong paraan ng Department of Budget and Management (DBM) na nakasaad sa National Budget Memorandum No. 138, Series of 2021 na layuning makapagbigay ng oportunidad na mapalakas ang pagtutulungan ng national government agencies at ang suporta upang mapagbuti ng climate response.

Idinagdag pa ng DENR na ang RRP na binuo ng CCAM-DRR Cabinet Cluster ay ang mga programa ng gobyerno na layuning mapabuti ang katatagan ng natural na sistema ng bansa at kakayahang makaangkop ng mga komunidad na naninirahan sa climate hazard vulnerable provinces at major urban areas.

Kabilang sa mga lugar na ito ang Masbate, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Negros Oriental, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Southern Leyte, Siquijor, Sarangani, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Bukidnon, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Sulu, Lanao del Sur, Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Metro Iloilo at Metro Davao.

Bibigyan ng prayoridad ang mga lugar na ito na may mas mataas na poverty incidence rates at lantad din sa climate hazards.

Hiniling din ng DENR sa LGUs na ikonsidera sa kanilang plano at budget allocation ang mga key investments sa ilalim ng RRP tulad ng community livelihood and enterprise continuity project, integrated water resources management project, enhancing coastal protection project, climate information services, at seismic resiliency.

Sa ginanap na pulong, ipinaliwanag ni DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems, and Climate Change Analiza Rebueta-Teh ang mga policy actions and strategies sa environment and natural resources sector tulad ng nakabalangkas sa "Towards a Water-Secure and Resilient Philippines." Santi Celario



100 new mining projects to raise P21 billion for gov't

By: [Leila B. Salaverria](#) - Reporter / [@LeilasINO](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:42 AM April 20, 2021

MANILA, Philippines — With the lifting of the moratorium on new mining agreements, 100 mining projects, which are now in the pipeline, are expected to generate P21 billion in revenues for the national government, according to Jonas Leones, undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Leones said 35 mining projects were expected to push through in phase one and the next 65 would be rolled out in the succeeding phase.

"We are now in the process of evaluating the pipeline projects," Leones said in an online briefing.

One of the big-ticket projects lined up is Silangan Mining in Surigao province, which has a funding requirement of \$700 billion, he said.

For government coffers

The new mining projects would generate P21 billion in income for government coffers, although he said the economic benefits would not be immediately felt and might take one to five years.

Leones also brushed off calls by environmental groups to keep the moratorium on new mining projects, saying the government needed the income from these activities to address the pandemic.

'We need a source of funds'

"As of now, we will not pay attention to these because the country has a lot of problems and we need a source of funds," he said.

"This is one of the ways for us to resolve our financial problems," Leones added.

He gave assurance to the public that the DENR would also focus on the mining operations' compliance with environmental laws.

"I just want to emphasize to our countrymen that this is not just about extraction, we will also look at environmental compliance so we can ensure balance between the economic aspect and the environmental aspect," he said.

President Duterte issued Executive Order No. 130 last week, which lifted the nine-year moratorium on new mining agreements in a bid to revive the pandemic-battered economy.

The EO tasks the DENR with coming up with terms and conditions in the new mineral agreements that would "maximize government revenues and share from production, including the possibility of declaring these areas as mineral reservations to obtain appropriate royalties." INQ



DENR titiba ng P21B sa bukas minahan

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Apr 20, 2021

NEWS



Photo courtesy of DENR FB



Aabot sa P21 bilyon na kita sa buwis ang mahahakot umano para pumasok sa kaban ng pamahalaan matapos iutos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na alisin na ang moratoriiim sa mga bagong kasunduan para sa 100 mining project sa bansa.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) undersecretary Jonas Leones, inaasahang mag-uumpisa na ang phase 1 ng 35 proyekto sa mga minahan habang susunod agad ang nalalabi pang 65 proyekto.

Tinukoy ni Leones ang Silangan Mining sa Surigao na isa aniya sa mga pinakamalaking proyekto sa industriya ng pagmimina dahil sa inilaan ditong \$700 bilyong pondo.

Hahakot aniya ito ng P21 bilyon na kita sa buwis pero aabot ng mula isa hanggang limang taon bago maramdaman ang pagsigla ng ekonomiya dahil dito.

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Samantala, ibinasura ng DENR ang panawagan ng mga environmental group na ibalik ang moratorium sa mga bagong kasunduan sa pagmimina sa bansa dahil kailangan umano ng mapagkukunan ng pondo para sa mga problema ng bansa.

"We need a source of funds. As of now, we will not pay attention to these because the country has a lot of problems and we need a source of funds," ani Leones.

Nilagdaan ni Pangulong Duterte noong nakaraang linggo Executive Order No. 130 na nagtatanggal sa siyam na taong moratorium para sa mga bagong mining agreement sa bansa. (Mia Billones)



Government eyes more Minahang Bayan areas

[Catherine Talavera](#) (The Philippine Star) - April 21, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The government plans to declare at least seven new Minahang Bayan sites this year, an official of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said.

“The target for the year 2021 is (to have) at least seven declared Minahang Bayan areas to bring the total to 46,” MGB director Wilfredo Moncano told The STAR in a text message.

Moncano said that as of April 12, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had cleared three applications for declaration as Minahang Bayan.

Among these are the Benguet Federation of Small Scale Mining Association in Tuba, Benguet, the Bulawan Landowners Small Scale Mining Association in Calanasan, Apayao and the Albor Small Scale Mining Cooperative in Libjo on Dinagat Island.

Both the Benguet and Apayao sites involve the mining of gold, while the Dinagat Island site involves the mining of chromite.

Moncano said the rest of the Minahang Bayan applications are in different states of processing.

He explained that when a site is cleared by the DENR secretary for declaration as Minahang Bayan, the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board (PMRB) in each province concerned would be the one to declare the area as a Minahang Bayan.

“It will open the area for application for small-scale mining contracts and small-scale mineral processing permits, but these applications will be processed by the PMRB and the governor of the province,” Moncano said.

A Minahang Bayan or People’s Small-Scale Mining Area is an area given by the government to small-scale miners under actual exploration, development, exploitation or commercial production.

Declaring an area as a Minahang Bayan will centralize the processing of minerals within a zone where the government will be able to monitor gold production by small-scale miners better.

It helps the government curb illegal mining and mitigate the adverse environmental impacts of indiscriminate mining operations in the country.

The PMRB will have direct supervision and control over the programs and activities of the small-scale miners within the Minahang Bayan.



Gov't won't back down on lifting mining ban

April 19, 2021 | 8:24 pm



THE GOVERNMENT said it will not give in to pressure to reconsider Executive Order (EO) No. 130, which lifted the moratorium on new mining agreements, citing the need to generate new revenue due to the pandemic.

"Hindi natin pinagtutuunan ng pansin ang ganyan dahil marami tayong problema ngayon sa ating bansa. Kailangan natin ng pagkukuhanan ng pondo at ito ang isa sa mga paraan para tayo makaahon. (We are not paying attention to those calling for the EO to be withdrawn because the country is facing many problems. We need to find a source of funds and this is one path to recovery)," Environment Undersecretary Jonas R. Leones said in a Laging Handa briefing Monday.

According to Mr. Leones, funds generated by new mining agreements can be used for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) containment efforts and to provide financial assistance to the poor.

He added that EO 130 is one of the initiatives taken by the government to address its financial challenges during the public health emergency.

On April 14, President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed EO 130, which also authorizes the government to review active mining deals for possible renegotiation. The EO amends an order issued by former President Benigno S. C. Aquino III in 2012, which froze the grant of new mining agreements.

Opposition to the EO has centered on claims that it will negatively affect the environment and indigenous communities.

Mr. Leones said there are 100 mining projects in the pipeline with the potential to generate P21 billion in revenue for the Treasury.

"We can use the country's resources to generate the necessary income for our economy," Mr. Leones said.

Mr. Leones added that the upcoming mining agreements consist of Phase 1 which includes 35 mining projects ready to be implemented soon, with 65 projects in Phase 2.

In a mobile phone message, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Wilfredo G. Moncano said Phase 1 projects can be expected to start within months and are at a stage of obtaining the requirements set out before proceeding with extraction.

Mr. Moncano said Phase 2 projects are those that can mobilize by next year, with proponents having passed milestones like the Declaration of Mining Project Feasibility.

Ronald S. Recidoro, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines executive director, said in a mobile phone message that large investments have been made in three projects that are in the pipeline — the Tampakan Copper Project of Sagittarius Mines, Inc.; the King-King Copper-Gold Project of the Nationwide Development Corp. and St. Augustine Gold & Copper Ltd.; and the Silangan Copper and Gold Project of Philex Mining Corp.



"We are already looking at over \$4 billion in capital expenditure, with over P40 billion in local government unit (LGU) taxes, P20 billion in social development projects, and P15 billion paid to indigenous peoples as royalties," Mr. Recidoro said.

"Of course, this will not come immediately, or in one go, but it will be spread over the life of the mining project. But to get this significant amount of revenue spread over years, and spent in the remote areas that need it most, is definitely a plus," he added.

Philex Mining Public and Regulatory Affairs Head Francis Joseph G. Ballesteros, Jr. said in a mobile phone message that the company is still looking for a business partner for its Silangan project in Surigao del Norte.

"We are still aggressively on the lookout for a business partner for Silangan. Perhaps, with this new EO 130, investor interest will be encouraged. We hope that we can accomplish this within the year," Mr. Ballesteros said.

In 2020, the MGB estimated that the value of the metallic mining industry's output rose 1.13% to P132.21 billion, of which nickel ore and its by-products accounted for 51.8% or P68.48 billion; gold 36% or P47.60 billion; copper 11.25% or P14.88 billion; and the combination of silver, chromite, and iron P1.26 billion.

Philex Mining is one of the three Philippine units of Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd., the two others being PLDT, Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. Hastings Holdings, Inc. — a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc. — maintains an interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — Revin Mikhael D. Ochave

Source: https://www.bworldonline.com/govt-wont-back-down-on-lifting-mining-ban/?fbclid=IwAR1A6JgHdTvJS5viGKj1N3LiyPksMk4hrPxGSDWnC2dV2wxpw1GfP_mqf5
[c](#)



Tagalog News: Pagbawi ni Pangulong Duterte sa moratorium sa pagmimina sa bansa, suportado ng Gobernador sa SurSur

By Radyo Pilipinas-TandagPublished on April 20, 2021

LUNGSOD NG TANDAG, Surigao del Sur, Abril 20 -- Suportado ni Surigao del Sur Gobernador Alexander Pimentel ang naging pasya ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na pagbawi sa ban/moratorium sa lahat ng mga bagong kasunduan para sa pagpapatakbo ng minahan sa bansa.

Sa isang panayam, inihayag nito na makakatulong ang nasabing desisyon upang muling sumigla ang ekonomiya ng bansa na labis nalugmok dahil sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID 19) pandemic.

Ayon pa kay Pimentel, kailangan na umanong humanap ng mapagkukunan ng pondo ang presidente para sa pagpapatupad ng mga programa at proyekto ng bansa na nakapaloob sa General Appropriations Act (GAA) ngayong taon.

Sa katunayan, una na ring sinang-ayunan ng Inter-Agency Task Force Against (IATF) COVID-19 ang pagbubukas ng mas marami pang industriya at pagpapapasok ng mga investor dahil labis na nangangailangan ngayon ng pera ang bansa.

Matatandaan na kilala ang lalawigan ng Surigao del Sur na may nag-ooperate na mga malalaking minahan sa buong bansa. (DXJS RP-Tandag/PIA-Surigao del Sur)



Giving our natural resources-based industries a deeper look

Published April 21, 2021, 12:10 AM by [John Tria](#)

As we move forward in recovery, I believe it is vital that we recognize an economic sector that has its roots in the rural areas and has a foothold in many areas in Mindanao. These are our natural resource-based industries.

Our constitution, specifically article 12, section 2 defines the scope of our natural resources to include minerals and timber, among others. The constitutional provision also includes important portions about how such utilizations may be made, to wit:

“The exploration, development, and utilization of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the State. The State may directly undertake such activities, or it may enter into co-production, joint venture, or production-sharing agreements”

Moreover, sustainable development principles require us to use resources in a judicious manner that meets the needs of both present and future generations.

With this, it is clear that we are not prohibited from utilizing our natural resources, contrary to the idea pushed by a few i have encountered that these resources ought to be left untouched.

