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**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## Cimatu visits Ulysses-hit Provident Village in Marikina

**Published** November 21, 2020 3:41pm

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu on Saturday visited Provident Village, which was heavily flooded during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses in Marikina City last week.

Cimatu, co-chairperson of the Build Back Better Task Force, was accompanied by Marikina City Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro during his visit, according to a report on 24 Oras News Alert.

Six people died in Marikina City due to the flooding, the local government said.

Malacañang earlier said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department Public Works departments will [lead the government's rehabilitation program](#) for areas hit by the recent typhoons.

The Marikina River swelled due to heavy rains from Typhoon Ulysses, flooding many areas in the city. The water level of Marikina River [exceeded](#) the level during Tropical Storm in 2009, when widespread flooding also occurred.

Teodoro said on Saturday 12,000 individuals or 3,000 families were [staying in evacuation centers](#). —**KG, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/765079/cimatu-visits-ulysses-hit-provident-village-in-marikina/story/>



## DENR-ERDB to Lead National Biotechnology Week celebration

BY VILLAGE CONNECT ON NOVEMBER 21, 2020

### ***DENR-ERDB to Lead National Biotechnology Week celebration***



## **NATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY WEEK 2020**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)—through its Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB)—is leading this year’s celebration of the National Biotechnology Week (NBW) from Nov. 23 to 27.



**Technology 03. About Genetic Diversity Studies of Forest Tree species in the Philippines**

ERDB, the DENR’s research and development arm, has lined up online activities to mark NBW 2020 with focus on strengthening the economy while promoting biotechnology.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu underscored the importance of promoting biotechnology and its benefits amid the devastating socioeconomic impacts of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the recent natural disasters.

Cimatu said biotechnology “sheds a gleaming light of hope that there are still interventions that can be done to resuscitate the economy and society.”

“With COVID-19 and Typhoons Quinta, Rolly, Siony, Tony and Ulysses happening in the same year, hopelessness seems abound. But through biotechnology, we want to show that there are still opportunities for growth and for refreshing changes in our contemporary world,” Cimatu said.



For this year, the NBW's theme is "Bioteknolohiya: Pagbangon at Pag-asa tungo sa Matatag na Komunidad, Kapaligiran at Ekonomiya" to adapt with the current events under the new normal.

NBW has been annually celebrated every last week of November through Presidential Proclamation 1414 since 2004.

The event serves as an advocacy to increase awareness on biotechnology and its contributions to agriculture and food security, health care services, education, industrial and economic development, and environmental sustainability.

During the weeklong event, seven Philippine government agencies—together with private, local and international organizations—will enlighten the public on the misconceptions and negative connotations on biotechnology.

They will also showcase generated biotechnologies for medical, agricultural, industrial, and environmental applications; and increase public awareness, education, and understanding on the use and benefits of biotechnology.

"We hope that students, faculty, entrepreneurs, government agencies, non-government organizations, policymakers, media, and the general public will be able to join us in this week-long virtual event to get to know more about biotechnology," Cimatu said.



## Manila Bats For Revival Of 'Nilad' Plant Population



By [Featuresdesk \(MD\)](#) November 20, 2020

The “nilad” plant where the name “Manila” came from will soon repopulate the city through a partnership between the city government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR-ERDB).

Manila Mayor Francisco ‘Isko Moreno’ Domagoso in a meeting with DENR-ERDB on Tuesday agreed to launch the “Nilad for Maynila” Project.

The project that will bring back the nilad plant in Manila aims to re-green a part of the Manila Bay.

The toponym or place name of Manila is said to be coined from the abundance of the stalky-rice plant that features flowers of bright white and yellow.

The nilad plant is said to be abundant in the city before and people say it is from the phrase “may nilad” meaning “where nilad is”.

A quick survey identified four potential sites where the nilad plant will be initially planted.

These are the areas of the Baseco Beach, a vacant lot near Quirino Grandstand, an area adjacent to the Manila Yacht Club, and on the islands along the Manila Baywalk.

Domagoso ordered Manila Department of Public Service director Kenneth Amurao to deploy Team Mandaragat, Baseco Beach Warriors, and Estero Rangers to assist the city government in planting and protecting the nilad population in the identified locations.

The nilad plant, with scientific name *Scyphiphora Hydrophyllacea*, is a mangrove species that grew abundantly along Manila Bay and Pasig River during the early times.

Mangroves help people weather the impacts of climate change and help mitigate its causes.

