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**DENR**

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## Davao Oriental mine firm suspended

[Rhodina Villanueva](#), [Edith Regalado](#) - The Philippine Star January 21, 2022 | 12:00am



"I have received the report confirming that Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company," Cimatu said.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has ordered the suspension of the operations of a mining company in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental.

"I have received the report confirming that Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company," Cimatu said.

Initial investigation and assessment of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)'s Mines and Geosciences Bureau and Environmental Management Bureau in Davao region confirmed that the siltation and discoloration of the rivers were due to the extraction activity of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp./Arc Nickel Resources Inc.

"Heavy and continuous rains on Jan. 13 and 14 have pushed overburden materials which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining toward the rivers," the DENR report read.

The DENR regional office issued a cease and desist order, notice of violation and show cause order to the mining company.

"This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If penalty or combination of the two, better, to avoid this from happening again," Cimatu said.



## Damaged water system: Cimatu halts mining firm's operations in Davao Oriental

JAN 20, 2022, 6:08 PM

Santiago Celario  
Writer

### ***Cimatu halts mining firm's operations amid river discoloration in Davao Oriental.***

**DEPARTMENT** of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has ordered the suspension of a mining company's extraction activities following the heavy siltation of Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers in Banaybanay town, Davao Oriental province on January 14.

*"I have received the report yesterday (January 17) confirming that the river has turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company," Cimatu said during the DENR's Expanded Executive Committee Conference on January 18.*

Based on the initial investigation and assessment of DENR-Davao Region, together with the region's Mines and Geosciences Bureau and Environmental Management Bureau, the siltation and discoloration of the Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers were attributed to the extraction activity of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources, Inc.

"Heavy and continuous rains last January 13 and 14 have pushed overburden materials which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining towards the said rivers," the report read.

On January 17, the DENR-Davao Region issued a cease and desist order (CDO), notice of violation, and show cause order to the mining company.

*"I directed the [issuance] of cease and desist order, suspension of that mining company, conduct of immediate investigation, and submission of investigation to PAB or Pollution Adjudication Board," Cimatu said.*

Meanwhile the DENR chief pointed out that the directive to immediately suspend the operations of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources, Inc. will prevent the occurrence of similar incidents in the future.



*"This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If penalty, or combination of the two, then better--to avoid this from happening again," Cimatu said.*

*"The disturbed surface of the mining company, their stockpiles, and their pond had overflowed due to heavy rains which had been going on for a couple of days. When it reached the river, the residents raised their concerns, particularly the fishermen," he added.*

Source: <https://opinyon.net/national/damaged-water-system-cimatu-halts-mining-firm-s-operations-in-davao-oriental?fbclid=IwAR3aXY8Zj3rQf9jj4iREzsexaves9jfa8Dg4nNlzR-2mg5XCCACG31eM1y0>



# Cimatu halts mining firm amid river discoloration in Davao

Published 20 hours ago on January 20, 2022 10:23 AM

By **TDI** @tribunephil



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has ordered the suspension of a mining company's extraction activities following the heavy siltation of Mapagba and Pinatatagan rivers in Banaybanay town, Davao Oriental province, 14 January.

"I have received the report (17 January) confirming that the river has turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company."

Based on the initial investigation and assessment of DENR-Davao Region, together with the region's Mines and Geosciences Bureau and Environmental Management Bureau, the siltation and discoloration of the Mapagba and Pinatatagan rivers were attributed to the extraction activity of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp./Arc Nickel Resources Inc.

"Heavy and continuous rains last 13 and 14 January have pushed overburden materials which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining toward the said rivers."

On January 17, the DENR-Davao Region issued a cease and desist order, notice of violation and show cause order to the mining company.

"I directed for the [issuance] of cease and desist order, suspension of that mining company, conduct of immediate investigation, and submission of investigation to PAB or Pollution Adjudication Board."

The DENR chief pointed out that the directive to immediately suspend the operations of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources Inc. will prevent the occurrence of similar incidents in the future.

"This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If penalty, or combination of the two, then better—to avoid this from happening again".

"The disturbed surface of the mining company, their stockpiles, and their pond has overflowed due to heavy rains which had been going on for a couple of days. When it reached the river, the residents raised their concerns, particularly the fishermen."

The DENR-Davao Region and local government of Banaybanay will be conducting regular monitoring of the area as the mining firm implements its environmental and control measures to address the siltation.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/01/20/cimatu-halts-mining-firm-amid-river-discoloration-in-davao/>



## DENR halts mining operations in Davao Oriental

by [Rio N. Araja](#) January 20, 2022, 10:10 pm in [National News](#)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources has ordered the suspension of a mining company's extraction activities due to heavy siltation of the Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental.

"I have received the report (on Jan. 17) confirming that the river has turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company," DENR Secretary Cimatú said.

Initial investigation and assessment of DENR-Davao region, together with the region's Mines and Geosciences Bureau and Environmental Management Bureau showed the siltation and discoloration of the Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers were attributed to the extraction activity of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp./Arc Nickel Resources Inc.

"Heavy and continuous rains last Jan. 13 and 14 have pushed overburden materials which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining toward the said rivers," the report read.

The DENR in Davao issued a cease-and-desist order, notice of violation, and show-cause order to the mining company.

"I directed for the [issuance] of cease and desist order, suspension of that mining company, the conduct of an immediate investigation, and submission of investigation to PAB or Pollution Adjudication Board," Cimatú said.

"This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If penalty, or combination of the two, then better—to avoid this from happening again," he said.

"The disturbed surface of the mining company, their stockpiles, and their pond has overflowed due to heavy rains which had been going on for a couple of days. When it reached the river, the residents raised their concerns, particularly the fishermen," he added.



# Operation of mining firms in Davao Oriental stopped

By [Alexis Marie Gomez](#) January 21, 2022

THE [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) (DENR) has ordered the suspension of a mining company's extraction activities following the heavy siltation of Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers in Banaybanay town, Davao Oriental.

"I have received the report... confirming that the river has turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company," Cimatu said during the DENR's Expanded [Executive Committee Conference](#).

The siltation and discoloration of the Mapagba and Pinatagan rivers were attributed to the extraction activity of [Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp./Arc Nickel Resources Inc.](#), said a report from the initial investigation and assessment of DENR-Davao Region, together with the region's Mines and [Geosciences Bureau](#) and [Environmental Management Bureau](#).

"Heavy and continuous rains last January 13 and 14 have pushed overburden materials, which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining toward the said rivers," the report read.

Last January 17, the DENR-Davao Region issued a cease and desist order, notice of violation, and show cause order to the mining company.

Cimatu pointed out that the directive to immediately suspend the operations of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp./Arc Nickel Resources Inc. will prevent the occurrence of similar incidents in the future.

"This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If [there is a] penalty, or combination of the two, then better — to avoid this from happening again," Cimatu said.



## Mining firm ops na nagpabago ng kulay ng tubig sa ilog sa Davao Oriental, pinatigil ni Cimatú



January 20, 2022 @ 5:36 PM 13 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines- Upang protektahan ang kapaligiran ipinag-utos ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatú ang suspensiyon ng extraction activities ng mining company sa Mapagba at Pinatatagan rivers na matatagpuan sa Banaybanay, Davao Oriental noong Enero 14 dahil sa heavy siltation ng dalawang ilog.

“I have received the report yesterday (Enero 17) confirming that the river has turned red due to extraction activities. I have instructed our regional office to immediately address the incident and to suspend the operations of the mining company,” ani Cimatú sa DENR’s Expanded Executive Committee Conference na ginanap noong Enero 18.

Sa press release base sa inisyal na imbestigasyon at pagsusuri ng DENR-Davao Region, kasama ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau at Environmental Management Bureau ng rehiyon, ang pagdumi at pagbago ng kulay ng Mapagba at Pinatatagan rivers ay dahil na rin sa extraction activity ng Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources, Inc.