What matters, therefore, is that our natural resources these be used and utilized responsibly. All businesses for that matter, need to managed sustainably and in a responsible manner. Environmental Impact Assessments are required for this purpose, and impacts need to be monitored over time.

Natural resources are indigenous or local. Utilizing them responsibly can create wealth and catalyze many local livelihood and employment opportunities in the countryside and can boost the local economy, driving employment not only in the direct utilization but in its downstream industries and businesses.

In the case of minerals, we possess significant amounts of metallic minerals such as copper, chromite, nickel. We also have non-metallic resources that can be tapped. In my November 2, 2020 column, I wrote about the industry:

[\(https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/02/possibilities-hope-and-vigilance/\)](https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/02/possibilities-hope-and-vigilance/)

“Data from the Mines and Geo Sciences Bureau indicate that of the 30 million hectares of land in the Philippines, about 9 million have mineral potential for vital items such as copper, iron, nickel, limestone, and gold.

In all, the mining industry employs 190,000 workers and earning 4.3 Billion dollars in export revenue and contributing 15 billion pesos in taxes, apart from the amounts spent on required livelihood and social development programs.”

The economic benefit can be multiplied further if a downstream mineral processing and metals and non-metals product – based industries take root. Local infrastructure can also be boosted, give its need for cement, reinforcing bars and galvanized iron sheets which all come from locally processed minerals.

With these additional industries deriving local metallic and non-metallic raw materials, expect the total employment to increase even more, and drive the growth of other support businesses and livelihoods, especially in the countryside.

In addition, minerals such as those we have, are vital for technology businesses like telecommunications which use metal components. If we are able to produce these locally from locally available minerals, more manufacturing jobs can be created. This, in turn, helps support other



technology-based industries.

With the recent issuance of Executive Order 130 lifting the moratorium on new order prohibiting new mineral projects, there is renewed interest in responsible mining as more mining projects are set to restart.

Implementing the necessary environmental and social safeguards under the 1995 Mining Act will be necessary to ensure that responsible mining practices are observed.

<https://mb.com.ph/2021/04/19/36-mines-to-start-operations-soon/>

With these potentials our recovery can be given a needed boost, the minerals sector therefore deserves a deeper look.

The DENRs Mines and Geosciences Bureau is the steward of our nation's mineral resources and promotes sustainable mineral resources development.

It would be a good idea to visit their website and see how the environmental and social safeguards, including post mine scenarios and health protocols can be implemented.

In future columns I will discuss other resource-based industries deserving a deeper look

Continue to stay safe everyone.



Environmentalists, church leaders to Duterte: EO 130 will bring more death and destruction in Mindanao

By [CAROLYN O. ARGUILLAS](#) - APRIL 20, 2021 7:27 PM

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 20 April) – Alarmed by President Rodrigo Duterte’s lifting of the nearly nine-year moratorium on the grant of new mineral agreements, environmentalists and church leaders urged him to reconsider the order as they expressed fear it would spell more death among farmers and fisherfolk, and further destroy Mindanao’s environment.

Executive Order 130 lifted the ban as this would allegedly usher in “significant economic benefits to the country” and support the ‘build, build, build’ and ‘Balik Probinsya’ programs of Duterte whose six-year term ends on June 30, 2022.



Mountains destroyed by mining operations loom large from a mining company's base camp in Surigao del Sur. MindaNews file photo by BONG S. SARMIENTO

“The Catholic Church, through Caritas Philippines, the Eco-Convergence and the CBCP National Laudato Si Program strongly enjoin President Duterte to reconsider the lifting of the mining moratorium,” said Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, chair of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines’ Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace, and National Director of Caritas Philippines.

A press release from Caritas Philippines also quoted Bagaforo as saying the lifting of the ban “is a sign of desperation to solve the ginormous economic gap caused by the COVID-19 pandemic” but is “unsustainable, destructive and extremely detrimental to the Filipino communities in the peripheries, and the Philippine ecology.”

Cagayan de Oro Archbishop Jose Cabantan warned “we will be facing another kind of threat to life and environment by the lifting of the ban.”

He cited, among others, the case of the Tampakan mining project in South Cotabato which is being opposed by the Diocese of Marbel.

“They really vehemently oppose mining in the area for the sake of the environment and the people, not just the residents there but those who will be affected by its destruction,” the Archbishop said. The EO, he added, “may create more ecological problems and human suffering.”

Fr. Jerome Millan, Social Action Center director of the Diocese of Marbel, said EO 130 could pave the way for Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) to proceed with its mammoth \$5.9 billion Tampakan project, Southeast Asia’s largest known undeveloped copper and gold minefield.



Gateway to base camp of Sagittarius Mines, Inc. in Tampakan, South Cotabato. MindaNews photo by BONG SARMIENTO

"(This) is a very sad development for us who are working to stop the Tampakan project," he told MindaNews.

"They're spoiling the land, they're destroying Mindanao"

In the early days of his Presidency in 2016, Duterte warned large-scale mining firms, mostly based in Metro Manila but operating in Mindanao, to stop what he said were "destructive" practices because "they're spoiling the land, they're destroying Mindanao."

In his thanksgiving party at the Crocodile Park in Davao City on June 4, 2016, Duterte said he preferred small-scale miners, banding into a cooperative, to operate the mines "and we will just support them and give it to them and give them instructions on how not to end up spoiling the land natin dito."

He also repeatedly said he was against open pit mining, the method SMI intends to employ to extract gold and copper in Tampakan.

SMI's environmental clearance certificate (ECC) was canceled by Environment Secretary Gina Lopez on February 4, 2017 but the Office of the President restored it on May 6, 2019 without the public knowing. South Cotabato reporters learned about it 14 months later, during a briefing by Omar Saikol, head of Region 12's Environmental Management Bureau, on July 9, 2020.

Saikol said they were not informed, too, on the restoration of the ECC and learned about it only when they inquired on the status of SMI's ECC.

Last month, the local government of Tampakan urged the provincial legislature to lift the ban on open-pit mining.

More flash floods, more deaths

Emma Hotchkiss, president of the CanCarMadCarLan Baywatch Foundation, Inc, in Surigao del Sur, anticipates more flash floods and a higher death toll with EO 130.

"We have been experiencing flash floods full of silt for the past three years. Our farms have been experiencing lower yields. Two mining companies' expired permits have been extended without stakeholders' consent. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), failed to protect our rights granted to us by our Constitution. Allowing the mining companies to operate illegally is a criminal act," she told MindaNews.

Hotchkiss said miners "must have been anticipating this EO since our forest have been filling up with Exploration Permit Applications as shown in the MGB Tenement Map dated February 2021."

EO 79, EO 130

Signed on April 14 and copies released on April 15, EO 130 lifted Section 4 of EO 79 which imposed in 2012 a moratorium on the grant of new mineral agreements.

President Benigno Aquino III signed EO 79 on July 6, 2012 “institutionalizing and implementing reforms in the Philippine mining sector,” including a moratorium on the grant of new mineral agreements “until a legislation rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms shall have taken effect.”



President Rodrigo Roa Duterte talks to the people after meeting with the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Emerging Infectious Diseases at the Malacañang Golf Clubhouse in Malacañang Park, Manila on April 15, 2021,. On that day, copies of EO 130 which the President signed a day earlier, were released, lifting the moratorium on mineral agreements. KING RODRIGUEZ/ PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO

According to Duterte’s EO 130, Section 48 of RA 10963 or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act doubled the rate of excise tax on minerals, mineral products, and quarry resources from 2% to 4%.

The EO said the DENR had conducted a “thorough review of the regulatory framework of the mining industry and has in place additional rules, regulations, and policies providing for and enhancing environmental safeguards to ensure that mining operations observe environmental protection.”

The EO also said the country has tapped “less than 5% of its mineral resources endowment to date” and that in addition to “ushering significant economic benefits to the country,” the mining industry can support government projects, such as the Build, Build, Build Program, by providing raw materials for the construction and development of other industries; and the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa program, by increasing employment opportunities in remote rural areas where there are mining activities, thereby stimulating countryside development.”

Copies of Duterte’s EO 130 were released on April 15, a full week before Earth Day on April 22, whose theme this year is “Restore Our Earth.”

‘No economic improvement’

“We are in the countryside, and we are seeing no economic improvement in the lives of the people from mining. The government has again chosen vested interests and profit over our suffering people and ecology,” Caritas Philippines quoted Bishop Bagaforo as saying.

Caritas also quoted South Cotabato Bishop Allan Casicas of the Diocese of Marbel as saying that while the Tampakan mining can potentially generate billions of export earnings, “it will also exponentially destroy the Mindanao River Basin which will severely affect nine provinces equivalent to more than 3.5 million population.”

“Environmental Trojan horse”

Dr. Jean Lindo, Secretary-General of Panalipdan Mindanao, described EO 130 as “an environmental Trojan horse.”

“What a gift to give this coming Earth Day. It is both ecocidal and ethnocidal. she said.

“While resource-scarce countries have demonstrated economic advancement that puts people in the equation of development, we are going the direction incompatible with sustainable and inclusive development. Now I am beginning to understand what ‘resource curse’ means.”



Hinatuan Island in Surigao del Norte ravaged by mining. The Hinatuan Mining Corp. operating here is among the 14 mining firms in the Caraga Region ordered closed by Environment Secretary on 1 February 2017. Photo courtesy of Sec. Lopez's Facebook page

Lindo said claims of “responsible mining” are “just greenwashing.”

“How can it be responsible when mining makes the communities more vulnerable to flooding? How can it be responsible when the implication is for communities to drink poisoned water? How can it be responsible when this means death to environmental defenders and the indigenous and peasant sector?,” she asked.

Anti-poor

Fr. Raymond Ambray, Convener of Save Our Surigao Movement and spokesperson of CaragaWatch, said Duterte's EO 130 is “a classic act of this administration's sense of priority.”

“Instead of addressing the pandemic squarely, including its economic resuscitation, the Duterte regime focused on a feigned and corrupt attempt to boost the economy under the pretense of its build, build, build program” and this lifting of the moratorium.

Ambray said the mining industry is “pro-capitalist and consequently anti-poor.” He cited Surigao del Sur where “our farmers suffer greatly in their produce due to the degradation of land ... fisherfolk in mining areas lost half of their catch due to siltation caused by mining and Lumads (Indigenous Peoples or IPs) are often displaced due to the mining operations that spawned the insurgency.

Ambray said the pandemic is “the worst of our time and yet the President's decision has worsened it all the more” because with the lifting of the moratorium, “it means more arable lands will be destroyed, more fishing sanctuary will be inundated, and more problems to come to the people whose livelihood depends on natural environment. Hence, there will be an exacerbation of future calamity of food shortage and resource war.”

“Rape of Mother Nature”

Bayan Muna's Rep. Eufemia Cullamat, a Manobo from Surigao del Sur, said lifting the moratorium will exacerbate environmental and economic crisis.

Cullamat noted that unless there are changes in the policies on mining in the country, it cannot help the economy recover. She said the meager royalties are “not enough to compensate for the extraction of tons of minerals from our land, the poisoning of the waterways and the seas from the waste tailings, the loss of livelihood and homes in the mining areas.”

Cullamat said the Mining Act of 1995 is 26 years old but it has not made the communities near the mine sites prosper. Instead, life has become more difficult for farmers and Indigenous Peoples (IPs). She said Duterte's “regalo” (gift) on Earth Day is “kalapastangan sa inang kalikasan” (rape of Mother Nature).



No prior consultations

In a statement, Bantay Kita, a Quezon City-based coalition of civil society organizations advocating transparency and accountability in the extractive industry, said it is "greatly dismayed and disheartened" because EO 130 took many stakeholders "by surprise and to our knowledge was issued without prior consultation with relevant stakeholders."

The group said citing the increase in excise tax from 2% to 4% under the TRAIN law to justify lifting the moratorium is "not the type of rationalization of existing revenue sharing schemes" contemplated by EO 79.



EFFECTS OF MINING. This is how massive mining operations look like from the air. Taken above the municipality of Carrascal in Surigao del Sur on Tuesday, 7 Oct 2014. MindaNews photo by ERWIN MASCARINAS

"Reforms in the fiscal regime of mining such as an increase in mineral royalty payments, the imposition of windfall gain tax, and the scrapping of unnecessary incentives should be enacted for a more fair economic contribution from the extractive industry" before even considering the lifting of the ban, Bantay Kita said, adding reforms in the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 are urgently needed to ensure "proper management and governance of our mineral resources, address social justice and environmental mining issues, and fully respect the rights of local communities, indigenous peoples, and local government units to approve or disapprove mineral extraction."