They have the capacity to take more carbon out of the atmosphere than terrestrial forests. (PNA)

Source: [http://thephilippinepost.com/manila-bats-for-revival-of-nilad-plant-population/?fbclid=IwAR2GnwsMwVf5mGVomXnqaot76Md\\_R1aofnhnQPSSUsCE4VEuX0UBWGMuho](http://thephilippinepost.com/manila-bats-for-revival-of-nilad-plant-population/?fbclid=IwAR2GnwsMwVf5mGVomXnqaot76Md_R1aofnhnQPSSUsCE4VEuX0UBWGMuho)



# On top of war on illegal logging, gov't to plant 200 million trees

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Nov 21, 2020 5:43:28 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, November 21) — The Department of the Interior and Local Government is planning to launch a massive tree planting campaign next year in response to the devastating floods caused by recent typhoons.

"Ang goal po nito ay makapagtanim tayo ng 200 million trees (The goal is for us to plant 200 million trees)," DILG spokesperson, Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya said in an online media briefing on Saturday.

Malaya said Interior Secretary Eduardo Año targets the rollout for next year, when orders will be made to local government units in support of the national greening program.

Meanwhile, Año has also directed the Philippine National Police to lead the crackdown against illegal logging and illegal mining in areas ravaged by tropical cyclones; the most recent was Typhoon Ulysses which left 73 people dead and billions worth of damage.

"Partikular po diyan sa Cagayan, Isabela, kahit na rin po sa Kabikulan dahil isa nga po ito sa mga sinasabing dahilan kung bakit nagkaroon ng unprecedented widespread flooding dahil nga po dito sa mga illegal acts na ito," Malaya said.

[Translation: These illegal acts are among the reasons cited for the unprecedented widespread flooding particularly in Cagayan, Isabela, and even the Bicol region.]

President Rodrigo Duterte earlier [ordered the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to investigate the logging and mining activities](#) in Cagayan Valley, one of the regions worst hit by Typhoon Ulysses. He said it's about time the government strengthened forest protection efforts to prevent future disasters.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said cease-and-desist orders have been issued against small-scale mining operations, adding that 10 people who died in landslides were working in illegal mining sites.

Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba earlier called for a "holistic approach" from the government to address environmental problems such as the denudation of forests and heavy siltation of riverbeds, which he said led to the worst floods in the province's recent history. Floodwater reached over 13 meters high in some areas, leaving thousands of residents stranded and desperate for rescue.

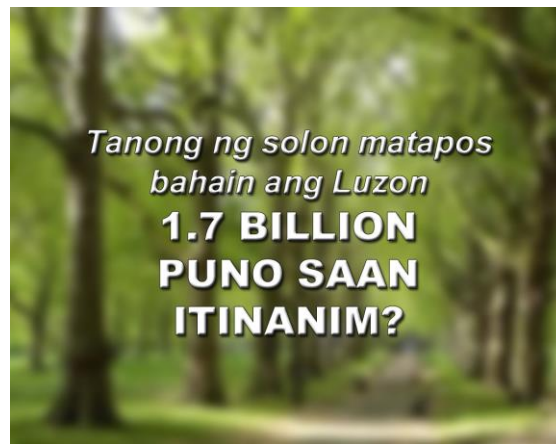
A total of ₱1.5 billion has been released to aid typhoon-hit local government units, Malaya said, following the declaration of a state of calamity in Luzon.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/11/21/tree-planting-war-against-illegal-logging.html>



## Tanong ng solon matapos bahain ang Luzon 1.7 BILLION PUNO SAAN ITINANIM?

November 19, 2020 jake



NAIS ng isang mambabatas sa Kamara na matukoy kung nasaan ang 1.7 bilyong puno na dapat naitanim sa nakalipas na mga taon.

Ito ang misyon ng House Resolution (HR) 1361 na inakda ni Quezon City Rep. Alfred Vargas para imbestigahan ang National Greening Program (NGP) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ginawa ng mambabatas ang nasabing resolusyon matapos salantain ng malawakang pagbaha ang Luzon partikular na sa Bicol Region, Marikina, Rizal at Cagayan Valley nang manalasa ang Bagyong Ulysses.

Isinisi sa kawalan ng punong kahoy sa mga kabundukan ang malawakang pagbaha subalit ayon sa mambabatas, noong 2011 ay sinimulan ng NGP ang pagtatanim ng 1.5 bilyon puno sa may 1.5 milyong ektaryang kabundukan sa bansa at natapos ito noong 2016.

“While DENR claimed to have 1.7 billion trees during the five-year span of the NGP, data shows total forest cover of the Philippines is the lowest in Asia at only 23 percent,” ani Vargas sa kanyang resolusyon.