“Heavy and continuous rains last January 13 and 14 have pushed overburden materials which contributed to the overflowing of silt pond, draining towards the said rivers,” nakasaad pa sa ulat.

Kaugnay nito noong Enero 17, ang DENR-Davao Region ay nag-isyu ng cease and desist order (CDO), notice of violation at show cause order sa mining company.

“I directed for the [issuance] of cease and desist order, suspension of that mining company, conduct of immediate investigation, and submission of investigation to PAB or Pollution Adjudication Board,” sabi ni Cimatú.

Samantala binigyang-diin pa ng DENR chief, ang kautusan sa agarang pagpapahinto sa operasyon ng Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources, Inc. ay upang maiwasan na muling mangyari ang parehong insidente sa mga darating na panahon.

“This is for them to face the consequences immediately. If they will be suspended, so be it. If penalty, or combination of the two, then better—to avoid this from happening again,” saad ni Cimatú.

“The disturbed surface of the mining company, their stockpiles, and their pond has overflowed due to heavy rains which had been going on for a couple of days. When it reached the river, the residents raised their concerns, particularly the fishermen,” dagdag nito. **Santi Celario**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/mining-firm-ops-na-nagpabago-ng-kulay-ng-tubig-sa-ilog-sa-davao-oriental-pinatigil-ni-cimatú/>





### Mining firm na itinuro sa siltation sa Davao Or., tumanggi munang ma-interview | UB

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# Cimatu Commits Fast Rehab of Siargao Island

Thursday, January 20, 2022 Journal Online



Department of Environment and Natural Resources ([DENR](#)) secretary and Task Force Build Back Better chair Roy A. Cimatu (left) receives an update on the status of rehabilitation in Siargao Island from Joseph Langanlangan (right), OIC-Division Chief for Technical Services of DENR Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office [Surigao del Norte](#) during the former's visit to the island on January 15, 2022. Siargao Island is one of the areas badly-hit by typhoon Odette on December 16, 2021 (inset). Cimatu vowed to fast track the island's rehabilitation and ordered the identification of relocation sites for displaced communities, the implementation of 'cash for work' program for locals who will be hired to plant mangroves in identified sites, and the installation of 'no build zone' signages to prevent the construction of structures in high risk areas.





# Cimatu orders quality testing of Paoay Lake water

By Leilanie Adriano January 20, 2022, 7:41 pm



**TESTING THE WATER.** A screenshot of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu as he delivers his speech as guest of honor and speaker during the 44th Foundation Anniversary of Mariano Marcos State University in Batac City on Thursday (Jan. 20, 2022). Before delivering his final message, he directed the environment department in Region 1 to conduct water testing at the Paoay Lake to ensure it is safe for swimming. (Screenshot from MMSU FB live stream)

**LAOAG CITY** – Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ordered on Thursday the immediate conduct of water testing at the Paoay Lake to ensure it is safe for swimming.

While passing by the lake on his way to attend the 44th founding anniversary of the state-run Mariano Marcos State University where he served as guest of honor and speaker, Cimatu said he was uncertain if he would grant a permit for the opening of the Paoay Lake waterpark.

“When I saw the water, I am not sure if it is OK for swimming,” Cimatu said as he ordered Regional Executive Director Crizaldy Barcelo of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 1 to conduct water sampling at the lake before allowing visitors to enjoy the water.

With eight days more to go before its planned official launching on January 28, Cimatu said that by that time the DENR can already ascertain if the water park passes quality standards for swimming.

If the lake is not fit for swimming, he said the opening of the waterpark should be postponed to a later date and find ways to clean it first.

The development of the Paoay Lake waterpark was an initiative of the Ilocos Norte government with an investment capital of PHP26.1 million.

As of the moment, bean bags and Bali beach umbrellas are now available at the lakefront for the excited visitors who eagerly await the opening of the largest floating playground in the north located near the Malacanang of the North in Barangay Suba, Paoay, Ilocos Norte.

The “inflatable floating island” is set to have its media launch on January 22. **(PNA)**



# Isko Moreno eyes dolomite beach as vaccination site

[Marc Jayson Cayabyab](#) - The Philippine Star January 21, 2022 | 12:00am



A worker of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority mans his post at the gate of the Manila Bay dolomite beach yesterday to ensure that COVID-19 protocols are observed by visitors.

Michael Varcas, file

MANILA, Philippines — After the Manila Zoo, Mayor Isko Moreno on Wednesday said he is open to using the dolomite beach along Roxas Boulevard as a vaccination site.

“If it’s feasible, why not? That’s a good idea, but let us make sure that the construction is finished and it is safe for the people,” Moreno said.

He said the city government ensures that vaccination sites are “geographically feasible” before opening these up to offer COVID-19 jabs.

The city government has three drive-through booster shot sites for vehicle owners, public utility drivers and delivery riders, aside from the Manila Zoo vaccination site and the inoculation program in barangay health centers, public schools and malls.

On Wednesday, the renovated Manila Zoo opened as a vaccination facility for minors aged 12 to 17 and senior citizens.

The inoculation site can accommodate 1,000 vaccine recipients daily.

Only fully vaccinated visitors are allowed to enter the man-made beach, which the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reopened on Jan. 4.

Children 11 years old and below are banned from visiting the dolomite beach.

The DENR welcomed the plan of the city government to use the dolomite beach as a vaccination center. “It is a good proposal because it’s an open area and people will somehow feel relaxed while being vaccinated,” DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones said. – **Rhodina Villanueva**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/01/21/2155297/isko-moreno-eyes-dolomite-beach-vaccination-site>



# Manila City gov't says open to using Manila Bay dolomite beach as vaccination site

Philstar.com January 20, 2022 | 2:17pm



Members of the Manila Police District (MPD) arrive early to provide security at the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach on Tuesday (December 28, 2021) before dawn as it opens to the public for a two-day trial. The DENR sets an online appointment system for visitors wanting to experience the man-made beach front to avoid overcrowding and in observance of the minimum health and safety protocols by the IATF.

The STAR / Miguel de Guzman, File photo

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila City government is open to the possibility of using the controversial Manila Bay Walk Dolomite Beach along Roxas Boulevard as another vaccination site to provide booster shots, it disclosed Thursday.

In a statement, Manila Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso said that construction in the area should be finished to assure the safety of people before the dolomite beach can be used as a vaccination site.

“If it’s feasible, why not? That’s a very good idea, but is the construction finished, and will people be safe? That’s always our concern,” Moreno told reporters in Filipino during the opening of the Manila Zoological and Botanical Garden as the latest vaccination site for minors and senior citizens.

The Manila Bay Walk Dolomite Beach is an artificial beach along Roxas Boulevard in Manila and a project by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources.

The dolomite beach was first opened to the public in September 2020.

After it was closed again for expansion, the beach was reopened to the public in July 2021 and then again in October after quarantine restrictions subsided.

Moreno has opened three drive-thru booster shot facilities for 4-wheel vehicles at the Quirino Grandstand, motorcycles and bicycles at the Kartilya ng Katipunan, and for drivers of public utility vehicles and delivery vans at the Bagong Ospital ng Maynila.

These are in addition to the continuing vaccinations in community health centers and designated public schools and shopping malls. This also comes after the opening of the newly-redeveloped Manila Zoo as a vaccination center for minors and seniors.

## Moreno hits anti-vaxxers, urges better access to vaccines

The Aksyon Demokratiko standard-bearer also reiterated his call for the people to get their booster shots as soon as possible, saying Manila City’s various vaccination facilities are available to everyone.



Moreno said that while unvaccinated workers are exempted from the “no vaccination, no ride” policy, workers should not confuse the exemption as an excuse not to get vaccinated at all.