The group also called on the DENR and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to conduct a comprehensive review of existing mining contracts and agreements and that the review "should include genuine stakeholder consultations with local government units and mining-affected communities."

It also urged the Department of Finance and DENR to "actively support legislation rationalizing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms that are fair and equitable, considering the one-time nature of mineral resource extraction" and called on President Duterte to "reconsider EO 130 and declare as urgent reforms in the mining fiscal regime to ensure a more equitable, transparent, and fair revenue sharing scheme and mechanisms."

Sustainable development

In Davao City, Atty. Mark Peñalver, Executive Director of the Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS), said the lifting of the moratorium "goes against the very mandate of our Constitution that the State should protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology."

He noted that one of the justifications for the ban is that it can support the "build, build, build" program of the government but "this does not agree with the development direction that we should be taking, i.e. sustainable development. We cannot just promote economic prosperity at the expense of our environment and our people."



No prior consultations

“You cannot expect a sustained economic prosperity if our environment is destroyed or left behind. Sustainable development requires the nexus of economics and environmental protection,” he said.

Peñalver also cited the Mining Industry Statistics released by the Mines and Geo-sciences Bureau on May 29, 2020 showing that the mining industry contributes less than 1% to the Philippine gross domestic product and less than 1% to employment. *(Carolyn O. Arguillas with reports from Bong Sarmiento and Antonio L. Colina IV)*



Cebu's dolomite keeps Manila Bay beach white

By: [Dale G. Israel](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:35 AM April 21, 2021



REPLENISHMENT Heavy equipment are used to dump fresh dolomite sand on an artificial beach in Manila Bay along Roxas Boulevard in Manila on April 13. The recent sand shipment from Alcoy town in Cebu province has been approved by Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia on the request of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu. —GRIG C.MONTEGRANDE

CEBU CITY—Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia has confirmed that the shipment of crushed dolomite that was recently poured on an artificial beach in Manila Bay came from the mountains of Alcoy town in the southern portion of the province.

Despite a ban on the domestic sale and shipment of dolomite sand from Alcoy, Garcia said she allowed the transport of 8,600 cubic meters of dolomite sand and 6,600 cubic meters of dolomite pebbles to finish the Manila Bay rehabilitation project on the request of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

At a press conference on Monday, Garcia clarified that she did not lift the cease-and-desist order (CDO) she issued against the sale and shipment of dolomite in the country.

Gov's order

"We did not want the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) to be caught in the middle for that project. I won't take part in the dolomite debate. If that was given clearance, then, we will allow [its transport]. So we allowed [the shipment] but at a very specific volume," she said.

"I did not lift that (CDO). We gave an exception upon the request of Secretary Cimatu because they needed to finish the Manila Bay project," she added.

Garcia earlier issued a CDO to Philippine Mining Service Corp. (PMSC) and Dolomite Mining Corp. for selling dolomite as a substitute to sand and gravel in the domestic market, which is not covered by their permits.



Gwen Garcia — FACEBOOK PHOTO



In Garcia's Executive Order No. 25, she also cited the possible "irreversible" ecological damage arising from the quarrying of dolomite. "The extraction of dolomite minerals from Alcoy and the consequential damage it will cause the terrestrial environment of Cebu Island violate the Cebuanos' constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature," it read.

Rodel Bontuyan, provincial environment and natural resources officer, said 3 metric tons of dolomite sand were shipped to Manila in February and another 3 MT in March.

He said another shipment was set this month but its volume had yet to be determined. Garcia said PMSC, which processes the crushed dolomite rocks, had yet to pay the P1.9 billion in taxes it owed the province since 2012. INQ



SMC, gov't to start Pasig River cleanup

posted April 20, 2021 at 10:10 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Preparations for a historic effort to clean up the Pasig River, to be fully funded by San Miguel Corporation and jointly undertaken with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works and Highways are now in full swing, with the first intensive studies on the riverbed currently underway, the company reported.

SMC is looking to remove 600,000 metric tons of waste per year from the Pasig River, with the actual cleanup to start in May.

SMC president Ramon Ang said the company has already completed the initial bathymetric survey of the Pasig River, from the Pandacan, Manila area going upstream. Further studies of the Manila Bay to Pandacan area are also now underway, using new equipment the company acquired.

Bathymetry is the study of the ocean, lake, or river floors, to determine their topography and characteristics underwater. The studies are the first to be done for these sections of the Pasig River.

"This is a very important environmental effort, and we want to do it right. Cleaning up the Pasig River has been a dream for many Filipinos, even our older generations, so we want to make sure our plan is strategic and effective. While we will use science and utilize modern technology, this project can only succeed with the cooperation of all stakeholders," Ang said.

"We are grateful for the support of (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu and (DPWH) Secretary Mark Villar. They will be key to making this project a success. Their expertise and ability to mobilize support from many stakeholders are vital to this initiative," he added.

Ang said the company recently took delivery of a marine echo sounder, a hydrographic survey equipment that uses sonar to determine the depths of water, by sending acoustic waves into the water.

Apart from bathymetric survey, SMC said it is also looking to conduct a soil test from Manila Bay to Pandacan, every 400 meters. The company has also coordinated with the DPWH to request its consultants to conduct its own hydrographic study and dredging plan.

"According to the DPWH, there have been no previous studies or dredging plans for the Pasig River near the Manila Bay. There were previous studies with JICA but that was for the area near Marikina river. So this is a historic effort. With the government and private sector working together, combining our efforts, resources, and technical know-how, I'm sure we will succeed in cleaning up Pasig River," Ang said.

Apart from the studies, Ang relayed that the draft memorandum of agreement between SMC and the DENR is now undergoing review, with DPWH also a signatory, in order to formalize the formation of a joint venture between SMC and the government agencies.

Ang said that apart from the survey equipment, SMC has also acquired equipment specifically for the Pasig River cleanup. These include a Cutter Suction Dredger and 800 metric ton hopper barge capable of removing 50,000 metric tons of silt and solid waste per month, or a total of 600,000 metric tons per year.

The company is also acquiring an amphibious excavator for dredging shallow waters and for river widening.

Currently, SMC is undertaking another massive and historic river cleanup project—its P1 billion initiative to dredge the 27-kilometer Tullahan-Tinajeros River system.

Earlier this month, or less than a year since SMC started work on that project, SMC reported dredging a total of 168,000 metric tons of waste from the Tullahan. It is set to double its daily dredging capacity to 1,500 metric tons per day. The project is aimed at helping mitigate flooding in Valenzuela, Navotas, Malabon, Quezon City, and Bulacan.

SMC's Pasig River cleanup project is part of its P95 billion project to build the Pasig River Expressway, an elevated toll road along the banks of the Pasig, which will connect the east and west sides of Metro Manila, from R-10 road in Manila to Edsa and C-5.

The project is seen to decongest traffic in Rizal, Cainta, and Marikina. It will also provide easier access to the central business districts of Makati, Ortigas, and Bonifacio Global City, and also connect to the Skyway system.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/352377>



Pasig River cleanup to start in May

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 20, 2021 4:18:54 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 20) — Preparations for the Pasig River cleanup project are underway with San Miguel Corporation, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works and Highways working together in a bid to extract 600,000 metric tons of waste per year.

A statement from SMC on Tuesday said the first intensive studies on the riverbed are ongoing, with the actual cleanup to begin in May.

The initial bathymetric survey, or the study of the river floor, has been finished. Further studies of the Manila Bay to Pandacan area are also now underway, added the statement.

"This is a very important environmental effort, and we want to do it right. Cleaning up the Pasig River has been a dream for many Filipinos, even our older generations, so we want to make sure our plan is strategic and effective. While we will use science and utilize modern technology, this project can only succeed with the cooperation of all stakeholders," said SMC President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Ang.

A soil test for every 400 meters from Manila Bay to Pandacan is also being eyed, the statement said.

Apart from the studies, Ang relayed that the draft memorandum of agreement between SMC and the DENR is now undergoing review, with DPWH also a signatory, to formalize the formation of a joint venture between SMC and the government agencies.

The cleanup of the Pasig River is in line with SMC's proposed 95.4 billion plan to construct the Pasig River Expressway.

SMC is also part of the dredging operations along the [Tullahan River](#) to further support current flood mitigation measures in the cities of Navotas, Malabon and Valenzuela before the start of the rainy season.

Tagalog News: Mga Tarlakenyo, hinikayat na makiisa sa pagdiriwang ng Earth Month

By Gabriela Liana Barela Published on April 20, 2021

LUNGSOD NG TARLAC, Abril 20 (PIA) -- Inaanyayahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources o DENR ang mga Tarlakenyo na makiisa sa selebrasyon ng Month of the Planet Earth ngayong Abril.

Layunin ng tema ngayong taon na "Doing Our Fair Share to Restore the Earth" na mahikayat ang bawat mamayan na gawin ang kanilang gampanin sa pangangalaga sa kapaligiran at likas na yaman.

Sa panayam kay Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Celia Esteban, binigyang diin niya na responsibilidad ng hindi lamang isa kundi ng lahat ang pabibigay pansin pangangalaga ng kapaligiran.

Aniya, kinikilala ng tema ngayong taon ang maaring magandang idulot ng bawat isang indibidwal sa pananatili ng kaayusan sa kanyang tinitirhan maging sa simpleng paraan.

Dagdag pa niya, isa rin itong paalala na mayroon pa ring pagkakataon na maisalba ang kalagayan ng ating planeta.



Si Department of Environment and Natural Resources Tarlac Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Celia Esteban. (Gabriela Liana Barela/PIA 3)

Sa kabila ng pandemyang dulot ng COVID-19, magpapatuloy ang mga aktibidad ng DENR para sa Earth Day sa Huwebes, Abril 22. Kabilang na rian ang mga tree planting activities.

Ani Esteban, limitado o simple ang mga tree planting activities ngayong taon sapagkat hindi pa pinahihintulutan ang maramihang pagpupulong.

Taon-taon nagpapabunga ng mahigit isang milyon na seedlings ang DENR Tarlac na kanilang itinatanim sa mga upland areas o burned areas ng probinsya.

Aniya, namimigay ang kanilang opisina ng libreng seedlings sa mga indibidwal na nais magtanim ng puno sa kani-kaniyang bakuran. (CLJD/GLSB-PIA 3)



Cleaning up ahead of Earth Day

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 20 2021 04:04 PM | Updated as of Apr 20 2021 04:05 PM



Bakawan warriors from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) collect trash and marine debris at the Las Piñas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA) on Tuesday, two days before the observance of Earth Day 2021. Celebrated annually on April 22 since 1970, Earth Day aims to raise awareness on the state of the planet and encourage action towards environmental protection.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/multimedia/photo/04/20/21/bakawan-warriors-clean-up-earth-day?fbclid=IwAR28HU-UdXd2NQRSrhfT1iZBqWCj0-1ZRbn1YpV5PK4TVm0tvL1aNCWjDfgs>

DENR reports discovery of new snout beetle species in Davao

ABS-CBN News

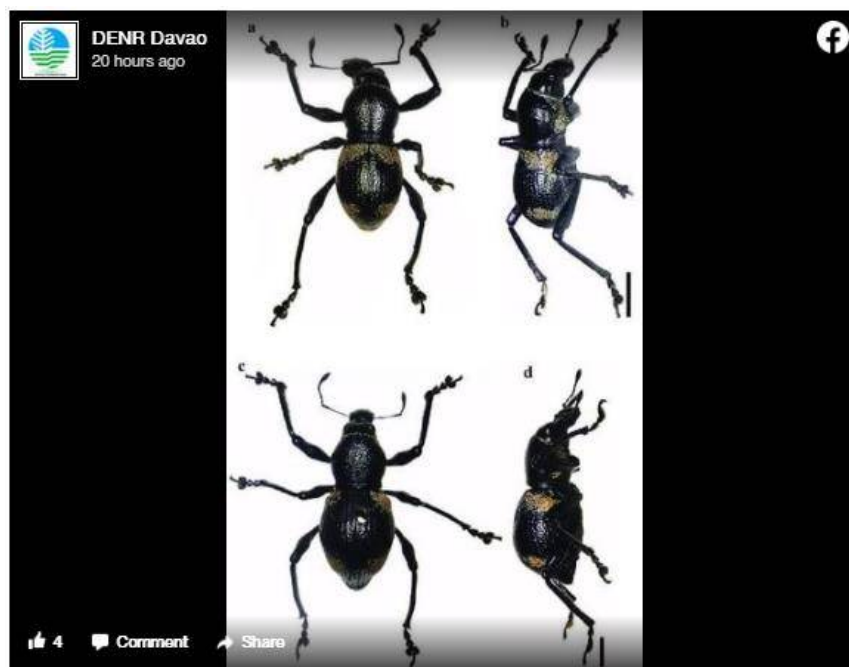
Posted at Apr 21 2021 03:39 AM



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Davao has reported the discovery of a new beetle species.