Dahil dito, nais malaman ng mambabatas kung totoong naitanim ang 1.7 billion puno na ito, saan ititanim at ano na ang kalagayan ng mga ito lalo na’t nagkaroon ng malawakang pagbaha kamakailan.

Hindi sinabi ni Vargas kung magkano ang ginastos ng gobyerno sa pagtatanim ng mga punong ito subalit noong 2019 ay humingi ang NGP ng P2.6 billion para sa pagtatanim ng 985,000 puno sa may 900 ektaryang kabundukan sa buong bansa. (BERNARD TAGUINOD)

Source: [http://saksingayon.com/nasyunal/tanong-ng-solon-matapos-bahain-ang-luzon-1-7-billion-puno-saan-itinanim/?utm\\_source=ReviveOldPost&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR3OwGrtpTl85opSv7o7tkCctQwys22GXsMB\\_Sf2qJWr3wjKU5LdKUJA\\_zQ](http://saksingayon.com/nasyunal/tanong-ng-solon-matapos-bahain-ang-luzon-1-7-billion-puno-saan-itinanim/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR3OwGrtpTl85opSv7o7tkCctQwys22GXsMB_Sf2qJWr3wjKU5LdKUJA_zQ)



# LTFRB tells transpo operators: Plant trees before acquiring franchise

By: [Consuelo Marquez](#) - Reporter / [@ConsINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 09:37 PM November 21, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has mandated applicants of franchise to plant trees in a bid to boost the government's reforestation program.

In a statement, the LTFRB said the mandatory tree planting for public transportation operators starts on December 1.

Under its memorandum issued last Nov. 20, the agency revealed the following rules for tree planting:

1. Those applying for a certificate of public convenience with at least 10 units. LTFRB said one unit is equivalent to one tree.
2. Those applying for extension of CPC validity must plant trees. Every unit is also equivalent to one tree.

LTFRB said transportation operators should coordinate with local government units as well as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for their tree planting activity.

LTFRB, which aims to plant 50,000 trees, said the mandatory tree planting came after most of Luzon areas were battered by Typhoon Rolly and Typhoon Ulysses.

It was LTFRB Region II Director Edward Cabase who recommended the idea. In Region II or Cagayan Valley, Cagayan and Isabela were submerged by massive floods brought by the impacts of Typhoon Ulysses.

## Climate crisis

In a previous report, the Ecological Threats Register (ETR) revealed that more than a billion people will be displaced from their houses in the next 30 years due to the [climate crisis](#).

The report studied the risk profiles of 157 countries including the Philippines on threats such as population growth, water stress, food insecurity, droughts, floods, cyclones, and rising temperatures and sea levels.

At least 60 percent of the countries in the report would face flooding threats because of rising sea levels and temperatures.

In the report, the Philippines, under the medium-risk group of the ETR, will face at least three ecological threats in the coming years.

CFC

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1363374/ltfrb-tells-transpo-operators-plant-trees-before-acquiring-franchise>





Under LTFRB Memorandum Circular 2020-076, which takes effect on Dec.1, the Board requires franchise applicants to plant one tree for every unit being registered.

STAR/ File

## 'Plant trees, get PUV franchise'

[Romina Cabrera](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 22, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Tree planting will now be a requirement when applying for or renewing transport franchises for all public utility vehicles (PUVs), the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said yesterday.

Under LTFRB Memorandum Circular 2020-076, which takes effect on Dec.1, the Board requires franchise applicants to plant one tree for every unit being registered.

The circular initially covers all applicants for the issuance of a new certificate of public convenience (CPC) with at least 10 units, as well as all corporations and cooperatives applying for the extension of their existing franchise.

Some 50,000 trees are expected to be planted in the first three months of implementation of the new LTFRB order.

Eventually, the new policy shall cover all applicants with a minimum of 10 units that will have transactions with the LTFRB.

For context, there are about 170,000 public utility jeepneys (PUJs), 26,000 utility van (UV) express units, an estimated 25,000 public utility buses (PUBs) and 35,000 transport network vehicle service (TNVS) operating in the country.

Operators will have to secure proof of compliance and corresponding photographs of the trees that they planted as part of their application requirements.

They shall coordinate with the local government unit (LGU) where they hold business or the concerned area office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the proof of compliance.

The LTFRB said failure to attach the new requirements means that their application will not be accepted.

The LTFRB said that successive natural disasters this year called for drastic measures and coordinated measures between government agencies and private stakeholders.



The board agreed to initiate efforts to plant trees as a pre-condition for the issuance of CPCs as part of its responsibility to protect the environment.