“We will try to understand the people, reach the people as much as we can. But at the end of the day, you have to decide on your own because you have to be responsible to others. As a citizen, you also have a responsibility to your community, to your country. It is not just the government that is responsible to the people,” Moreno said on Wednesday.

“Man has a responsibility to his fellow man, to himself, to his family. We are under attack, people are dying, getting sick because of this dreadful disease called coronavirus. So science needs the approach, because the only thing that can help us, is science. Vaccination is the only solution.”

He said all those who are still unvaccinated, including workers, can avail of these facilities to get protected from COVID-19.

“Our people in the city have choices. They can choose where is convenient for them. The remaining unvaccinated ones, and maybe, some of our workers, because they don’t live in Manila, they go in and out of Manila, so we wanted to protect them. We wanted to protect ourselves while protecting them. So, it works both ways,” Moreno explained.

“While I respect some individuals’ opinion about vaccination, I’m calling on people to get vaccinated. Vaccination is added protection for all of us. Marites can’t do anything about COVID-19, but vaccines are proven by science,” he also said.

Moreno pointed out that providing more access to vaccination facilities in the most convenient way to the people has resulted in more people getting vaccinated, with 23,676 persons being vaccinated on January 17 with either their first dose, second dose or booster shots in Manila.

He also noted that of the more than 15,000 individuals who received their booster shots at the Luneta and Kartilya ng Katipunan drive-thru facilities, 60% were non-Manilans.

“People really want to get vaccinated. All they need is convenience and access,” he said.



## Mayor Isko eyes Manila Bay dolomite beach as city's next vax site

Jaleen Ramos January 20, 2022

Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso on Wednesday, Jan. 19, bared his plan to use the Manila Bay Walk Dolomite beach as a vaccination site.

This comes at the heels of the recent vaccination of minor and senior populations held at the newly-renovated Manila Zoo as part of the city’s novel plan to vaccinate and give vaccinees the chance to see nature and breathe fresh air in a controlled environment.



The Manila Bay dolomite beach. (Photo by Noel Pabalate/ MANILA BULLETIN)

“Kung feasible, bakit hindi? That’s a very good idea. Tapos na ba ‘yung construction nila, safe ba sa mga tao? ‘Yun naman ang concern natin palagi eh, ‘yung safety ng mga tao (If it’s feasible, why not? That’s a very good idea. Is their construction finished, is it safe for the people? That is our concern always, the safety of the people),” Domagoso said during the opening of the Manila Zoological and Botanical Garden on Wednesday, Jan. 19.

“Pansinin nyo, kapag pumipili tayo ng lugar, secluded halos lagi ‘yung mga lugar. Geographically feasible sa gagawing function doon sa particular na action plan, Pero okay ‘yun, bakunahan sa dolomite (If you will notice, everytime we choose a place, they are almost always secluded and geographically feasible for the function eyed in that particular action plan. It will be vaccination at the dolomite),” he added.

The Manila Bay Walk Dolomite Beach, also known as Dolomite Beach, is an artificial beach along Roxas Boulevard in Manila. It was reopened to the public on Dec. 28 and Dec. 29, 2021 and again on Jan. 4, 2021 onwards.

Domagoso appealed again to those who are still unvaccinated to get their jab, and for the fully vaccinated, to get their booster shots.

Vaccination facilities in the city are open to both residents and non-residents of Manila, he said.

While unvaccinated workers are exempted from the “no vaccination, no ride” policy, Domagoso reminded them that they should not use it as an excuse to not get the vaccine.

“Pipilitin nating unawain ang mga tao, abutin ang tao hanggang kaya natin. But at the end of the day, you have to decide. Kasi, you have to be responsible to others. As a citizen, meron ka ring responsibilidad sa iyong pamayanan, sa iyong bansa. Hindi lang gobyerno ang may



responsibilidad sa tao (We will try to understand them, reach out to them as much as we can. But at the end of the day, you have to decide. Because, you have to be responsible to others. As a citizen, you also have a responsibility to your community, to your country. It is not only the government that is responsible to the people),” Domagoso said.

He added that the opening of several vaccination sites in the city has resulted in a high vaccination record, with 23,676 persons vaccinated on Jan. 17.





## Isko: Dolomite Beach as vax site okay

by [Manila Standard](#) [January 20, 2022, 11:10 pm](#) in [National](#), [News](#)

Presidential candidate and Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso is open to use the controversial Manila Bay Dolomite Beach as another COVID-19 vaccination site.

“If it’s feasible, why not? That’s a very good idea, but is the construction finished, and will people be safe? That’s always our concern,” Domagoso told reporters in Filipino during the opening of the Manila Zoological and Botanical Garden as the latest vaccination site for minors and senior citizens.

Domagoso on Monday night also led the inauguration of the newly-refurbished Plaza Asuncion in Malate, one of the many projects promised – and fulfilled – by the 47-year-old local executive for the people of the city when he campaigned for the mayorship in 2019.

“I’m happy for you. I had made a promise to you and today there is a proof for it,” Moreno told Manileños as he inaugurated the fully-lighted public space that is now replete with fountains, good quality benches and speakers for background music.

Although the city has been conducting the vaccination in secluded places, Domagoso said conducting vaccination at the Dolomite Beach is very feasible.

“It’s geographically feasible to hold that function for a particular action plan. But I think it’s okay,” he said.

Dolomite Beach is located on Manila Bay along Roxas Boulevard, which makes it accessible to any public transportation. People can easily go to the vaccination site and get their anti-COVID shots.

Domagoso said construction in the area should be finished to assure the safety of people before the beach can be used as a vaccination site.

The P389-million artificial beach is a project by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources. It was first opened to the public in September 2020.

After it was closed again for expansion, the beach was reopened to the public in July 2021 and then again in October after quarantine restrictions subsided.

Domagoso has opened three drive-thru booster shot facilities for four-wheel vehicles at the Quirino Grandstand, motorcycles and bicycles at the Kartilya ng Katipunan, and for drivers of public utility vehicles and delivery vans at the Bagong Ospital ng Maynila.

These are in addition to the continuing vaccinations in community health centers and designated public schools and shopping malls in the city.

This also comes after the opening of the newly-redeveloped Manila Zoo as a vaccination center for minors and seniors.

As for Plaza Asuncion, Moreno has promised to rehabilitate the once-drab and blight public plaza when he becomes mayor as part of his goal to open green spaces for Manileños where they can rest and relax not only physically, but also mentally, after a grueling day.

“The people of Leveriza have long hoped for it to be returned to them, I was still then vice mayor. It has been made into a shooting range, with dogs, cats; hanging out of solvent boys, rotten cars. I said before, when I become mayor, God has mercy, I will fix that. We recovered, then there was a pandemic, but we did it,” Moreno said.



“Just imagine, before, there seemed to be no government here, it was dark, a pile of rotten things. And at least somehow, the place is clear for you,” he added.

But Moreno does not contend himself by just keeping a promise, as he always strived to deliver the best for the people, in both infrastructure and services.

And the best for him means world-class, like the newly-rehabilitated Manila Zoo, the Bagong Ospital ng Maynila, vertical housing like Tondominium and Binondominium, modern 10-story fully-airconditioned public school buildings like the new Manila Science High School; Social services for senior citizens, and assistance to public school students and teachers in the form of allowances, tablets and free bandwidth, among other countless accomplishments that he had delivered.

“By the mercy of God, and with your help, I stood on the stage there, I promised you before, I left a word that sometimes you may say ‘Is what Ko-Is says true?’”

“Student allowance, senior citizen allowance, Manila Hospital, housing... don’t you remember that those were the promises I made on stage. Now my countrymen, by the mercy of God, I will pierce my nose before you. Everything promised in 10 years, happened in just two years,” Moreno proudly said.

“The government can do too much, because many say it is too much. Why is it necessary to lack? Isn’t the man’s right that your service he gets, too? It’s not possible, let’s not be content with that. We need first class, that’s the people’s money,” he added.