According to Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) in Davao Oriental, the insect is a snout beetle with bronze scale markings. It was named *Metapocyrtus bronsi* sp. nov.

The discovery is a result of a biodiversity research conducted by scientists and researchers from Central Mindanao University, the DENR's long-time conservation partner, the agency said in its [Facebook page](#).



Researchers said that the flightless weevil is one of hundreds of species under the genus *Metapocyrtus*.

This beetle differs from others because of the yellow gold to bronze scale markings with green to blue scales scattered at the edge of the markings in elytra and pronotum and legs entirely black.

“Under the insect order Coleoptera (Beetles), there are currently two site endemic species in Mt. Hamiguitan, first is *Colilodion colongi*, and the latest, the *Metapocyrtus bronsi*,” said Clint Michael Cleofe, a MHRWS-based DENR conservationist.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/21/21/denr-reports-discovery-of-new-snout-beetle-species-in-davao>



New species of beetle found in Mt. Hamiguitan

Published April 20, 2021, 12:24 PM

by [Zea Capistrano](#)

DAVAO CITY – A new species of snout beetle was found in Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 11 said on Tuesday, April 20.



In a statement, the DENR Davao said the snout beetle species collected in Mt. Hamiguitan has “bronze scale markings, thus named *Metapocyrtus bronsi* sp. nov.”

“The researchers said that this flightless weevil is one of the hundreds of species under the genus *Metapocyrtus*. But these new beetles differ from all the others because of the yellow gold to bronze scale markings with green to blue scales scattered at the edge of the markings in elytra and pronotum and legs entirely black,” The DENR said.

Clint Michael Cleofe, a MHRWS-based DENR conservationist added that “under the insect order Coleoptera (Beetles), there are currently two site endemic species in Mt.

Hamiguitan, first is *Colilodion colongi*, and the latest, the *Metapocyrtus bronsi*.”

The DENR also said that the discovery of the new species is a result of the biodiversity research conducted by the scientists and researchers from the Central Mindanao University (CMU).



New beetle species found on Mt. Hamiguitan

By ANTONIO L. COLINA IV -APRIL 20, 2021 8:32 PM

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 20 April) – Scientists from Central Mindanao University (CMU) in Bukidnon discovered a new species of snout beetle named “Metapocyrtus bronsi sp. nov.” on Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) in Davao Oriental.



The newly discovered species of beetle named “Metapocyrtus bronsi sp. nov.” discovered on Mt Hamiguitan in Davao Oriental. (Photo courtesy of DENR-Davao)

In a statement released on Tuesday, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Davao said the newly discovered weevils, which are endemic to Mt. Hamiguitan, were found settling on the leaves of ferns in the buffer zone of the mountain.

Mt. Hamiguitan is a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage site after its inscription on June 23, 2014.

It said the beetle is one of the hundreds of species under the genus Metapocyrtus. The newly discovered beetles are characterized by its “yellow gold to bronze scale markings with green to blue scales scattered at the edge of the markings in elytra and pronotum and legs entirely black,” according to the agency.

It said that the discovery was a result of the biodiversity research conducted by the scientists and researchers of CMU, a long-time conservation partner of the agency.

Aside from “Metapocyrtus bronsi sp. nov.”, Clint Michael Cleofe, a MHRWS-based DENR conservationist, said Mt. Hamiguitan has another endemic species of beetle called “Colilodion colongi.”

It said that researchers are calling for the conservation of MHRWS “for the perpetuity of the flora and fauna habituating in it.”

The Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, declared a protected area under Republic Act 9303 (Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary Act of 2004), measures 16,923 hectares covering Mati City and the municipalities of San Isidro and Governor Generoso.

Recorded species on Mt. Hamiguitan are 963 species of flora and 440 species of fauna, 341 of which are endemic to the Philippines. The plants include 729 angiosperms, 27 conifers, 164 ferns and allies, 17 mosses, 13 liverworts, and 13 lichens while the known fauna include 15 species of non-flying mammals, 11 species of flying mammals, 108 species of birds, 33 species of reptiles, 18 species of frogs, 142 species of butterflies, 31 species of dragonflies and damselflies, 46 species of spiders, four species of earthworms, 15 species of nematodes, and 17 species of freshwater fish. (Antonio L. Colina IV / MindaNews)

Source: <https://www.mindanews.com/top-stories/2021/04/new-beetle-species-found-on-mt-hamiguitan/>



56 more baby sea turtles released into Sarangani Bay

By Richelyn Gubalani [April 20, 2021, 5:58 pm](#)



BACK TO THE SEA. Photo shows some of the 56 Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) hatchlings that were released into the Sarangani Bay on Monday (April 19, 2021) by personnel from the Municipal and Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Glan town (Cenro-Glan), Sarangani province. The sea turtles were found by a concerned resident emerging from a nesting site in Purok Pinaghiusa, Barangay Burias. (Photo courtesy of Cenro-Glan)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Environment workers released into the sea on Monday afternoon some 56 more sea turtle hatchlings that emerged from a nesting site in a coastal village in Glan, Sarangani province.

Dr. Rosalinda Cortez, head of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro)-Glan, said in a report on Tuesday the Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) turtles made their way into the Sarangani Bay hours after hatching along the shores of Purok Pinaghiusa, Barangay Burias.

She said a concerned citizen, Randy Peralta, noticed the emergence of the hatchlings at the site and immediately reported the matter to Bantay Dagat member Gildo Villorente.

Villorente then relayed the report to Cenro-Glan for proper assistance and other necessary interventions, she added.

Cortez said a team from their office and the Glan Municipal Environment and Natural Resources office went to the site and helped in the proper handling of the sea turtle hatchlings.

The release was witnessed by residents and Barangay Burias officials led by chairman Venancio Wata.

"Our Olive Ridley sea turtles are important to our ecosystem. Their existence is an important indicator of a balanced and healthy marine life," Cortez said.

The release of the newly-hatched Olive Ridley turtles was the second in Barangay Burias this month and the third in Glan since February.

On April 1, some 80 hatchlings were also found and later released to the sea in Sitio Kimangayao, which is adjacent to the Burias Pawikan Hatchery in the same village.

At least 94 baby turtles also made their way home into the Sarangani Bay on Feb. 10 from the shores of Purok Islam, Barangay Glan Padidu.

Cortez said they are continually educating residents in the coastal barangays of Glan and the neighboring municipalities on the importance of marine wildlife, especially the sea turtles, to raise awareness on achieving a balanced ecosystem.



She said marine turtle species, including the Olive Ridley, are considered endangered based on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order No. 2019-09 or the “Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories.” (PNA)



4 giant pawikan nalambat

By Abante News Online — Last updated Apr 20, 2021

METRO



Photo courtesy of Alden Ricardos Pains



PINAKAWALAN ng mga mangingisda ang nahuli nilang apat malalaking pawikan sa karagatan na sakop ng Brgy. Camindoroan San Juan, Ilocos Sur.

Sa imbestigasyon, sinabi ni Barangay Chairman Gaudelio delos Santos, na nasa 60 kilo ang dalawang malalaking pawikan na nahuli, habang ang dalawang mas maliit ay 10 hanggang 15 kilo.

Sinabi ng mga mangingisda na aksidente nilang nahuli ang mga ito.

Wala namang anumang sugat ang mga pawikan at agad din silang pinakawalan sa utos na rin ng tanggapan ng DENR sa bayan.

Makailang ulit na rin na nakahuli ang mga mangingisda ng pawikan sa lugar na agad din naman nilang pinakakawalan. (Kiko Cueto)

Bislig City gov't plans tourist attraction featuring captured crocodile

Ronron Calunsod, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 20 2021 04:28 PM

MANILA - The city government of Bislig in Surigao del Sur plans to create a tourist attraction featuring the 11-foot saltwater crocodile that was captured last week, its mayor said on Monday.

“After ma-rehabilitate kini nga buaya, kini nga reptile, ibalik na diri sa ato sa Bislig. So, ato ning himuon nga mura’g tourist attraction ba,” [Mayor Florencio Garay](#) said of the animal which is a critically endangered species.

(After this crocodile, this reptile is rehabilitated, it will be brought back here to Bislig. So we will make this as a tourist attraction.)

The male crocodile, estimated to weigh between 250 and 300 kilos, was accidentally spotted and captured in the city’s Barangay Pamanlinan late night on April 12. It was the first crocodile captured in the locality, according to City Administrator Romulo Garay.

It was subsequently brought to a wildlife resource center in Kapalong, Davao del Norte since Bislig City has no facility yet for crocodiles.

The mayor cited how the local government of Bunawan in neighboring Agusan del Sur province also turned “Lolong”, once the “world’s largest crocodile in captivity”, into a tourist attraction.

The giant saltwater crocodile, measuring 20.24 feet or 6.17 meters, was captured in 2011 but died on Feb. 10, 2013.

“Parehas didto, kung nakahinumdum mo didto sa Bunawan nga aduna’y buaya dito sa, kadtong ginganla’g Lolong. Mao pud ni atong himuon diri. Mao gani, duna nay area nga atong, diin atong ibutang ning buaya dinhi, kay ilabi na nga we are also planning to have a river cruise, nga kini usa kini, part kini sa usa sa mga attraction unya diha sa maong lugar,” Mayor Garay said.

(What we plan to do here will be similar to what Bunawan did with the crocodile named Lolong that was captured there. We have an area here where we can place this newly captured crocodile, especially that we are also planning to have a river cruise. This will be part of the attraction in that place.)

The city tourism office of Bislig said Tuesday there is no set location yet for the said crocodile once it is returned since the Department of Environment and Natural Resources “has yet to do necessary assessment and management plan.”

The DENR officer in Bislig City said the planned site or facility that will house the captured crocodile must satisfy the requirements of the agency’s Biodiversity Management Bureau.

Nathaniel Racho told ABS-CBN News by phone on Tuesday that a rescue center or facility must have features almost similar to a crocodile’s natural habitat.

He recalled the death of “Lolong” while in the eco-park that was built for him.

The DENR had said initial findings from a necropsy performed on the crocodile suggested that he may have died of pneumonia and cardiac arrest. An agency official said lesions were found in Lolong’s major organs such as heart, lung, kidney and intestines, indicating possible chronic infection that may have been aggravated by stress.



DENR CENRO Bislig

last Wednesday



RESCUED SALTWATER CROCODILE (*Crocodylus porosus*) WITHIN THE AOR OF CENRO BISLIG

The saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) is one of the most critically endangered species in the world and is nationally protected by law since 2001 which is the Republic Act No. 9147 also known as "The Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act".

On April 12, 2021 at around ten-thirty in the evening, a concern citizen called confirming the presence of crocodile moving near at the fishpond in Ba... [See More](#)



👍 97 💬 8 ➦ 118

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/20/21/bislig-city-govt-plans-tourist-attraction-featuring-captured-crocodile?fbclid=IwAR3ESZZPWPT3zPieI8TeApPDrnPeaQASIN8_MNMKoYrocndvHxi-tqavLeg



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GMA Public Affairs · Follow

April 19 at 5:52 PM · 🌐

ISANG CELEBES BLACK APE, NAKITA SA ISANG PIGGERY?

ISANG CELEBES BLACK APE, NAKITA SA ISANG PIGGERY?

Hindi nakikita sa Pilipinas ang Celebes Black Ape, pero sa isang pambihirang pagkakataon, bigla itong lumitaw at ilang araw itong nakita sa isang babuyan sa Alfonso, Cavite.

Nang puntahan ni Doc Nielsen ang lugar, wala na ito roon at hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa nahahanap.