Just last week, following the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses, Transport Secretary Arthur Tugade proposed that tree planting be one of the mandatory requirements to secure transport franchises, licenses and permits.

This will be the contribution of the transport sector in the reforestation program of the government.



News5

12h · 🌐

Magiging epektibo ang Memorandum Circular 2020-076 simula December 1, 2020.

BUONG DETALYE: <https://bit.ly/3fkTPmD>

**NEWS 5 DIGITAL**

## PAGTATANIM NG PUNO, KASAMA NA SA FRANCHISE REQUIREMENT NG LTFRB

Inaasahang nasa 50,000 na puno ang maitatanim sa buong bansa sa mga susunod na buwan matapos ilabas ng Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board ang Memorandum Circular 2020-076. Sa ilalim nito, mandatory ang tree planting sa mga kooperatiba o indibidwal na nais kumuha ng Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC).

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courtesy: PIA

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## MALAWAKANG PAGTATANIM SOLUSYON SA BAHA – DA

November 20, 2020 jake



NANINIWALA si Agriculture Secretary William Dar na malawakang pagtatanim sa watersheds ang solusyon upang mapigilan ang malaganap na pagbaha sa maraming lungsod at bayan sa bansa.

Ani Dar, ang pagtatanim ng mga puno ay napapanahon at pangmatagalang solusyon laban sa pagbaha, bukod sa iba pang plano ng pamahalaan.

“We need engineering interventions here. At the same time, we need to reforest in a big way our watersheds. Otherwise, we will have a year in, year out, itong problema na ito,” paliwanag ni Dar.

“I am hoping that as the engineering interventions would start now, like dredging, we should also start reforesting in a big way all our watersheds,” susog ng kalihim.

Batay sa datos, 18 watershed sa Luzon, na may magandang tanim ng mga puno, ang kailangan upang mayroong matibay na sasalo sa mga tubig.

Kapansin-pansin, nang humagupit ang magkakasunod na bagyo sa bansa, partikular sa Luzon, marami nang lugar na hindi nakaliligtas mula sa buhos ng ulan at putik mula sa kabundukan.

Ayon sa apektadong mga residente, halos wala nang puno ang mga kagubatan, dahil sa hindi napahihintong ilegal na pagtotroso.

Katulad sa Cagayan, marami nang puno ang nawala na sasalo sa agos ng tubig tuwing bumabagyo, dahilan upang lumubog ang maraming bayan sa nasabing lalawigan nang bumigwas ang Bagyong Ulysses.

Halos kapisaso na rin lang ang mga puno sa San Mateo at Montalban sa Rizal, dahilan upang regular na bumubuhos ang napakalakas na tubig na may kasamang putik, mula rito patungo sa lungsod ng Marikina.

Ayon pa sa impormasyong ipinarating ng mga residente, talamak ang quarrying sa San Mateo at Montalban ngunit mukhang pinabayaan na ng mga alkalde sa dalawang bayang ito. (NELSON S. BADILLA)

Source: [http://saksingayon.com/metro/malawakang-pagtatanim-solusyon-sa-baha-da/?utm\\_source=ReviveOldPost&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR0PJFThQbNzZaUX4IPrbFKZT9hXn4Nb4aGtnE4ITCACyWFEZKq-Sz70nLk](http://saksingayon.com/metro/malawakang-pagtatanim-solusyon-sa-baha-da/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR0PJFThQbNzZaUX4IPrbFKZT9hXn4Nb4aGtnE4ITCACyWFEZKq-Sz70nLk)



## 'Ulysses' great floods: Another wake-up call?

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

November 22, 2020



*The Philippine Army Disaster Response Team 525th and Barangay Disaster Relief and Response Team in Doña Pepeng Subdivision rescue residents trapped in North Libis Subdivision in San Mateo, Rizal.*

The howling winds and torrential rains have kept people awake and praying for the storm to pass when it was felt the strongest in the middle of the night on November 11.

Even before Typhoon Ulysses's (international name Vamco) landfall in the town of Patnanungan in Quezon province in Southern Luzon at 10 p.m., power supply and telecommunication, including wireless Internet services in many areas on its track were cut off momentarily, silencing social-media platforms where feeds are mostly about blow-by-blow accounts of the typhoon in their area. But as soon as services were restored, social media was suddenly filled with cries for help.

### Great flood



*A one-story house (right), with only its roof visible, is submerged in water in San Mateo, Rizal.*

In the morning, the typhoon's worst impact was revealed. Parts of Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon were turned into a massive water world.