The 47-year-old presidential aspirant said his overriding ambition to give the best for the people was born out of his love for the people, for them not to experience what he had experienced as a poor boy in the slums of Tondo.

“You just don’t know how much I love you. The poverty I experience before, don’t let your children experience it. I also experience the public hospital service before, don’t let them experience it.”

“What you are experiencing now are what we were experiencing when we had money. And also being experienced by ordinary people. That is my dream for each of you,” Moreno stressed.

Moreno’s love for the people and leadership style was affirmed by Vice Mayor Honey Lacuna, who described Moreno as a man of action and an epitome of solid-rock reliability in these trying times.

“He continues to dream for the good of every Manila child. It is sleepless and really fast in acting and responding to the basic needs of fellow human beings and serves as our mainstay, especially in this time when we are facing a global health crisis,” Lacuna said.

“Yorme is in the hearts of our Manilans, and a leader every Filipino needs,” she said.

This kind of leadership is what Moreno wants foremost for the Filipino people to have when he applied for the highest position of the country, campaigning on a “Buhay at Kabuhayan” platform that places the welfare of the people above all else.

But while he had set aside his “Listening Tour” to focus all his efforts in fighting the Omicron surge gripping the country, Moreno said he still believes that destiny and the people’s will deal him a good hand.

“God has mercy. It may not be a sin for this nation for God to punish us by giving us leaders who will persecute us. Nothing is perfect. I am not perfect. I am no angel. I am not an angel,



but I, continue to believe in God, we will not be forsaken, this country will not be ruined,” the Aksyon Demokratiko standard bearer stressed.

“So, if you want to be different, let’s do something different,” said Moreno.

Be that as it may, Moreno said that wherever fate takes him in his journey, his head will always remain high if only for delivering on his promises, and delivering what is best, for the people of Manila.

“Wherever destiny takes me, wherever opportunity takes me, and at least I can walk in any corner of Manila with my forehead level. Because my saliva was pawned by the people of Manila. Because that’s all I have, my saliva can be pledged,” he said.

“So I’m happy to fulfill the things I said and going beyond what I promised,” said Moreno.

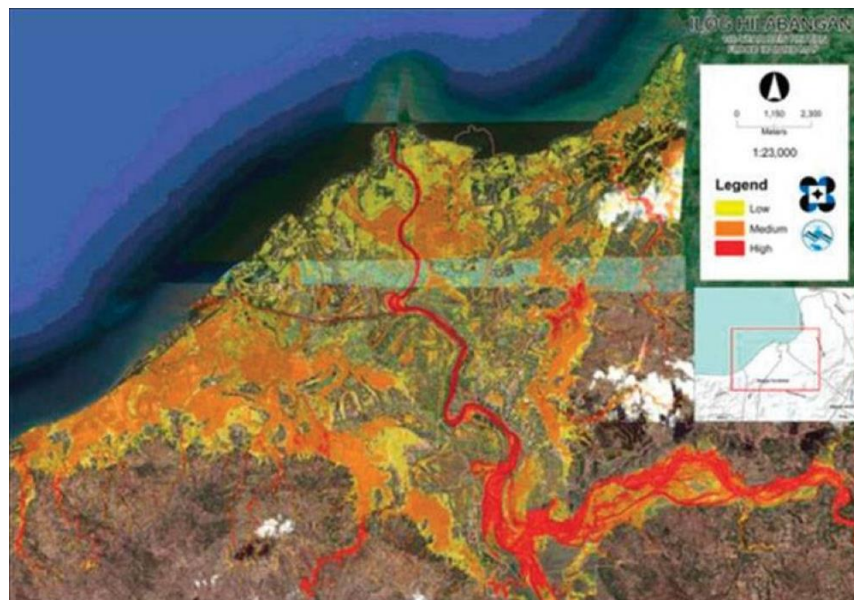


# The Philippines receives 4.6M Euro grant from Germany's climate initiative

January 21, 2022



Tagum Libuganon river basin.



Flood hazard map, Ilog Hilabangan. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

THE [Philippines](#) has received a 4.6 million [Euro](#) grant from the German government's [International Climate Initiative](#) which will secure drinking water access for 500 households and irrigation up to 3,000 hectares of agricultural land in Negros and Davao region.

The [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) (DENR) is implementing the "Ecosystem-based Adaptation in 2 River Basins" or E2RB through a partnership with German-commissioned Deutsche Gesellschaft für [Internationale](#) Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

The DENR's river basin control office (RBCO), project implementer, will start the project in 2022 despite delays due to the [Covid-19](#) pandemic.

"A Project [Management Committee](#) has already been created. We can start implementation this year after some delays due to Covid 19," according to RBCO Executive Director [Nelson Gorospe](#).

The E2RB will be carried out in Ilog Hilabangan in Negros and Tagum Libuganon (mainly Davao del Norte) in Davao Region.



E2RB will strengthen the river basins' ecosystem services, protect their biodiversity, and importantly, reduce their vulnerability to climate change as destructive flooding has been experienced in the river basins.

"One of the bases for the choice of the site is perennial flooding," said Gorospe.

E2RB is in line with DENR's program on climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction roadmap 2018-2022. It also aligns with the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022, Philippine biodiversity strategy and action plan, and enhanced national greening program.

"The effective protection of forests in river basins supports the objectives of the Philippine Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) in the area of mitigation through the contribution of the forest sector to the planned total greenhouse gas reduction of 70 percent in 2030," according to the DENR-GIZ agreement.

For any questions or interview requests, please contact <https://growthfeatures.com/2022/01/07/denr-averts-climate-vulnerability-in-flooding-prone-ilog-hilabangan-negros-tagum-libuganon-davao-region-ecosystem-based-management-done/>



## Grass owl, 3 owlets recovered in SRPPF

Published January 20, 2022, 9:40 AM  
by [Jeffrey Damicog](#)



Grass owl

A grass owl and its three owlets have been recovered from the reservation of the San Ramon Prison and Penal Farm (SRPPF) in Zamboanga City, the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) said.

In a statement, BuCor said “the owl family” has been turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and is now under the care of the Zamboanga City’s Wild Life Holding Facility.

It said the owl and the owlets were brought to the city veterinarian for examination and medication.

“Under the leadership of BuCor Director General Gerald Q. Bantag and with full support of Acting Superintendent C/Supt. Jhaeron L. Lacaben, SRPPF is mindful and active in the preservation of our natural resources to include precious flora and fauna found in SRPPF’s vicinity,” it also said.



# Over 1000 Philex workers might lose jobs

Published 19 hours ago on January 20, 2022 11:14 AM

By **Aldwin Quitasol**



BAGUIO CITY—More than 1,000 workers of Philex Mining Corp. might end jobless after 2024 if nothing will be done to continue its operation.

Philex President and CEO Eulalio Austine bared that more than 1, 700 ranked-in-file, managers and contractors will be affected. He said they might lose their jobs after the mine life of the company.

Austine said that they projected that the mine closure is this year, 2022 as their gold production is now low. He said that because of the high production of metal and its competitive price in the world market, the company can continue its operation until 2024.

Austine said that the company is looking for possible solutions to ensure the continuity of the operation of the mines. He said this is to save the jobs of the workers and the families who are depending on them.

He said they are looking into more projections of extending the mine life of the company with the demand or preference of many people towards green economy. He explained that people are now embracing technologies like electronic vehicles and solar power energy among others. He said that in order that green technology and green economy be sustained, mining is one of its needs.

He said that, if they will be able to extend the mine life if Philex after 2024, then its operations will have a great potential with green economy.



# Groups oppose Cebu City plan to build waste-to-energy facility

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JANUARY 19, 2022

Environmental groups on Wednesday slammed the plan of Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama to install an incinerator waste-to-energy (WTE) facility that will convert the huge volume of garbage produced in the city and nearby towns into energy.