Kung sakaling makita ang Celebes Black Ape na nasa video, ipagbigay-alam ito kaagad sa Born to Be Wild sa pamamagitan ng pagpapadala ng mensahe sa Facebook Page— para mai-tum over sa DENR ang naturang Celebes Black Ape. See Less



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CDC set to give nod on Clark Water plan

By Jordeene B. Lagare

April 21, 2021

CLARK Water Corp. (CWC) can proceed with its plans to upgrade a wastewater treatment plant subject to reduced tariff adjustment.

The Clark Development Corp. (CDC) and Clark Water reached “amenable terms of agreement” for the latter to carry out its compliance action plan.

State-owned CDC is slated to issue the notice to proceed to Clark Water on the condition that the tariff increase will be capped at P4.35 per cubic meter, which will be implemented on a staggered basis in the next four years.

As part of the terms agreed upon, the sewage treatment plant capacity in the Freeport shall be at 25 million liters per day, in compliance with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ Department Administrative Order 2016-08.

The final tariff adjustment, which may be lower than the P4.35 per cubic meter, will also be determined by CDC and CWC after the review and evaluation of the cost estimates and detailed engineering design to be submitted by CWC.

CDC indicated the future proposal of wastewater rate increase will only be considered if such increase is due to the proposed increase in the facility’s capacity and shall be subject to separate negotiations in accordance with the terms of concession agreement.

In a letter to Clark Water, CDC underscored the need to maintain “balance among all stakeholders and accept a tariff that is just for all locators in the Clark Freeport Zone with the end view of maintaining a competitive environment.”

A CDC official, who is not authorized to speak on the matter, said “the CDC is steadfast in its objective of protecting its locators and to ensure that Clark remains competitive. We don’t want our locators to bear additional burdens especially in the current situation.”



CDC, CWC reach agreement on action plan, tariff rates in Clark

April 20, 2021

THE Clark Development Corporation (CDC) and the Clark Water Corporation (CWC) have reached amenable terms of agreement on the implementation of the approved Compliance Action Plan (CAP) of CWC, which is required under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2016-08.

After CWC signified and conformed to the terms and conditions of CDC on the implementation of the CAP, the state-owned corporation is set to issue a Notice to Proceed (NTP) to CWC to carry out its approved plan.

The terms stipulated in the agreement aims to assure that the cost competitiveness in doing business in this Freeport will be upheld.

In a letter by CDC to CWC, the state-owned firm underscored the need to maintain “balance among all stakeholders and accept a tariff that is just for all locators in the Clark Freeport Zone with the end view of maintaining a competitive environment,” the CDC said.

As part of the terms agreed upon, the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) capacity in the Freeport shall be at 25 MLD compliant with the DAO 2016-08 standards, while the water and wastewater tariff adjustment is capped at P4.35 per cubic meter inclusive of all related incidental and miscellaneous charges.

The final tariff adjustment, which may be lower than the P4.35 per cubic meter, will also be determined by CDC and CWC after the review and evaluation of the cost estimates and Detailed Engineering Design (DED) that will be submitted by CWC. Accordingly, the tariff increases will be implemented on a staggered basis in the next four years.

Meanwhile, on future proposal of increase on wastewater rates, it was specified that it will only be considered if such increase is due to the proposed increase in STP capacity and shall be subject to separate negotiations in accordance with the terms of Concession Agreement and under the principle that the chosen technology is considered to be the most cost-effective option available.

The execution of the CAP is part of the requirements under the Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016 adopted and promulgated by DENR. (PR)



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



The Manila Times

15h · 🌐

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Manila Bay Rehabilitation

Workers dump more dolomite sand in Manila Bay on Monday, April 19, 2021, as part of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation project.

📷 J. GERARD SEGUIA



👍❤️😄 1.3K

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Green EDSA Movement to launch virtually April 22

posted April 20, 2021 at 11:10 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

The Green EDSA Movement will be launched in a virtual ceremony on April 22, 2021, the global celebration of Earth Day, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Government and private sector leaders will declare their solidarity with the GEM to transform EDSA into an iconic tree-lined Greenway, giving priority to people mobility over vehicle mobility and a greener environment to address climate change.

“We are deeply committed to our civic duty to protect the environment, which enables us to lead lives in continuing socio-economic prosperity, ecological balance and general well-being,” said Eduardo H. Yap, chairman of GEM’s core convenors group.

“We aim to transform EDSA through robust advocacy for public-private partnership in carrying out Green improvement projects.”

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III will deliver the keynote message. He recently called for “strong collective action against the climate crisis”, which is causing devastating damage to lives and property from stronger typhoons, hotter summers and rising sea levels. His call is consistent with the exhortation of the United Nations to declare a climate emergency.

Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade will deliver a message of support. He initiated the transformation of EDSA with reforms in mass transportation, particularly the full rehabilitation of the MRT3, new busway on inner lanes and bus system reforms for people mobility in conformance with the national transportation plan. These reforms have created the opportunity to transform EDSA further with walkable tree-lined sidewalks and bike lanes.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chairman Benhur Abalos, together with Mayors Abigail Binay of Makati, Carmencita Abalos of Mandaluyong City and Joy Belmonte of Quezon City are expected to deliver messages of solidarity and their respective green initiatives.

The MMDA is in charge of EDSA and will be a key player in its transformation and beautification under a sustainable green program with measurable targets and a timetable that the GEM will advocate and support.

As part of the launching ceremony, SM Development Corporation will plant six balitbitan trees along the long EDSA frontage of its new huge FAME condominium complex.

Aboitiz Equity Ventures Green Program head Manuel Lozano will deliver an inspirational message of support. Notable also is the participation of Energy Development Corp., which has signified that it will lend its deep botanical and tree planting expertise to the GEM and donate seeds of special carbon-absorbing trees for the greening of EDSA.

Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban Jr. leads the roster of advisers in the advisory panel of the GEM.

Supporting the GEM are the largest business, professional, civic and green organizations, in the country, among others: the Management Association of the Philippines, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Makati Business Club, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Employers Confederation of the Philippines, PhilExports and the Move-As-One Coalition.

Francisco Ed Lim, FINEX president, will speak on these organizations support to the GEM.

The core convenors composing the steering committee are Eduardo “Eddie” Yap, chairman, Evelyn Singson, vice chairperson. The others are Emmanuel Bonoan, Herminio Coloma Jr., Santiago F. Dumlao Jr., Baltazar Endriga, Margarita Floirendo, Maan Hontiveros, Alfredo B. Parungao, Anton San Diego and Marife Zamora.

Alcala town builds 'green wall'

By Oliver T. Baccay Published on April 20, 2021

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan, April 20 (PIA) -- The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Alcala is pushing on a massive tree planting activity to build the Green Wall of Alcala project.



Residents of Alcala town join in the tree planting activities along the riverbanks. (LGU Alcala)

Alcala Mayor Cristina I. Antonio said that they are now growing seedlings of native Philippine tree species which will be planted along the riverbanks and in lowland areas of the town as a measure to cushion flood impacts in the communities and to people's livelihoods.

She said that the trees will be specifically planted along the banks of the Cagayan River and the Pared River, and likewise along the town's highways.

"This is a vegetation belt which will serve as our protection against the severe impacts of flooding," Antonio said.

Last year, the municipality of Alcala was the most affected among the towns of Cagayan province, which incurred huge damages on agriculture, infrastructure, and properties.

Aside from this, the officialdom of Alcala also supports the dredging of the Cagayan River to remove siltation on the riverbed which causes severe swelling of flood waters during the rainy season.

"We have bottlenecks in some parts of the Cagayan River, which need to be dredged to allow smooth flow whenever there is heavy downpour of rains in our area," the mayor stated.

She further said that they continuously engage their constituents to help mitigate impacts of disasters and to build resilient communities. (MDCT/OTB/PIA 2-Cagayan)

WWF-PH Statement on the recently-submitted Philippine NDC

by [Village Connect](#) about 12 hours ago

WWF-PH Statement on the recently-submitted Philippine NDC



The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines welcomes the submission of the Philippines' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last 15 April 2021, but reminds the government to 'act swiftly, with higher ambition and with a great sense of urgency.'

"The country's official commitment to reduce emissions by 75% by the year 2030 from the agriculture, waste, industry, transport, and energy sectors highlights the importance being given toward climate action. Achieving the 75% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is anchored on enhanced access to climate finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building."

"The value of ensuring ecosystem integrity, of using traditional knowledge, education, and public awareness, and of meaningful inclusive collaborative participation in climate action are specifically recognized therein. Moreover, the Philippine NDC expresses the challenges and adaptation needs of the country to address climate change while pursuing a low carbon, sustainable, and climate, and disaster-resilient development."

"While we appreciate the commitments made by the Philippine government, we also note with disappointment that only 2.71% of the 75% emission reduction target remains unconditional, while the remaining 72.29% is conditional. This gives much space for the possibility that the NDC targets will not be met in full. Climate action must be among our top priorities, as the lives of millions of Filipinos will continue to be affected otherwise.

"What is being asked of all countries during the Decade of Action is higher ambition in the fight against climate change. This ambition is not entirely reflected in the way the Philippine NDC has been structured, with more details and clarity needed to articulate how targets can be achieved. Ultimately, the Philippine NDC has to deliver against the 1.5C ambition of the Paris Agreement.

"We see that plans and policies are in place that allow for higher ambition in the NDC, and that can lead to a significant cut in our emissions by 2030. We can hardcode emissions reduction into our national plans, so long as we have the political will to meet our commitments. With the NDC submitted, the government must set in motion the actions, policies and measures needed to attain the commitments made therein.

"Even as we remind the government of the importance of prioritizing climate action, we call on all stakeholders to work together to take our commitments even further and to act upon them. We look forward to continued constructive engagement with the government, the various agencies and other stakeholders on the key aspects of the Philippine NDC and look towards its enhancement and the attainment of goals set therein.



We are running out of time in the fight against climate change, and our islands will be among the worst affected should we fail to change course now. We ask that the government act swiftly, with strong ambition, and strive to meet the 75% emission reduction in full, for the sake of all our shared futures.”

Atty. Angela Ibay, head of Climate Change and Energy Programme for WWF-Philippines, said.

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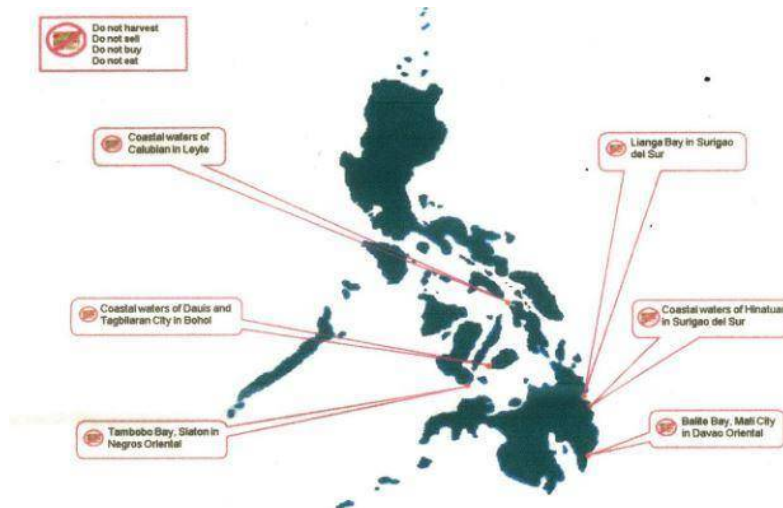
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Source: <https://www.villageconnect.com.ph/wwf-ph-statement-on-the-recently-submitted-philippine-ndc/6843>



BFAR: 6 areas found positive for paralytic shellfish poison

Published April 20, 2021 10:42pm



The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) on Tuesday evening announced that six areas have been found positive for paralytic shellfish poison that is beyond the regulatory limit.

In its shellfish bulletin No. 11, the BFAR said that all types of shellfish and acetes or alamang from the following areas are not safe for human consumption:

- Lianga Bay in Surigao del Sur
- Coastal waters of Hinatuan in Surigao del Sur
- Balite Bay, Mati City in Davao Oriental
- Tambobo Bay, Siaton in Negros Oriental
- Coastal waters of Dauis and Tagbilaran City in Bohol
- Coastal waters of Calubian in Leyte

PH logs over 21K new Covid-19 recoveries

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz **April 20, 2021, 5:00 pm**



(Infographic courtesy of DOH)

MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) Tuesday reported a total of 21,664 new recoveries from the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), pushing the country's total recovery count to 809,959 or 85 percent of all infections.