Reminiscent of Typhoon Ondoy (international name Ketsana) that caused the great flood in September 2009, Ulysses dumped an equivalent of a month's rain in just a day, turning roads into ravaging rivers.

Due to Ulysses, six dams in Luzon were forced to open flood-control gates as water reached critical levels. Major rivers in Luzon have likewise overflowed, causing the massive flood in many areas.



Eastern Metro Manila, Southern Luzon and Cagayan Valley were heavily submerged.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported that 67 people died due to Ulysses as of November 14.

The national government as well as local government units (LGUs) in many areas were caught by surprise by the flooding as tens of thousands of families were unable to vacate their homes to safer grounds and were forced to climb atop roofs needing rescue.

Environmentalists were quick to blame the floods on the continuing environmental degradation courtesy of illegal logging, mining and quarrying.

## Worse than Ondoy

Reaching 22 meters, the water level in the Marikina River surpassed Ondoy's record of 21.5 meters, according to Marikina Mayor Marcelino Teodoro.



*Bald mountain at a portion of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in Rizal province.*

Teodoro admitted that they underestimated Ulysses, making their preparations falling short of expectation.

Interviewed by the media on November 12, Teodoro said they were anticipating the water level in the Marikina River to reach only 18 meters high, at most.

Almost all 16 barangays, including those not historically experiencing severe flooding, were submerged.

While the flood during Ondoy was considered a wake-up call with several laws enacted on its account, the great flood caused by Ulysses a decade later proved a failure in many levels—on the part of concerned government agencies and LGUs, to address the environmental degradation, or at the very least, prepare for the worst-case scenario.

Republic Act (RA) 9729, or the Climate Change Act, was enacted on October 23, 2009, a month after Ondoy.

The law calls for the mainstreaming of climate change into government policy and created the Climate Change Commission, the climate change coordinating body.

A year after, RA 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, was passed. It institutionalizes the government's disaster response from the national government down to the smallest unit of the government.

On November 24, 2011, Proclamation 296, signed by then-President Benigno Aquino, established the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL). It covers a total of 26,125.64 hectares in Antipolo City, and the towns of Baras, Rodriguez, San Mateo, and Tanay, in Rizal province.



## Dying ecosystem

Just a few days after Ulysses, the Masungi Georeserve Foundation posted a statement on its Facebook page describing the Upper Marikina Watershed suffering from “Stage 4” forest cancer.

Accompanied by photographs of a denuded forest, Masungi’s Facebook post on November 13 lamented that the efforts to restore the UMRBPL apparently failed.

“Had the forest rehabilitation efforts years ago were taken seriously, the flooding and devastation in surrounding cities and communities when typhoon occurs would not have happened,” it said. “Restoration is the only way to go. It is not only the planting of native trees but the restoration of an entire working ecosystem,” the statement added.

It explained: “Being a nearby forest to Metro Manila, the Upper Marikina Watershed regulates water flow, enhances water quality, and reduces the risk of floods and landslides in downstream cities like Marikina. It is the only sustainable and long-term solution coupled with smart infrastructure and disaster risk management.”

## ‘Management failures’

For its part, environmental group Kalikasan-People’s Network for the Environment (PNE) blamed the floods not only on the watershed degradation and extreme rainfall event.

It also pointed to the dam’s management failure, apparently blaming the release of excess waters from large dams during the heavy downpour that aggravated flooding in Luzon.

“All these combined transformed the entire island of Luzon into a virtual water world,” Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan-PNE told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on November 14.

Dulce also criticized the national and local governments for their failure to act according to their mandates to reduce the risk of disaster.

## Heavily silted rivers

In separate fora and telephone interviews, environment officials acknowledged the various problems that contributed to the recent flooding.

In Cagayan and Isabela provinces and nearby areas in the Cagayan Valley region, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu blamed the siltation of the Cagayan River caused by the degradation of the watershed.

At a news conference on November 15, Cimatu said a massive dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River and a massive reforestation of the surrounding watersheds are needed to address the problem.

Rabin Quilala, deputy executive director at the DENR’s River Basin Control Office (RBCO), said the flooding in Marikina City and low-lying areas in Metro Manila and nearby towns of Rizal can be directly attributed to the degradation of the Marikina River Basin.

The situation of the Marikina River Basin generally reflects the problems besetting all other river basins in the Philippines, he said.



“The status of river basins in the country are basically the same because of forest denudation,” he added.

Major rivers, he said, are already heavily silted, making areas close to rivers prone to flooding. Quilala recognized that addressing the multifaceted problems besetting the country’s river basins requires long-term planning and implementation.