Such project, the group Philippine Earth Justice Center (PEJC) alleged, would only exacerbate the public health and the ecological crisis caused by climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Establishing WTE facilities is an extremely expensive and dirty solid waste management method which will cause more harm to the environment and accelerate climate change. Cebu City’s strategy on climate and post-disaster resilience should be based on ecological and sustainable principles. We urge Mayor Rama to rethink and scrap his plan of putting up a WTE facility in the city and consider instead investing in renewable energy sources,” PEJC’s Atty. Kristine Joy Argallon said.

The EcoWaste Coalition believes Cebu City will end up shouldering a heavy financial burden by entering into a contract with the contractor/provider of the WTE facility.

“Typical WTE contracts have decades-long terms and contain lock-in provisions that will bind the city to expensive and onerous obligations for a long time. This is an unnecessary expenditure of public funds on a system that is dangerous to public health and the environment. The city’s strategy should be based on a robust implementation of programs that focus on waste minimization, materials recovery and recycling. We hope Mayor Rama and the Cebu City Council will scrap the waste-to-energy plans for the city and reconsider their approach to waste management,” Atty. Lievj Alimangohan of the EcoWaste Coalition said.

The group called on the Cebu City Government to pursue genuine ecological solutions as mandated by existing environmental laws in the country instead of investing in WTE.





# Lawmaker pushes for climate field school, rainwater harvesters, more

January 21, 2022



Mangrove-planted coastal greenbelts help protect islands from disastrous typhoons. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

THE [Department of Education](#) (DepEd), through its Field Operations strand, shared innovative milestones in its literacy, sports, children and employee welfare programs aimed at continuously strengthening the field offices' overall functions. "Our offices managed to improve, innovate and develop lead projects and practices, which made it possible for the Department of Education to provide the best possible services before and during the pandemic, and [these are] through the efforts of DepEd's field offices, the 16 [Regional Offices](#), [and] 216 SDOs (School Division Offices)," Undersecretary for Field Operations Revsee Escobedo said during the DepEd General Assembly for 2021.

Escobedo, who also oversees the [DepEd Employees Association Coordinating Office](#), underscored priority for employee welfare through the creation of an Online Helpdesk, where department employees, unions and cooperatives can seek assistance in resolving matters in response to the health situation. "Through DO No. 3, Series of 2021, a child protection unit along with the child rights education desk was created to further strengthen the department's policies and commitments towards child protection. We have capacity-building efforts and evaluation studies, skills enhancement of the personnel and training them to be more effective in their respective tasks crucial to the implementation of child protection programs and policies," Escobedo said. Escobedo mentioned that partnerships with [Stairway Foundation Inc.](#), Facebook [Philippines](#) and Social Watch Philippines serve as a manifestation of the dedication of both the public and private sectors to assert child rights.

He also cited the completion of the comprehensive strategic plan for child protection in schools and other learning environments for 2022-2024. Meanwhile, the establishment of the [National Academy of Sports](#) (NAS) further institutionalizes an educational system to implement quality and enhanced secondary education specializing in a sports-centered curriculum. CLIMATE change, and its destructions as those of Typhoon "[Odette](#)" all over the Visayas and Mindanao, can no longer be ignored if the Philippines' agriculture sector is to take off, according to House Deputy [Speaker](#) and Antique Rep. [Loren Legarda](#). "The Philippines should put up more [Climate Field School](#) (CFS) similar to the one in [Siargao Island](#), rainwater harvesters and organic compost facilities in order to adapt to climate change and flourish its agriculture sector amid weather-related disasters," Legarda said. Speaking at the [Philippine Chamber of Agriculture](#) and [Food Inc.](#)'s (Pcafi) Halalan 2022 Para sa Agrikultura, Legarda said she would push for "greening" of the supply chain once elected senator.



Pcafi President [Danilo Fausto](#), along with Alyansa Agrikultura's Ernesto Ordoñez, and three other farm-based groups are orienting 2022 election candidates on the plight of the Philippines' agriculture. Others proposing recommendations are the [Federation of Free Farmers Chairman Secretary Leonardo Montemayor](#), [National Scientist Dr. Emil Javier](#), and Rice Watch Chairman [Hazel Tanchuling](#). A climate field school for farmers and fisherfolk was first established in Dumangas, Leyte. Legarda pointed out that mangrove-planted coastal greenbelts help protect islands from disastrous typhoons. As such, coastal greenbelts, largely planted with mangroves as that found in [Del Carmen](#), Siargao Island, should be put up nationwide. She added that "organic composting should also be practiced among farmers as rice straws, animal manure and other organic wastes are a ubiquitous source of fertilizers."

"It's high time we rationalize how we use our resources, especially since we are made up of many islands, so our waterways are not continuous. Water resources should be done on a per island basis. There should be a regionalized development of water resources. It makes sense because there's so much water, but we don't have water," she stressed.



# Earth's threshold for chemical pollution breached: study

The release of chemicals and pollutants has accelerated to a point that a 'planetary boundary' has been crossed, threatening Earth and humanity, according to a new study.



A crunched-up plastic bottle washed up on the shores of Latvia. Image: [Bo Eide](#), [CC BY-NC 2.0](#).

[Elizabeth Claire Alberts, Mongabay.com](#)

8 min read Jan. 20, 2022

Thousands of human-made chemicals and synthetic pollutants are being released, with new ones being constantly produced every day. Scientists now say that we have crossed a critical threshold that threatens the Earth and poses a clear threat to humanity.

There are about [350,000 different types](#) of artificial chemicals currently in the global market, from plastics to pesticides, to industrial chemicals such as flame retardants and insulators. While research shows that many of these chemicals have deleterious impacts on the natural world and human health, most of them have not been evaluated, and their interactions with and impacts on Earth are unknown.

“The knowledge gaps are massive and we do not have the tools to understand all of what is being produced or released, or effects they have,” Bethanie Carney Almroth, an ecotoxicologist and microplastics researcher from the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, told Mongabay. “We just don’t know. So we try to look at what we do know and add up all these little puzzle pieces to get a big picture.”

As scientists endeavor to identify and understand the impacts of chemicals and other artificial substances — referred to as “[novel entities](#)” — industries are pumping them out at a staggering rate. The global production of chemicals has increased fifty-fold since 1950, and this is expected to triple by 2050, according to a report published by the [European Environment Agency](#). While some novel entities are regulated by governmental bodies and international agreements, many can be produced without any restrictions or controls.

The mismatch between the rapid rate at which novel entities are being produced, compared to the snail’s pace at which governments assess risk and monitor impacts — leaving society largely flying blind as to chemical threats — was what prompted Carney Almroth and colleagues to make their argument in a new paper published in [Science and Technology](#), that we have breached the “planetary boundary” for novel entities, endangering the stability of the planet we call home.

## **Quantifying the novel entities boundary**

The concept of [planetary boundaries](#) was first [proposed by a team of international scientists](#) in 2009 to articulate key natural processes that, when kept in balance, support biodiversity; but when disrupted beyond a certain threshold, can destabilise and even destroy the Earth’s ability to function and support life.



[Nine boundaries](#) have been identified: climate change, biosphere integrity, ocean acidification, ozone depletion, atmospheric aerosol pollution, freshwater use, [biogeochemical flows of nitrogen and phosphorus](#), land-system change, and of course, the release of novel chemicals.

Many of these boundaries have clear thresholds. For instance, scientists determined that humanity would overshoot the safe operating space for climate change when carbon dioxide in the atmosphere exceeded 350 parts per million (ppm), which happened in 1988. The threshold for novel entities, however, has until recently evaded definition, largely because of the knowledge gaps surrounding these substances.