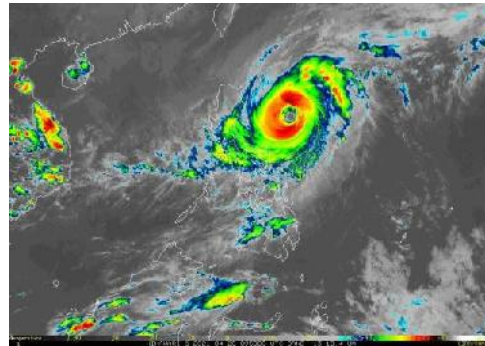
In its daily Covid-19 bulletin, the DOH reported 7,379 new infections, bringing the country's active cases to 127,006 or 13.3 percent of a total of 953,106 cases since the beginning of the pandemic.

Of the active cases, it said the majority at 96.9 percent have mild symptoms, followed by the asymptomatic at 1.3 percent, those with severe symptoms at 0.7 percent, those in critical condition at 0.6 percent, and those with moderate symptoms at 0.48 percent.

It also reported 93 new deaths caused by Covid-19, with the country's total casualties now at 16,141.

Meanwhile, it said the National Capital Region's (NCR) 700 beds at intensive care units (ICU) are at 84 percent occupancy, its 3,800 isolation beds at 61 percent occupancy, its 2,200 ward beds at 70 percent occupancy, and its ventilators are at 61 percent utilization.

For the whole country, there are 1,900 beds at ICUs at 67 percent occupancy, 13,600 isolation beds at 49 percent occupancy, 6,000 ward beds at 56 percent occupancy, and 2,000 ventilators at 46 percent utilization. (PNA)



This satellite image shows Typhoon "Bising" which kept its strength on April 20, 2021, according to PAGASA. RAMMB

'Bising' to bring rain over Camarines provinces, Catanduanes, eastern Quezon

(Philstar.com) - April 20, 2021 - 8:06pm

MANILA, Philippines — PAGASA on Tuesday said heavy rainfall will prevail in the Camarines provinces, Catanduanes and in the eastern portion of Quezon as Typhoon "Bising" maintained its strength.

The weather bureau said Bising was last seen at 475 km east of Baler in Aurora and was slowly moving at a north northwestward direction.

It remains to be carrying 175 kph maximum sustained winds and gustiness of up to 215 kph.

"Under these conditions and considering the antecedent rainfall over the aforementioned areas, flooding (including flashfloods) and rain-induced landslides are highly likely to occur especially in areas identified in hazard maps as highly or very highly susceptible to these hazards," the agency said in its afternoon forecast.

Bising is seen to move northward or northwestward until Thursday and make its way out of the Philippine Area of Responsibility by Sunday.

The following areas, however, remain under **Tropical Cyclone Wind Signals**:

Signal No. 2

- Eastern portion of Cagayan (Santa Ana, Gonzaga, Baggao, Gattaran, Lal-Lo, Peñablanca, Santa Teresita, Buguey, Camalaniugan, Aparri)
- Eastern portion of Isabela (San Pablo, Maconacon, Divilacan, Ilagan, Palanan, San Mariano, Dinapigue)
- Northern portion of Aurora (Dilasag), and Catanduanes

Signal No. 1

- Batanes
- Rest of Cagayan including Babuyan Islands, the rest of Isabela, Quirino, Apayao, Kalinga
- Eastern portion of Mountain Province (Barlig, Natonin, Paracelis, Sadanga, Bontoc)
- Eastern portion of Ifugao (Banaue, Lagawe, Mayoyao, Aguineldo, Alfonso Lista, Hingyon)
- Northeastern portion of Nueva Vizcaya (Diadi)
- Central portion of Aurora (Casiguran, Dinalungan, Dipaculao, Baler)
- Eastern portion of Quezon (Calauag, Guinayangan, Tagkawayan) including Polillo Islands, Camarines Norte, and Camarines Sur



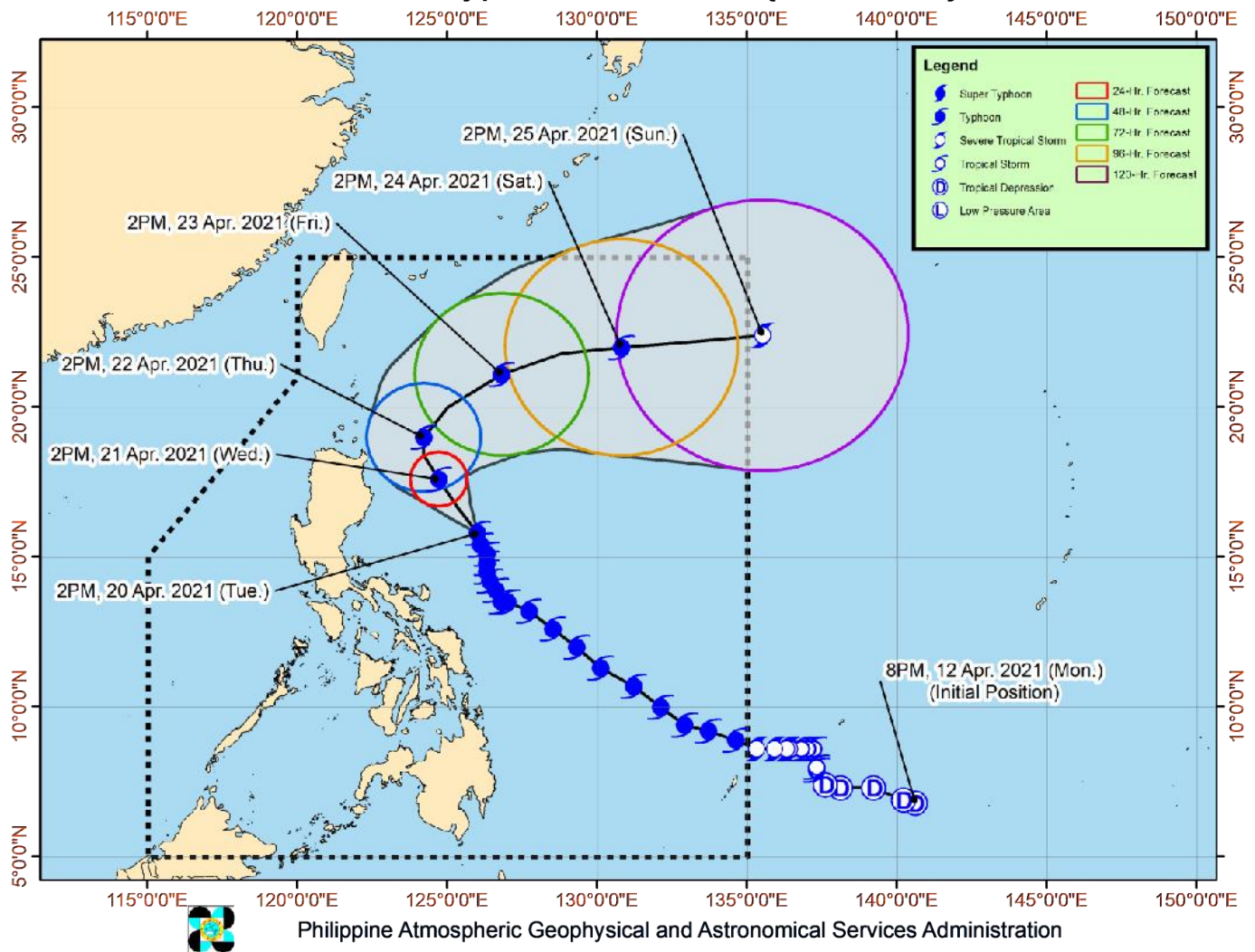
At least two people are dead in the wake of Bising, with over 50,500 individuals affected, according to disaster response officials.

The Philippine Coast Guard has reported too that over 2,000 passengers remain stranded in ports in areas affected by the typhoon.

Forecast Position

- Wednesday afternoon: 315 km East of Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
- Thursday afternoon: 290 km East of Calayan, Cagayan
- Friday afternoon: 515 km East of Itbayat, Batanes
- Saturday afternoon: 935 km East of Extreme Northern Luzon
- Sunday afternoon: 1,425 km East of Extreme Northern Luzon (Outside PAR)

Track of Typhoon "BISING" {SURIGAE}



Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/04/20/2092532/bising-bring-rain-over-camarines-provinces-catanduanes-eastern-quezon>



Duterte to China: 'Do not touch Phl oil'

I will send my grace ships to state a claim. You can be assured. If they get oil, nickel, and precious stones, that would be the time we should act on it.

Published 7 hours ago on April 21, 2021 12:20 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) [@tribunephil_MJB](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday night vowed to send warships to the West Philippine Sea (WPS) to drill for oil and other minerals should China begin to explore the area's natural resources.

In his pre-recorded address, Duterte assured the public that he would send Philippine ships in the waters to stake a claim on the area that has been frequented and controlled by the Chinese militia for many years.

China has infrastructures on the Philippine-owned Bajo de Masinloc, Subi Reef and the Mischief Reef despite its earlier assurances that it will not militarize the disputed area.

These facilities included airstrips and military facilities.

The three areas are within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and were featured in the 1734 Velarde map against China's recently devised nine-dash line claim.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) concluded that China's historic rights claims over the maritime areas inside the "nine-dash line" have no lawful effect if they exceed what's entitled to on 12 July 2016.

It was rejected by China and Taiwan.

More than 200 militia ships also occupied a large part of the water near the Julian Felipe Reef from December last year, forming a large wall of boats anchored hull-to-hull to project impenetrable ownership of the fishing grounds and sea lanes.

The Chinese flotilla stayed in the Philippine water territory until last week when the United States sent powerful American ships and their air and submarine support to accompany two Philippines ships in reclaiming control of the area.

Duterte was assailed by many fronts for his perceived inaction on the issue that presidential spokesperson Secretary Roque denied when he claimed the Chief Executive was handling the matter using "silent diplomacy".

"When we start to mine, when we start to get whatever it is that is in the bowels of the China Sea (West Philippine Sea)... our oil, I'll be there, but by that time I will send my ships there," Duterte said.

"I will send my grace ships to state a claim. You can be assured. If they get oil, nickel, and precious stones, that would be the time we should act on it," the President added.

Duterte reminded the Chinese government of their previous agreement that Manila and Beijing could only explore the area through joint oil and gas activity.

In 2019, Duterte said he would push for a joint exploration of natural resources with Beijing in the WPS for as long as Manila gets the bigger share.



“If they start drilling, I’ll ask them ‘Is that part of our agreement?’ Because if it is not part of our agreement, if you start to drill oil there, I will also drill my oil there,” he stated.

In the same speech, he admitted that he was not inclined to assert the country’s jurisdiction in the area for now.

Duterte also defended his silence over the presence of the Chinese ships within the Philippines’ EEZ, saying the country can only reclaim China-occupied areas in the WPS by force and with bloodshed.

“If we go there, really to find out and to assert jurisdiction, it would be bloody. It would result in violence that maybe we cannot win,” he said.

“The issue of the West Philippine Sea remains a question forever until such time that we can take it back. There’s no other way but war,” Duterte added.

Duterte also lashed out at critics who wanted him to confront China over the continued presence of Chinese warships at the Julian Felipe Reef, located within the Philippines’ EEZ about 175 nautical miles west of Bataraza, Palawan.

He particularly cited the purported group of 500 active and retired military officers who were allegedly plotting to oust him, as well as retired Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio who has been criticizing him for keeping mum on the maritime dispute.

In the past week, a Twitter account dubbed “Info Ops” has been posting about an alleged Viber group composed of military officers who would supposedly withdraw their support to the President if he does not take a stronger stance against China’s aggression in the WPS.

Senator Panfilo Lacson, meanwhile, said President Duterte cannot wave the white flag on WPS.

The lawmaker warned that the President could be sending a “wrong message” with his recent pronouncement that the Philippines risks bloodshed and a no-win situation against China.

He stressed that the country’s Commander-in-Chief cannot afford such error, especially implying surrender.

“He’s the leader of our country and he’s the Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces. He can think of anything and speak about anything except surrender,” Lacson said.

“Remember, we have an arbitral ruling in our favor and it’s permanent although it’s unenforceable. There are so many things to think about except surrender. We cannot wave the white flag, so to speak,” he added.