The DENR-RBCO already had various integrated master plans for the country’s major river basins. However, he said funding for the implementation of the various programs as recommended by experts that crafted the master plans remains a “big problem.”

Hard engineering that will require a huge budget, he said, is needed, to prevent, if not mitigate flooding.

Such activities include massive river-dredging, construction of check dams or small water impounding areas, river dikes and even irrigation canals to divert floodwaters, harness water through hydropower generation, and boost crop production, at the same time, on top of reforestation degraded watersheds.

## ‘Still recovering’

Isidro L. Mercado, the Rizal Provincial Environment and Natural Resource Officer, said as far as the UMRBPL is concerned, the protected area has somehow recovered from decades of abuse and forest denudation.

He said currently, around 70 percent to 75 percent of the almost 26,000-hectare UMRBPL is already covered by a lush forest.

“Compared to the 50-percent forest cover when we started in 2011, forest cover is now 70 percent to 75 percent,” Mercado told the BusinessMirror on November 14.

However, he said outside the protected areas, trees planted through the National Greening Program (NGP) have yet to fully grow and mature.

## Climate-change factor

DENR Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon, for his part, attributed the flooding in Luzon to the excessive rainfall.

“Imagine the 356 mm rainfall in Tanay only. That is equivalent to a month of rainfall already,” said Calderon, also an Assistant Secretary for Climate Change of the DENR.

The fact remains that various development activities in Marikina City have weakened the watershed’s capacity to absorb rainwater, he said.

“When I flew [by helicopter] over the Marikina Watershed, I saw the forest is thick. The problem is the areas outside the protected area,” Calderon told the BusinessMirror on November 13.

He said rainwater cascading from the top of the mountains to the Marikina River in five hours to six hours only means the forest is healthy. He also noted that the soil was already saturated because of past typhoons before Ulysses came.





## Problems and solutions

On November 14, DENR Undersecretary Jonas R. Leones, for Policy, Planning and International Affairs, acknowledged that quarry operations may have taken its toll on the Marikina River anew.

He said while many quarry operations in Rizal, based on the plotting of the DENR revealed that they are not within the watershed, the operations still contribute to the environmental degradation and the siltation of the Marikina River.

There are 10 to 11 Mineral Production Sharing Agreements and 22 plots that operate with local government-issued permits in San Mateo and Rodriguez in Rizal, according to Leones, Cimatu's spokesman.

But whether quarrying is done in public or private land, he said its operation must be strictly regulated and limited to minimize their environmental impact.

“We may need to sit down with the LGUs on this one. On our [DENR] part, we will look into the quarry operation's environmental compliance certificate,” he said.

Meanwhile, the official said care and maintenance of NGP sites and livelihood program for upland dwellers will have to do for now due to budget constraints.

Livelihood projects for upland dwellers in watersheds will help reduce the pressure on the environment, acknowledging that tree-poaching, charcoal-making and slash-and-burn farming are also a big challenge to the ongoing reforestation effort, including the rehabilitation of the Marikina Watershed.

*Image credits: [Bernard Testa](#), [Rita Abarquez](#), [Masungi Georeserve Foundation](#)*



## Illegal loggers, miners in DILG, PNP crosshairs

posted November 22, 2020 at 12:40 am

by [Manila Standard](#)

Authorities pointed to environmental abuse as a factor in the destructive floods this month in parts of Luzon, saying the government will crackdown on illegal loggers and miners in the country's north.

Interior Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya told a public press briefing that Interior Secretary Eduardo Año had directed police to prioritize crackdowns in provinces affected by floods over the past month.

Malaya said Año ordered PNP chief Debold Sinas to hold a crackdown in all sorts of illegal logging and illegal mining in areas affected by storms particularly in Cagayan, Isabela, and in the Bicol region because this was said to be the cause of unprecedented widespread flooding.

Parts of the Bicol region experienced lahar flow from the Mayon Volcano as Super Typhoon Rolly hit Luzon, particularly in Albay, earlier this month, with some residents blaming quarrying.

Cagayan and Isabela were, meanwhile, inundated last week with widespread flooding, with water levels reaching rooftops and residents appealing for rescue via social media. Among other reasons, officials said illegal logging was a factor in the worst floods seen in the area in decades.

DILG next year will roll out a project for local government units to encourage tree planting among their constituents, targeting the planting of 200 million trees nationwide.

Malaya said: "Our goal in strengthening national tree planting is to plant 200 million trees. Año wants this to start next year. Memorandum circulars will be released to encourage widespread tree planting campaigns in support of the national greening program from the barangays to the highest government level.