Patricia Villarrubia-Gómez, a plastic pollution researcher at Stockholm University's Stockholm Resilience Centre, who co-authored the new paper, said these knowledge gaps are not present because these chemicals and other polluting substances do not pose risks — it is because scientists are still scrambling to understand novel entities and the myriad ways they can impact the natural world.

“It is a very new field of study,” Villarrubia-Gómez told Mongabay. “It is in its infancy in comparison to other major environmental problems ... most research has been done in the past seven years.”

Carney Almroth said researchers have used the Holocene, the current geological epoch that began just over 10,000 years ago, as a measuring point to quantify the thresholds of other planetary boundaries, but this approach was not appropriate for novel entities.

“This boundary is different from the others because the others are all referring back to the Holocene conditions — that was 10,000 years of a very stable Earth system and Earth climate,” Carney Almroth said. Scientists “can look back and ask, ‘What were carbon dioxide levels then and where was nitrogen and phosphorus during that time period?’ and refer back to that [as a baseline]. We could not do that because novel entities did not exist during that time period and the background baseline levels would be zero for most of them.”

Instead, the researchers gathered all of the information they could on artificial chemicals and other pollutants, looking at their impacts all along their supply chain, from extraction to production to use, and eventually, to their disposal as waste. Then they used a weight-of-evidence approach to determine that novel entities could, in fact, disrupt the planet's stability.

“The weight of evidence indicates now that we are exceeding the boundary, but there is more work to be done,” Carney Almroth said.

Björn Beeler, the international coordinator for the [International Pollutants Elimination Network](#) (IPEN), who was not involved in this new research, called it a “very smart academic paper” that illustrates the need to act.

“We are about to enter an exponential growth period,” Beeler told Mongabay. “If you are concerned about toxic substance exposure, the amount of toxic substances [including plastic pollution] is set to grow three- [or] fourfold in the decades ahead.”

He added: “If you're worried about it now, it's set to get a lot worse.”

With science falling far behind in assessing risk, and governments largely failing to regulate chemicals, humanity is flying blind into a future where the unforeseen impacts of chemical pollutants could be catastrophic.

The release of novel entities isn't the only planetary boundary that humanity has breached. Climate change, biosphere integrity, land system change and the biogeochemical flows of nitrogen and phosphorus have also pushed past the safe operating limits that keep Earth a habitable place.



## **An ‘existential’ threat to humanity**

What is known about chemical substances and other pollutants has long raised alarms among experts — dating back to [Rachel Carson and the publication of \*Silent Spring\*](#), which helped launch the modern environmental movement. Hazardous chemicals such as [pesticides](#) can damage soil health, contaminate drinking water, and even get carried on the wind, to impact a wider environment and disrupt populations of birds, mammals and fish. Many of the chemicals we ingest, such as [pharmaceuticals](#), persist after being flushed down the toilet, with [wastewater polluting rivers and oceans](#), or even the land when contaminated solid sewage sludge is used to fertilise crops.

Chemical persistence in the environment is a major thorny problem: Research has shown that polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) — highly toxic and carcinogenic substances banned by the US as far back as 1977 and once widely used in coolants and oil paints — have continued [building up in the blubber of killer whales](#) (*Orcinus orca*), posing a genuine threat to a [species that is already struggling](#) in many parts of the world. So called “[forever chemicals](#)” — *perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs)*, that are highly toxic, carcinogenic and act like endocrine disruptors, are currently commonly used in [disposable food packaging](#), cookware, cosmetics and even dental floss. A recent report also found them to be [common in most of the drinking water](#) in the US. They take hundreds or thousands of years to break down, but no US limits have yet been placed on the concentration of forever chemicals in water.

“Even if we were to stop using and releasing [many novel entities], they would still be [here] for decades, or centuries, depending on what [substance] we’re talking about,” Carney Almroth said, adding that the risk of residual impacts from novel entities makes it even more imperative to stop, or at least slow down, the release of these substances.

The new paper in *Science and Technology* takes a specific look at plastics, which have become [ever-present in daily life](#) as food packaging, kitchenware and appliances. In recent years, much attention has been paid to the trillions of [microplastics](#) — fragments smaller than 5 millimeters, or three-sixteenths of an inch — polluting the global oceans, and the potential for larger plastic pieces to entangle or choke wildlife. New [research](#) shows that the sea breeze can even propel microplastics into the atmosphere, contaminating the very air we breathe and [impacting climate change](#).

Plastic is highly problematic since it’s made out of a cocktail of chemicals that can leach out dangerous substances, especially when heated, cooled or scratched. A chemical compound known as bisphenol A (BPA) has been shown to act as an [endocrine disruptor](#) and interfere with hormones, impact immune systems and even promote certain cancers. One [study](#) even found that BPA can be absorbed into the human body through mere skin contact. But it’s not just BPA that’s harmful — many [BPA alternatives](#) have been found to be equally a risk to human health.

“We have been told for many, many decades that [plastics are] inert, and that they don’t release chemicals to their surroundings,” Villarrubia-Gómez said. “More and more, we’re discovering that that’s not true. Plastic leaches other chemicals ... and we are in contact with [plastic] the whole day.”

Plastic isn’t just a problem in its end state. To make plastic, which uses petroleum as its base, greenhouse gases like ethane and methane need to be fracked from the ground and “[cracked](#)” into new compounds, the precursors to plastics. These industrial processes can release a number of toxic chemicals, along with various greenhouse gases, into the environment. The production of plastics is also intimately tied to the fossil fuel industry; as demand for oil drops, the petrochemical industry is ramping up its [production of plastics](#).



“They see plastics as their next piggy bank,” Carney Almroth said. “Simultaneously, there’s a big push for an increase in plastics production and plastic use and plastic sales.”

Beeler said the release of novel entities into the environment poses a similar risk as climate change. “They’re both existential threats to humanity,” he noted. “Climate change [will determine] where you can live and how you can have a livelihood. Chemicals actually just remove your health — it’s very, very direct and personal. So I would draw them [as being at] the same crisis levels. It’s just that we’re not that socially conscious of chemicals and chemical safety, as we are of climate now.”

Determining a chemical’s risk often takes many years of methodical research, as scientists trace the causal connections between a synthetic substance and resulting environmental and health impacts. By then, that substance will often be ubiquitous, used in products across society.

‘Uptick in awareness’

While change is urgently needed to mitigate the impacts of novel entities, Carney Almroth said such an industrial paradigm shift would require a “massive overhaul of systemic societal structures.”

Industries that produce novel entities are “supported by the fact that we require constant economic growth,” she said. “This is one of the ways that they’ve been able to keep producing and using chemicals, even in the face of toxicity data, because they can show that it can grow economies, provide jobs, provide materials and so on and so forth.”

Despite the enormity of the problem, there may be opportunities for change in the near future. For instance, there are calls to form an [international panel on chemical pollution](#), similar to those institutions focused on biodiversity and climate, such as the IUCN or the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

In February and March, the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) will also be meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss a number of environmental issues, including whether to mandate a new global treaty on plastics.

Beeler said that while negotiations may swing in the direction of only treating plastic as a waste issue, there are calls to address the entire plastic life cycle, taking into account all of the chemicals and pollutants plastic releases into the environment from production to waste stream.

He also said there’s also a reason for optimism in the way heightened public interest in plastic pollution has helped raise awareness of the larger problem of synthetic chemical contaminants.

“There’s been a small uptick in awareness [of] the harm from chemicals ... due to the affiliation and link to plastics,” he said. “But prior to plastics, it was really [an awareness] desert — and plastics have created a little oasis of growing consciousness.”

*This story was published with permission from [Mongabay.com](#).*

21 JANUARY 2022, FRIDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **COVID-19 NEWS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



# Philippines tallies 31,173 new COVID-19 cases

Philstar.com January 20, 2022 | 4:21pm



People queue to receive COVID-19 vaccine at a drugstore along Bayan-Bayan Ave. in Marikina City during the pilot implementation of the government's "Resbakuna sa mga Botika" program on Jan. 20, 2022.