“I am not saying the President is actually raising the white flag but that’s the implication. If the officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) would take it that way, it could be disastrous to Philippine sovereignty,” he stated.

Lacson, who chairs the Senate national defense committee, said the government can build strong alliances with other countries, especially now that other nations like the US and Japan have formed united fronts against the China advance.

mje

Source: https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/04/21/do-not-touch-phl-oil/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=do-not-touch-phl-oil



US waiting for Philippines to call for help vs Chinese sea incursion: Manila envoy

Jamaine Punzalan, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 20 2021 03:57 PM



This handout satellite imagery taken on March 23, 2021 and received on March 25 from Maxar Technologies shows Chinese vessels anchored at the Julian Felipe Reef (Whitsun Reef) around 320 kilometers (175 nautical miles) west of Bataraza in Palawan in the West Philippine Sea. *Satellite image ©2021 Maxar Technologies, AFP/ Handout*

MANILA — The United States is waiting for the Philippines' call for help to push back against Chinese incursion of its territorial waters, an envoy of Manila said on Tuesday.

The Pentagon is communicating with the Philippine military and recently [deployed](#) aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt to the South China Sea, said Philippine Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez.

The West Philippine Sea is within the larger South China Sea. Some 240 ships are allegedly massing within the Philippine territorial waters.

"We are working round the clock, so to speak, in terms of being able to navigate or make sure that there's the freedom of the seas, and code of conduct that we're pushing," Romualdez said in a press briefing.

"At the same time, the United States is obviously waiting for us to call them if we need their assistance in removing or asking the vessels that are parked in our area of responsibility, our economic zone [to leave]," he added.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque, who facilitated the briefing with Romualdez, said he was "not sure" what the envoy meant.

"I don't want to put words in his mouth," he said.

Instead, Roque said the US failed to aid the Philippines when it lost features in the waterway twice, during the previous administration of former President Benigno Aquino III.

Aquino's government initiated an arbitration case against China over its standoff with the Philippines in Panatag Shoal (Scarborough Shoal) in the West Philippine Sea. A United-Nations backed court in 2016 junked Beijing's "historical" claims over the waterway.

President Rodrigo Duterte has refused to press Beijing to comply with an arbitration ruling. Instead, he sought to build an alliance with China, having been promised billions of dollars of loans and investments, much of which have yet to materialize.

But Duterte said on Monday he was prepared to send military ships in the sea to "stake a claim" over oil and mineral resources.



"I'm not so much interested now in fishing. I don't think there's enough fish to quarrel about. But when we start to mine, when we start to get whatever it is in the bowels of the China Sea, our oil, by that time I will send my grey ships there to stake a claim," Duterte said in a late night public address.

"If they start drilling oil there, I will tell China, is that part of our agreement? If that is not part of our agreement, I will also drill oil there," he said even as he reiterated he wanted to remain friends with Beijing.

Duterte "made it very clear" to China that "there is a limit to our friendship," said his spokesman.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/20/21/us-china-philippines-duterte-sea-incursion-palace-romualdez?fbclid=IwAR3h7WaeDxWzBERdzxrdGRgNS_0L8Iysvtg5qgBNmekHX8j91bETTdNY9uM



UN chief calls for real action to fight climate change

April 20, 2021, 7:01 pm



CLIMATE CHANGE. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres attends the joint hybrid press conference to launch the State of the Global Climate in 2020 Report at the UN headquarters in New York on April 19, 2021. Guterres on Monday called for specific commitments and real action to fight climate change after speaking out about the severity of the climatic disruptions that have raged on the planet. (Xinhua/Xie E)

UNITED NATIONS – United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday called for specific commitments and real action to fight climate change after speaking out about the severity of the climatic disruptions that have raged the planet.

"We must agree to a common direction of travel," the UN chief said at the joint hybrid press conference with Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization Petteri Taalas to launch the State of the Global Climate in 2020 Report.

The top UN official stressed that the next 10 years "need to be a decade of transformation."

"The United Nations is building a global coalition committed to net zero emissions -- to cover all countries, cities, regions, businesses, and financial institutions," Guterres said.

"Countries need to submit ambitious new NDCs -- the nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement -- which are their climate plans for the next 10 years. We need those commitments and plans to be backed up with concrete immediate action," he added.

Referring to the report, Guterres said that "it needs to be read by all leaders and decision-makers in the world" as this report shows that 2020 "was also another unprecedented year of extreme weather and climate disasters."

He said the cause is clear because climate disruption is "caused by human activities, human decisions, and human folly."

"The effects are disastrous," he said, adding that 2020 was 1.2 degrees Celsius hotter than pre-industrial times.

"We are getting dangerously close to the 1.5 degree Celsius limit set by the scientific community," he warned. "We are on the verge of the abyss. The six years since 2015 have been the hottest on record."

The Paris Agreement on climate change promised to limit temperature rise to as close to 1.5 degrees Celsius as possible.

On specific data, Guterres said that concentrations of the major greenhouse gases continued to climb. Carbon dioxide concentrations rose to a new high -- 410.5 parts per million, which is a 148 percent increase above pre-industrial levels.

The number of tropical cyclones globally was above average in 2020. There were 98 named tropical storms, said the secretary-general.



"This was mostly driven by high activity in the North Atlantic, which had more than double the long-term average," he said.

Guterres also talked about the widespread drought in the United States, which drove the largest wildfires ever recorded in California and Colorado, and drought in Brazil, which fueled serious wildfires in the Pantanal wetlands.

"In the Arctic, the annual minimum sea-ice extent in September 2020 was the second-lowest on record. The Greenland ice sheet lost 152 billion metric tons of ice from Sept 2019 to August 2020. Antarctica's loss of ice increased. And the rate of sea-level rise is accelerating," he elaborated.

"To avert the worst impacts of climate change, science tells us that we must limit global temperature rise to within 1.5 degrees of the pre-industrial baseline," said the secretary-general. "That means reducing global greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030 and reaching net-zero emissions by 2050."

"This must be the year for action," he stressed.

Turning to the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, Guterres said that the trillions of dollars spent on Covid-19 recovery "must be aligned with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals."

"Subsidies to polluting fossil fuels must be shifted to renewable energy," he said.

"Developed countries must lead in phasing out coal -- by 2030 in OECD countries, and 2040 elsewhere," he noted. "No new coal power plants should be built."

Guterres called on the developed countries to "deliver on climate finance for the developing world, particularly the promise of USD100 billion a year."

"Half of all climate finance from donors and multilateral and national development banks must flow to resilience and adaptation, from 20 percent today," he said.

"I count first on developed countries to deliver on climate finance and the promised 100 billion dollars a year at the G7 Summit in June," he said. "Then, I will urge the G20 countries to take on the greening of the broader financial architecture, address debt and make climate-related financial disclosure mandatory."

"This is truly a pivotal year for humanity's future. This report shows we have no time to waste," said the secretary-general. (Xinhua)



UN urges sincere commitment for climate change

By The Manila Times

April 21, 2021

BOGOR: United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called for specific commitments and real action to fight climate change after speaking out about the severity of the climatic disruptions that have raged the planet.

“We must agree to a common direction of travel,” the UN chief said at the joint hybrid press conference with Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization Petteri Taalas to launch the State of the Global Climate in 2020 Report.

“The United Nations is building a global coalition committed to net zero emissions—to cover all countries, cities, regions, businesses and financial institutions,” said the top UN official, stressing the next 10 years “need to be a decade of transformation.”

“Countries need to submit ambitious new NDCs — the nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement — which are their climate plans for the next 10 years,” he added. “We need those commitments and plans to be backed up with concrete immediate action,” said the secretary-general.

Referring to the report, Guterres said “it needs to be read by all leaders and decision-makers in the world” as this report shows that 2020 “was also another unprecedented year of extreme weather and climate disasters.”

He said the cause is clear because climate disruption is “caused by human activities, human decisions and human folly.” “The effects are disastrous,” he said, adding 2020 was 1.2 degrees Celsius hotter than preindustrial times.

“We are getting dangerously close to the 1.5-degree Celsius limit set by the scientific community,” he warned. “We are on the verge of the abyss,” he continued. “The six years since 2015 have been the hottest on record,” said the secretary-general.

The Paris Agreement on climate change promised to limit temperature rise to as close to 1.5 degrees Celsius as possible.

On specific data, Guterres said concentrations of the major greenhouse gases continued to climb. Carbon dioxide concentrations rose to a new high — 410.5 parts per million, which is a 148 percent increase above pre-industrial levels.

The number of tropical cyclones globally was above average in 2020. There were 98 named tropical storms, said the secretary-general.

“This was mostly driven by high activity in the North Atlantic, which had more than double the long-term average,” he said. Xinhua



The climate pledges of the world's top emitters

posted April 20, 2021 at 11:30 am

by [AFP](#)

Under the Paris Agreement on climate, nearly every country will have to drastically reduce their carbon emissions, and they were supposed to submit renewed plans to do so by the end of 2020.

The first raft of "nationally determined contributions" (NDCs) submitted in 2015 would put Earth on course to be at least 3 degrees Celsius hotter than pre-industrial times, a far cry from the Paris temperature cap goal of keeping warming "well below" 2C.

Under the deal's "ratchet" mechanism, signatories are required to periodically renew their emissions-cutting plans to drive more rapid decreases in emissions.

Roughly half of the countries met the 2020 deadline to do so, but many big emitters -- included the top two, China and the United States -- have yet to do so. Washington has said it will unveil its new targets this week, in anticipation of the delayed COP26 summit in Glasgow in November.

China

In its first NDC, China -- by far the largest emitter, responsible for roughly a quarter of all carbon pollution -- promised to reduce the intensity of its emissions by as much as 65 percent by 2030.

Under that scenario, it planned to reach peak emissions at the end of this decade.

In September last year, President Xi Jinping made a surprise announcement at the UN General Assembly: China plans to achieve net-zero emissions by 2060.

But the country's new five-year plan, released in March, doesn't spell out the steps to reaching this goal, nor has Beijing officially submitted its renewed NDC.

United States

The second-largest polluter, the US was one of the driving forces behind the Paris deal, with an initial commitment to cut emissions a quarter by 2025, compared with 2005 levels.

President Joe Biden wasted no time in office in rejoining the accord after his predecessor Donald Trump's decision to backtrack on US commitments.

He has set a net-zero date for 2050 and has unveiled a \$2 trillion infrastructure spending plan to help achieve it.

The US has still not submitted its renewed NDC, but it is expected to do so either before or during a two-day climate summit this week.

European Union

The EU committed in 2015 to reduce its CO2 emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

Member states updated this goal in December, aiming to reduce emissions by "at least 55 percent" by the end of this decade.

Although Britain is leaving the EU, it also has a 2050 net-zero target built into law. It announced in December it would seek to reduce emissions 68 percent by 2030, compared with 1990 levels.

India

Like China, India plans to reduce its carbon intensity -- by up to 35 percent this decade compared to 2005 levels.

The world's third-largest polluter has yet to submit a renewed NDC.

Russia

Russia formally rejoined the Paris deal in 2019.

Moscow says it plans to achieve pollution levels in 2030 that are 70 percent of 1990 levels -- in reality a drop of only 30 percent.



Japan

Japan in 2016 committed to a 26-percent reduction in emissions by 2030. Its renewed NDC, issued in March 2020, had the same figure, eliciting sharp criticism from carbon monitoring research groups.

However new Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said in October the country would be carbon neutral by 2050.

- The rest -

Among other principal emitters, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, and South Korea have all submitted their renewed NDCs, albeit without any significant boost in emissions cuts.

Indonesia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa have yet to submit their plans for the next five years.

Around 80 nations representing less than 30 percent of emissions met the official deadline for NDC resubmissions.

The UN said that the renewed pledges would see emissions drop less than one percent compared with 1990 levels -- a far cry from the 45-percent cut that the UN's climate panel says is needed to limit warming to 1.5C.

Carbon neutrality

More and more countries are committing to achieve net-zero emissions -- that is, any remaining carbon pollution will be sequestered or offset -- by 2050.

But according to the United Nations, more than 100 countries representing 65 percent of global emissions have yet to formally set a date by which they must achieve climate neutrality.



CO2 emissions seen up 5%

By [Reuters](#) -April 21, 2021

LONDON- Global CO2 emissions from energy are seen rising nearly 5 percent this year, suggesting the economic rebound from COVID-19 could be “anything but sustainable” for the climate, the International Energy Agency said.