Meanwhile, with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) under fire for the severe flooding in Isabela and Cagayan when Typhoon Ulysses swamped the provinces last week, Senator Richard Gordon said the agency should be properly supervised to avoid a repeat of the catastrophic incident.

"We cannot solve everything through legislation, all the laws are there. What is important is that NIA is properly supervised," he said when asked how he could address the issue through legislation.

Gordon advised NIA to practice the 4Ps – Predict, Plan, Prepare and Practice like they do in the Philippine Red Cross where he is chairman and CEO -- to mitigate the effect of disasters and more lives and property will be saved.

The PRC head also supported the call to include dam releasing in the alerts issued by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, adding that in the Red Cross, they regularly monitor the water level in the different dams so they could warn residents to evacuate if they are nearing spilling level.

"The Red Cross monitors the status of the dams. For example, the Tullahan River, we ask people to evacuate, we tell them that it is about to overflow," he said.

The release of water from the dams reportedly worsened flooding situations in Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, the Cordillera Administrative Region, and Metro Manila.

In Cagayan and Isabela, the release of water from Magat Dam, one of the biggest dams in Asia, at the height of the storm allegedly triggered massive flooding in Cagayan Valley and left at least nine dead.

Meanwhile, NIA chief Ricardo Visaya said the spillway gates of Magat Dam had to be opened amid the heavy rains from Typhoon Ulysses to prevent the dam from breaking and causing a bigger catastrophe that would have affected millions of people.

In a related development, the government has released P1.5 billion in funds for areas badly hit by recent storms that spawned severe flooding across Luzon, an official from the Department of the Interior and Local Government said Saturday.

Malaya said: "Since state of calamity was declared, the SARO and the NCA were already released, amounting to P1.5 billion for LGUs badly-hit by the consecutive typhoons."

The funds were taken from a P16-billion budget the Department of Budget and Management allocated for disaster response.

President Rodrigo Duterte earlier placed all of Luzon under a state of calamity after consecutive storms, notably Typhoons Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses, ravaged parts of the country's biggest island, causing catastrophic floods.



Other local government units affected by the storms may request funds from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Malaya added.

Among other areas hit by widespread floods during Ulysses was Metro Manila, particularly Marikina.

Meanwhile, the number of injuries attributed to Typhoon Ulysses has climbed to 68, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said in its Saturday update.

The number of deaths remained at 73, and 19 people were still missing.

The deaths, injured, and missing were recorded in the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, the Bicol, and the Cordillera regions, and the National Capital Region.

Affected families were placed at 912,912, which is equivalent to 3,747,201 persons residing in 6,197 barangays in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, NCR, and the Cordillera region.

Damage to agriculture was placed at P4,213,681,074 incurred in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Bicol, Cordillera, and the NCR.

Damage to infrastructures was estimated at P8,699,732,576 in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Cordillera, and the NCR.



# Government to crack down on illegal loggers, miners after Luzon floods— DILG official

Angela Coloma, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Nov 21 2020 01:01 PM



In this photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard, houses are submerged in flooded areas in the Cagayan Valley region on Saturday. Even if there were no typhoon signals hoisted over the region, numerous factors led to the worst flooding the province has seen in decades, according to Cagayan Gov. *Manuel Mamba. Philippine Coast Guard via AP*

MANILA - The government will crack down on illegal loggers and miners in parts of Luzon recently devastated by record floods, an official of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said Saturday, as authorities pointed to environmental abuse as a factor in the catastrophic inundation following consecutive storms.

DILG Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya in a public press briefing said Interior Secretary Eduardo Año has directed police to prioritize crackdowns in provinces affected by floods over the past month.

"Si Secretary Año po ay nagbigay ng kautusan kay [Philippine National Police chief] Gen. Debold Sinas, ang pinuno ng Philippine National Police na mag-crackdown sa lahat ng uri ng illegal logging at illegal mining sa mga lugar na nasalanta ng bagyo partikular sa Cagayan, Isabela kahit na po sa Kabikulan dahil ito ang sinasabing dahilan [nung] unprecedented widespread flooding," Malaya said.

(Secretary Año ordered PNP chief Debold Sinas to hold a crackdown in all sorts of illegal logging and illegal mining in areas affected by storms particularly in Cagayan, Isabela, and in the Bicol region because this is said to be the cause of unprecedented widespread flooding.)

arts of the Bicol region experienced lahar flow from the Mayon Volcano as Super Typhoon Rolly hit Luzon, particularly in Albay, earlier this month, with some residents blaming quarrying.