The STAR / Walter Bollozos

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines on Thursday registered 31,173 new COVID-19 cases, pushing the national tally to 3,324,478, data from the Department of Health showed.

Of the newly-reported cases, 95% occurred from January 7 to January 20.

The regions with the highest number of additional infections during that period were Metro Manila (30%), Calabarzon (22%) and Central Luzon (9%).

The number of active cases was at 275,364, of which 95% have mild illness.

The DOH also reported that the death toll increased by 110 to 53,153, while recoveries rose by 26,298 to 2,995,961.

Around 43% of 73,989 samples on January 17 tested positive for COVID-19, way above the threshold set by the World Health Organization.

Five testing laboratories did not submit data to the agency.

The utilization rates of intensive care unit beds in the capital region and nationwide were at 51% and 50%, respectively.

## COVID-19 vaccination in pharmacies

- The Philippines launched the [pilot run of COVID-19 booster vaccination program](#) in select drugstores in Metro Manila in a bid to make jabs accessible to more people.
- The DOH told individuals [who received the Sinopharm vaccine](#) to wait for the advice of experts on which booster brand should be administered to them.
- The Manila City government said it is open to the possibility of using the controversial [Manila Bay Dolomite Beach](#) as a vaccination site.
- Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said the refusal of Public Attorney's Office chief [Persida Acosta to get vaccinated](#) contributes to vaccine hesitancy.

— Gaea Katreena Cabico

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/01/20/2155225/philippines-tallies-31173-new-covid-19-cases>





# Gov't monitoring COVID-19 surges in areas outside Metro Manila — Nograles

[Alexis Romero](#) - Philstar.com January 20, 2022 | 5:46pm



Cops from the Eastern Police District conduct a check point along E. Santos Street in Brgy. Concepcion Uno in Marikina City on July 30, 2021.

The STAR / Boy Santos, File photo

MANILA, Philippines — The government is monitoring areas outside Metro Manila that recently posted high growth in COVID-19 cases as the Philippines continues to battle a sharp rise in pandemic infections linked to the highly infectious Omicron variant.

Acting presidential spokesman Karlo Nograles noted that some regions are now at critical risk because of a high two-week growth rate and average daily attack rate or the number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population.

"Based on the report of (Health) Secretary (Francisco) Duque (III) to the President during the Talk to the People, we have seen that there are regions being monitored, aside from NCR (National Capital Region), Region IV-A CALABARZON, Region III (Central Luzon), and then CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region), and Region I (Ilocos)," Nograles said in an interview with One PH last Wednesday.

"Of course, we are monitoring regions that are under Alert Level 3 because they have a high two-week growth rate and a high average daily attack rate," he added.

Nograles said some regions, including Metro Manila, have posted high growth rates in cases but remain under Alert Level 3 because their hospital bed utilization rates have not reached high risk levels. The bed utilization rate in an area with a high risk ADAR and two-week growth rate has to reach 71% for it to be placed under the stricter Alert Level 4, he added.

"In NCR, we are still at moderate (risk) in terms of total bed utilization. So it does not yet fall within the high level of total bed utilization, so we are still under Alert Level 3," Nograles said.

Under Alert Level 3, a number of businesses or activities are allowed up to 30% indoor capacity for fully vaccinated persons and 50% outdoor venue capacity. When an area is placed under Alert Level 4, several establishments or activities may operate or may be undertaken at a maximum of 10% indoor venue capacity for fully vaccinated individuals only and 30% outdoor venue capacity provided that they have been issued a safety seal certification.

Last Monday, Duque reported that six regions are now at critical risk namely Metro Manila, Cagayan Valley, Ilocos, CALABARZON, CAR and Central Luzon. Metro Manila's two-week growth rate in cases was higher by 1,425% from January 4 to 17 compared to the previous two weeks. The two-week growth rates for other regions at critical risk were 3,321% for Cagayan Valley, 3,362% for Ilocos, 3,002% for CALABARZON, 4,436% for CAR, and 2,949% for Central Luzon.



The ADAR per 100,000 population of critical risk regions during the period were 103.59 for Metro Manila, 13.31 for Cagayan Valley, 10.25 for Ilocos, 36.65 for CALABARZON, 25.05 for CAR, and 21.51 for Central Luzon.

As of January 16, the bed utilization rates for five of the six critical risk regions are at moderate risk. Only Central Luzon's bed utilization rate was at low risk. The rest of the country's regions are classified as high risk.

The entire Philippines is now at critical risk with a 1,805% two-week growth rate and an ADAR of 24.82 per 100,000 population from January 4 to 17. The country's healthcare utilization rate remains at low risk, with a bed utilization rate of 48.33% and an intensive care unit beds utilization rate of 49.33% as of January 16.



# Government workers entitled to paid quarantine leaves – CSC

[Robertzon Ramirez](#), [Elizabeth Marcelo](#) - The Philippine Star January 21, 2022 | 12:00am



In a Memorandum Circular dated Jan. 18, the CSC said failure to report for work in instances that government employees are required to undergo isolation or treatment after getting infected with the virus or being identified as “close contacts of a suspect, probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 while in the performance of their official functions” should be considered as excused absence.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has expanded its rule on paid “excused absences” to cover government workers who will be required to undergo quarantine after testing positive for COVID-19 or for being a close contact of an infected person.

In a Memorandum Circular dated Jan. 18, the CSC said failure to report for work in instances that government employees are required to undergo isolation or treatment after getting infected with the virus or being identified as “close contacts of a suspect, probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 while in the performance of their official functions” should be considered as excused absence.

“Excused absence refers to the period when a government worker is not obligated to go to work due to required quarantine period, but are entitled to pay,” the CSC said.

The commission said government workers may be required to adopt a work-from-home arrangement depending on the nature of their job.

## No vacation leaves for BI employees

Meanwhile, Bureau of Immigration personnel at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) are prohibited from going on vacation until the end of the month amid the rising cases of COVID-19 among BI employees, an official said on Wednesday.

Port operations division chief Carlos Capulong said the policy started last Dec. 16, but was extended until Jan. 31 after more BI officers at the NAIA tested positive for the virus.

Capulong said the directive was necessary to ensure unhampered airport operations.

“No applications for leave will be approved to ensure that we have enough personnel to service the traveling public,” Capulong said.

Records showed that 138 BI personnel have contracted COVID-19 while another 129 are still on quarantine pending the results of their swab tests.

The BI has downgraded its office operations to 30 percent to avoid the spread of the virus.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/01/21/2155278/government-workers-entitled-paid-quarantine-leaves-csc>



## ‘Get jabbed or swabbed’

‘In accordance with the directives of the President, we are appealing to our government officials to get vaccinated,’ Health Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje said in a televised briefing

Published 6 hours ago on January 21, 2022 01:00 AM

By **MJ Blancaflor and Alvin Murcia**



Public Attorney's Office (PAO) chief Persida Acosta

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra on Thursday prodded Public Attorney's Office (PAO) chief Persida Acosta to comply with government rules on unvaccinated people like her regarding onsite work.

Guevarra said he advised Acosta on Covid-19 work protocols after she admitted in a television interview that she's not inclined to get vaccinated against Covid-19 due to her age and other health considerations.

“If unvaccinated but must report for onsite work, the requirement is to at least undergo RT-PCR or antigen testing once every two weeks,” Guevarra told reporters, referring to his message to Acosta.

On Thursday, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon called on Malacañang and the Department of Justice (DoJ) to stop the PAO chief from reporting to work until she gets vaccinated.

Drilon said that Acosta being unvaccinated runs counter with the government's ongoing push to get more Filipinos better protected against Covid-19, which has infected over 3.32 million people in the Philippines.

Joining the fray, the Department of Health (DoH) called on all government officials and workers to get the anti-Covid shots, saying unvaccinated people put their co-workers at risk.