The IEA’s Global Energy Review 2021 predicted carbon dioxide emissions would rise to 33 billion tons this year, up 1.5 billion tons from 2020 levels in the largest single increase in more than a decade.

“This is a dire warning that the economic recovery from the COVID crisis is currently anything but sustainable for our climate,” IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said.

This year’s rise will likely be driven by a resurgence in coal use in the power sector, Birol added, which the report forecast to be particularly strong in Asia.

It should also put pressure on governments to act on climate change. US President Joe Biden will hold a virtual summit for dozens of world leaders this week to discuss the issue ahead of global talks in Scotland later this year.

Last year, when power use dropped due to the COVID-19 pandemic, energy-related CO2 emissions fell by 5.8 percent to 31.5 billion tons, after peaking in 2019 at 33.4 billion tons.

The IEA’s annual review analyzed the latest national data from around the world, economic growth trends and new energy projects that are set to come online.

Global energy demand is set to increase by 4.6 percent in 2021, led by developing economies, pushing it above 2019 levels, the report said.

Demand for all fossil fuels is on course to grow in 2021, with both coal and gas set to rise above 2019 levels.

The expected rise in coal use dwarves that of renewables by almost 60 percent, despite accelerating demand for solar, wind and hydro power. More than 80 percent of the projected growth in coal demand in 2021 is set to come from Asia, led by China.

Coal use in the United States and the European Union is also on course to increase but will remain well below pre-crisis levels, the IEA said.

Meanwhile, China’s industry ministry said it would compile records this year on energy consumption by key enterprises in energy-intensive industries such as steel, aluminum and cement in order to help promote conservation and efficiency.

These will include details of production and capacity in 2020 and total energy consumption, broken down into coal, natural gas, electricity and renewable energy, a Ministry of Industry and Information Technology document showed.

The move comes as some aluminum smelters in Inner Mongolia have reduced output to meet regional energy consumption targets and top steel city Tangshan called for production cuts of 30-50 percent at most of its long-processing mills this year to help China meet its goals of peaking emissions by 2030.

The ministry also said on its website that it would carry out inspections to ensure that tiered electricity pricing systems for the aluminum, steel and cement sectors were being properly implemented.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_business/co2-emissions-seen-up-5/



No saving the planet without booming India

posted April 20, 2021 at 12:30 pm

by [AFP and Simon Sturdee](#)

Global efforts to arrest climate change and keep Earth liveable will fail without a jumbo-sized effort from India to halt emissions growth that could wipe out ambitious carbon reduction targets elsewhere.



In this file photo taken on November 2, 2020, smoke billows from a factory chimney during a smoggy morning in Ajmer. Global efforts to arrest climate change and keep Earth liveable will fail without a jumbo-sized effort from India that experts say will need political will and an ocean of outside money. AFP

But one thing India doesn't need, its leaders have made clear, is lectures from the West on what path to take.

The world's third-biggest carbon emitter, already home to 1.3 billion people, is projected by the UN to become the planet's most populous nation by the middle of the decade.

Crucially for its carbon footprint, its urban population is set to rise the size of Los Angeles each year, totalling 270 million people by 2040, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

They will all need homes, built with energy-intensive concrete and steel, vehicles to drive, goods to consume and air-conditioning to survive India's ever-harsher summers.

To meet the associated electricity demand over the next 20 years, India could need to add a power system the size of the European Union, the IEA believes.

"All roads to successful global clean energy transitions go via India," it said in a recent report. "The stakes could not be higher, for India and the world."

Sunny side up

These are sobering statistics ahead of US President Joe Biden's virtual climate summit this week and UN talks in Glasgow set for November.

But India bristles at being told what to do, particularly by Western countries that bear far more historical responsibility for climate change and still have much higher per capita carbon footprints today.

"They emitted and therefore the world is suffering. India is suffering because of actions of others," Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar thundered last week.

"We will not allow anybody to forget it."

India is also acutely aware that climate change is happening: melting Himalayan glaciers, a water crisis, rising temperatures, and more frequent cyclones are already wreaking havoc.

Air pollution from vehicles, industry, power generation, and farming was meanwhile blamed for over a million premature deaths nationwide in 2019.

And unlike many other countries, India is on track to exceed its voluntary goals under the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

These include improving the economy's emissions intensity 40 percent by 2030, and growing the share of non-fossil fuels in power generation to 60 percent -- well above its 40 percent pledge.

India has also set the ambitious target of reaching 450 gigawatts of renewable capacity by then, including 280 gigawatts from solar power, which is already highly competitive on price compared to coal.



Solar currently accounts for less than four percent of electricity generation, and coal 70 percent. By 2040 solar and coal are on track to each account for around 30 percent, the IEA says.

A recent report by UK energy group Ember even suggested that India's use of coal for power generation may have already peaked three years ago.

Offsetting Europe

But carbon emissions are still on track to grow 50 percent by 2040, enough to offset entirely the projected fall in emissions in Europe over the same period.

Emission reductions are possible with major upgrades to India's power infrastructure, including battery storage for solar energy.

But the main reason for the CO2 increase is industry -- making all that steel and concrete for India's booming cities -- and transport, with 25 million more trucks expected on the roads by 2040.

The government is still building more coal power plants and awarding contracts to mine more coal. Already India's output is 700 million tonnes per year, second only to China.

There has been speculation that India -- following the US, EU, and China -- might announce a target date for net zero emissions, but this may require changes too far-reaching for the government to stomach.

A study by the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW) think-tank said that to achieve net zero by 2050, the share of coal, oil and gas would have to tumble from 73 percent in 2015 to just 5 percent.

It would also cost half a million mining jobs, higher electricity prices, and, since Indian Railways relies heavily on coal freight for income, higher fares for millions of train passengers, said Vaibhav Chaturvedi from the CEEW.

A more realistic path would be greater use of existing technologies to cut emissions, like electrifying more trains and vehicles, greener construction materials, rooftop solar panels, using more hydrogen fuel, and capturing emissions for storage.

But this will require \$1.4 trillion more than currently in the pipeline, the IEA says -- much of which needs to be provided by richer nations.

"India should do more but it should also get support from the international community," Harjeet Singh from Action Aid Climate told AFP.

"The international community is listening to only half of the story... My worry is that if there is no real money, we will not see real action."



'Dire warning' for the planet: Coal is powering the economic recovery

By Julia Horowitz, CNN Business

Published Apr 20, 2021 4:24:57 PM



(CNN) -- Global carbon dioxide emissions are set to surge dangerously this year as the global economy undergoes a huge recovery.

In a new report, the International Energy Agency estimates that carbon emissions from energy use are on track to spike by 1.5 billion tonnes in 2021, as heavy coal consumption in Asia, and in China in particular, outweighs rapid growth in renewable sources. That would be the second largest annual increase in energy-related emissions in history.

"This is a dire warning that the economic recovery from the Covid crisis is currently anything but sustainable for our climate," Executive Director Fatih Birol said in a statement. "Unless governments around the world move rapidly to start cutting emissions, we are likely to face an even worse situation in 2022."

The Paris-based group is sounding the alarm before 40 world leaders come together later this week for a two-day summit on the climate crisis convened by President Joe Biden. Birol called it a "critical moment to commit to clear and immediate action."

As countries around the world locked down last year and people were instructed to stay at home to limit Covid-19 infections, emissions fell dramatically.

But any climate benefit from the pandemic looks poised to be short-lived. The IEA estimates that global energy demand will rise by 4.6% in 2021 and exceed 2019 levels, fed by rising energy use in developing economies and emerging markets.

Energy-related emissions are expected to end the year just below where they stood in 2019, reversing 80% of the decline seen in 2020.

A resurgence in the use of coal is of particular concern, with demand expected to approach its 2014 peak this year.

China is expected to account for 50% of global demand growth for coal. Use in the United States and Europe is also rising but is expected to stay "well below pre-crisis levels."

Earlier this week, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres called for developed countries to phase out the use of coal by 2030, and for an end to the construction of new coal-fired power plants.

Electricity demand, meanwhile, is projected to see its fastest growth in more than a decade.



But there's some good news: More than half of the increase in global electricity supply will come from renewable sources in 2021, driven in part by growing solar and wind energy output from China.

The IEA's estimates are subject to "major uncertainty" given the lack of clarity on the trajectory of Covid-19 infections and vaccinations. If travel recovers sooner than expected, for example, energy demand will increase even further.

This story was first published on CNN.com, "'Dire warning' for the planet: Coal is powering the economic recovery"



Race to save Cyprus corals from climate change, mass tourism

Agence France-Presse / 10:30 PM April 20, 2021



Cypriot marine ecologist Louis Hadjioannou, 38, dives to photograph the coral, as he monitors the impact of climate change on the delicate fauna in the crystal clear waters of Glyko Nero in Ayia Napa, off the island's southeastern shore. – For the past nine years, Hadjioannou has systematically recorded the effect of rising sea temperatures of the corals near Cape Greko and is striving to raise awareness to save the marine diversity of the Cypriot waters for the next generation of islanders. (Photo by Emily IRVING-SWIFT / AFP)

Ayia Napa, Cyprus — Many people think Cyprus has no corals, says marine ecologist Louis Hadjiannou. If climate change and coastal development continue unabated, he fears, they may soon be right.

A fisherman's son who hails from the Mediterranean island, Hadjiannou loves to put on his wetsuit, fins, and mask and plunge off the dramatic rocks into the turquoise waters to delve into the fragile underwater world.

“It's always an exploration,” enthuses the 38-year-old researcher, looking over the crystal clear waters of Glyko Nero near the resort of Ayia Napa on the island's southeastern coast.

“Even if you jump in at the same spot a million times, every single time you see something new, something exciting, as long as you have the open mind to look at things in the right way.”

When most people think of corals, they may imagine the colorful and species-rich Red Sea reefs off Egypt, rather than the less technicolor Mediterranean underwater habitats.



A Moray eel pokes out of a Cladocora caespitosa coral, commonly known as cushion coral, in the waters of Glyko Nero in the Mediterranean coastal city of Ayia Napa in southeastern Cyprus on April 14, 2021. – With rising water temperatures threatening the endemic corals of the Mediterranean, local marine ecologist Louis Hadjioannou monitors the impact of climate change on the delicate fauna in the crystal clear waters of Cyprus. (Photo by Emily IRVING-SWIFT / AFP)

“When I talk about the corals of Cyprus, most people say: ‘We have corals in Cyprus?’” smiles Hadjiannou, who works with the Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute.



“Yes, it is true: We do have corals — and we are still discovering new species ... They are so emblematic, they are so important, they support biodiversity. But at the same time, they are so sensitive to changes in the environment.”

Next generation

Coral reefs are among the planet’s richest ecosystems and are sometimes dubbed the rainforests of the oceans, providing shelter for countless species of fish, turtles, and other marine life.

But even as Cyprus’ marine ecosystems are still being studied, Hadjiannou says, they are under extreme threat from climate change as well as mass tourism, the building of new hotels and marinas, and agricultural run-off.

For the past decade, Hadjiannou has been monitoring the corals and studying how sea temperature changes impact their health.



A grab from an AFPTV aerial video taken on April 14, 2021, shows corals in the crystal clear waters of Glyko Nero in Ayia Napa, in southeastern Cyprus. – With rising water temperatures threatening the endemic corals of the Mediterranean, local marine ecologist Louis Hadjiannou is monitoring the impact of climate change on the delicate fauna in the crystal clear waters of Glyko Nero in Ayia Napa, Cyprus. (Photo by Emily IRVING-SWIFT / AFP)

“Whenever there is an anomalous year, a higher temperature than normal, we notice a high percentage of corals are dying,” he told AFP.

A rise of about one degree Celsius in 2015 killed off 20 to 30 percent of corals, he said, adding that “some of them came back and recovered, but many did not.”

“Even the slightest increase in temperature... can seriously affect them, and I think the forecast shows it is going to be much more within the next 30, 40 years.”

While combating climate change requires a global effort, many things can be done locally, Hadjiannou said.

He urged a more sustainable kind of coastal development and the establishment of new and larger protected areas with bans on harmful practices such as swimmers stepping on corals or throwing boat anchors.

The other priority, says Hadjiannou, who became a father last month, is educating children. “They are the future,” he said. “They are the ones who are going to become the future conservationists, the future government, the future users of this island.”

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1421613/race-to-save-cyprus-corals-from-climate-change-mass-tourism>

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