The department noted reports that some officials have remained unvaccinated even as the government steps up its inoculation efforts to protect people from the dreaded disease.

“In accordance with the directives of the President, we are appealing to our government officials to get vaccinated,” Health Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje said in a televised briefing.

“They not only put themselves at risk, but also those who were vaccinated because they may get infected, causing Covid-19 spread in the workplace,” she added.

Cabotaje, who is also chairperson of the national Covid-19 vaccination operations center, acknowledged that immunization remains optional in the Philippines.



She did not name the unvaccinated government officials she was referring to.

Acosta, in her defense, said that while she is not an “anti-vaxxer,” her health choices should be respected. “We should respect people who do not want to be vaccinated. This is a right of refusal,” she said.

“Let us not deprive those unvaccinated but healthy of their right to go to work because they have families to feed. And the RT-PCR which is being required should not be shouldered by the workers since it will eat up their measly salaries,” Acosta added.

She said that no Philippine law mandates Covid-19 vaccination.

At the height of the Dengvaxia fiasco, Acosta repeatedly claimed that children who had received the anti-dengue vaccine supposedly died because of their jabs. Her claim had been refuted by the government.

The Dengvaxia controversy created a national health scare that saw immunization rates for various diseases like measles and polio plummeting in the country.

As for Covid-19 vaccination, the government launched various initiatives to address vaccine hesitancy such as information campaigns and putting up various inoculation sites across the country.

On Thursday, five select pharmacies in Metro Manila began offering Covid-19 booster jabs to make vaccines accessible to more people.

The program is expected to expand to other drug stores in the country.

Over 56.44 million Filipinos have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19, while 5.61 million individuals have received booster shots.

Source: [https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/01/21/get-jabbed-or-swabbed/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=get-jabbed-or-swabbed&utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=get-jabbed-or-swabbed](https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/01/21/get-jabbed-or-swabbed/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=get-jabbed-or-swabbed&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=get-jabbed-or-swabbed)



# Virgin coconut oil helps in mild Covid-19 relief

By Ma. Cristina Arayata January 20, 2022, 7:34 pm



(Image grabbed from DOST Secretary Fortunato de la Peña's Facebook page)

**MANILA** – An official of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) on Thursday said the study on the effectiveness of virgin coconut oil (VCO) as an adjunct therapy for Covid-19 showed that it has helped in the symptom's relief and faster recovery of clinical trial participants.

"Base sa community (based clinical) trials ng DOST-Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) sa Sta. Rosa (Laguna), *kung saan nilalagay nila ang VCO sa pagkain ng mga participants na mild Covid cases bilang dagdag sa standard na pangangalaga, nababawasan ang mga sintomas ng mild Covid cases at hindi nagiging severe case, at mas maaga silang gumagaling* (Community-based clinical trials held by DOST-FNRI in Sta. Rosa, Laguna showed that mild Covid-19 patients who had VCO mixed in their meals had their symptoms reduced. Their condition did not become severe, and they recovered faster," DOST Undersecretary Rowena Guevara said in a televised Laging Handa public briefing.

In the FNRI's community-based clinical trials held in Sta. Rosa, Laguna from May to November 2020 and in Valenzuela City from June to December 2021, half of the participants were provided with the intervention while half belonged to the controlled group or those that did not receive VCO mixed in their meals.

DOST Secretary Fortunato de la Peña earlier said the VCO group showed no Covid-19-related symptoms on Day 18 of the clinical trials, while symptoms persisted in some patients in the controlled group until Day 23.

The VCO group has recovered from infection or inflammation approximately 14 days after being subjected to the intervention, he said.

Guevara said participants in the Valenzuela clinical trial directly drank the VCO.

"Included in the evaluation are the C-reactive protein level, hematology test, pulmonary function, viral load, lipid profile and resolution of signs and symptoms, as well as the number of days the participants are in the center (site). Results were the same as the one held in Sta. Rosa," she said.

Guevara added that this shows VCO can be mixed with meals and can be taken directly to reduce the symptoms among mild Covid-19 cases.

She also clarified that VCO can be taken by both adults and minors.



"Kasi ang VCO ay may FDA approval bilang functional food; so kahit wala kang Covid-19 ay puwede kang uminom ng VCO, mapa-bata o matanda (Because VCO was approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a functional food, it can be taken whether by kids or adults, even if they don't have Covid-19)," she said.

Meanwhile, for those interested to become VCO producers, Guevara said the FDA has requirements for them to get a license to operate.

"VCO must be in compliance with the Philippine national standards. The FDA also oversees the production line, if it is compliant with good manufacturing processes, food safety, etc.," Guevara said.

She said with this study, those who will apply as VCO producers may ask for a copy of the clinical trial results so they can indicate that the product will also be for symptomatic mild Covid-19 relief.

"If approved by the FDA, they can include in the VCO packaging that the product can be used to reduce the symptoms among mild Covid-19 positive individuals," Guevara said. **(PNA)**



**#OneDENR**

**Covid-19  
Situation and Response**





# DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 677

## ENERO 20, 2022

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,  
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:  
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

# 8.3%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO  
**275,364**

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

# 90.1%

TOTAL NG GUMALING  
**2,995,961**

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

# 1.60%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY  
**53,153**

MGA BAGONG KASO **31,173**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **26,298**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **110**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **3,324,478**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING ENERO 18  
DATOS NGAYONG ENERO 20  
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG ENERO 18

# 43.3%

PORSYENTO NG MGA  
NAGPOSITIBO

# 73,989

BILANG NG  
TINIST

HALOS  
**98.3%**  
ANG MILD AT  
ASYMPTOMATIC  
NA KASO!

**SANITIZE ANG  
KAMAY AT IWASAN  
ANG KULOB NA LUGAR**

KABUANG PILIPINAS  
PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION  
PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

KALAGAYAN NG MGA  
AKTIBONG KASO

ICU BEDS (3.8K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>50%</b> Utilized
ISOLATION BEDS (20.6K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>51%</b> Utilized
WARD BEDS (14.5K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>54%</b> Utilized
VENTILATORS (3.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS)	<b>24%</b> Utilized

ICU BEDS (1.2K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>51%</b> Utilized
ISOLATION BEDS (4.9K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>47%</b> Utilized
WARD BEDS (4.5K TOTAL BEDS)	<b>58%</b> Utilized
VENTILATORS (1.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS)	<b>29%</b> Utilized

8,424 Asymptomatic
262,168 Mild
2,979 Moderate
1,488 Severe
305 Critical

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For health concerns and emergencies, you may access here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

[bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines](https://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines)

### DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

• 1555 • 0915-777-7777  
• 02-886-505-00 • 0919-977-3333

[bit.ly/OHCCHotline](https://bit.ly/OHCCHotline)

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[bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine](https://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine)

SeeYouDoc  
seeyoudoc.com  
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KonsultaMD  
konsulta.md  
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CloudPx  
cloudpx.ph/

Telimed and Medgate  
medgate.ph/shop/telimedplan/purchase

MedCheck  
medcheck.com.ph/find-a-doctor/SeeYouDoc

TelAventusMD  
TelAventusMD@aventusmedical.com.ph  
TelAventusMD

HealthNow  
healthnow.ph/  
help@healthnow.ph  
HealthNow



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App  
o gamitin ang WEBAPP  
at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph



Walang internet or load?  
Report via SMS

2158-5779 (for Globe users)  
225-655-779 (for other users)



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?  
I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH  
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH  
KONTRACOVIDPH: kontracovid.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

[OfficialDOHgov](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov)

[@DOHgovph](https://twitter.com/DOHgovph)

[doh.gov.ph](https://doh.gov.ph)

[02\) 894-COVID / 1555](tel:02894COVID)

21 JANUARY 2022, FRIDAY



**DENR**

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
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


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