Cagayan and Isabela were, meanwhile, inundated last week with widespread flooding, with water levels reaching rooftops and residents appealing for rescue via social media. Among other reasons, officials said illegal logging was a factor in the worst floods seen in the area in decades.

DILG next year will roll out a project for local government units to encourage tree planting among their constituents, targeting the planting of 200 million trees nationwide.

"Yung pagpapalakas sa national tree planting natin ang goal po nito ay makapagtanim ng 200 million trees at ang target po ni Año na masimulan ito next year. Maglalabas ng memorandum circulars para hikayatin ang malawakang tree planting in support of the national greening program mula sa barangay at pinakamataas na antas," Malaya said.

(Our goal in strengthening national tree planting is to plant 200 million trees. Año wants this to start next year. Memorandum circulars will be released to encourage widespread tree planting campaigns in support of the national greening program from the barangays to the highest government level.)

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/11/21/20/government-to-crack-down-on-illegal-loggers-miners-after-luzon-floods-dilg-official>



# DILG directs crackdown on illegal logging, mining after ‘Ulysses’ onslaught

By [Darwin Pesco](#)

November 21, 2020

INTERIOR Secretary Eduardo Año ordered a crackdown against illegal logging and mining in the aftermath of the onslaught caused by typhoon “Ulysses” (international name: Vamco), the department’s spokesman said on Saturday.

DILG Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya said that the order, which was discussed in a meeting by the management committee of the DILG, was particular to areas heavily affected by the recent typhoons.

The crackdown will focus on the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, and even in the Bicol Region, he added.

Año directed Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Debold Sinas to start the war against all forms of illegal logging and mining, Malaya said.

Source: [https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/11/21/news/latest-stories/dilg-directs-crackdown-on-illegal-logging-mining-after-ulysses-onslaught/799381/?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0tfFg78I8lysZOG1NZJ5YAjgLxHETZl7oHYAF4ITpw\\_fPk7qHXenm6MB8#Echobox=1605940025](https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/11/21/news/latest-stories/dilg-directs-crackdown-on-illegal-logging-mining-after-ulysses-onslaught/799381/?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0tfFg78I8lysZOG1NZJ5YAjgLxHETZl7oHYAF4ITpw_fPk7qHXenm6MB8#Echobox=1605940025)



# Crackdown, ilulunsad vs illegal loggers, miners matapos ang pagbaha sa Luzon: DILG

By **Bombo Bam Orpilla** -November 22, 2020 | 1:46 AM

Maglulunsad umano ng crack down ang gobyerno laban sa illegal logging at illegal mining sa mga lugar na binaha bunsod ng pananalasa ng bagyo.

Una rito, sinisisi ng mga otoridad ang pag-abuso sa kalikasan na nakapagpalala sa sakunang naranasan nitong mga nakalipas na linggo.

Sa isang public press briefing, sinabi ni DILG Usec. Jonathan Malaya na nagbigay na ng direktiba si Interior Secretary Eduardo Año sa PNP na gawing prayoridad ang crackdown sa mga lalawigang sinalanta ng mga pagbaha.

“Si Secretary Año po ay nagbigay ng kautusan kay [Philippine National Police chief] Gen. Debold Sinas, ang pinuno ng Philippine National Police na mag-crackdown sa lahat ng uri ng illegal logging at illegal mining sa mga lugar na nasalanta ng bagyo partikular sa Cagayan, Isabela kahit na po sa Kabikulan dahil ito ang sinasabing dahilan [nung] unprecedented widespread flooding,” wika ni Malaya.

Kung maaalala, nakaranas ng lahar flow mula sa Bulkang Mayon ang ilang parte ng Bicol region, partikular sa Albay, sa kasagsagan ng pagtama ng Super Typhoon Rolly sa Luzon.

Habang ang mga probinsya ng Cagayan at Isabela ay nakaranas ng malawakang pagbaha, na sinisisi sa iligal na pagputol ng mga punongkahoy.

Kasabay nito, inilahad ng DILG na maglulunsad sila ng proyekto para sa mga local government units sa susunod na taon para hikayatin ang mamamayan na magtanim ng mga puno.

“Yung pagpapalakas sa national tree planting natin ang goal po nito ay makapagtanim ng 200 million trees at ang target po ni Año na masimulan ito next year. Maglalabas ng memorandum circulars para hikayatin ang malawakang tree planting in support of the national greening program mula sa barangay at pinakamataas na antas,” ani Malaya.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/crackdown-ilulunsad-vs-illegal-loggers-miners-matapos-ang-pagbaha-sa-luzon-dilg/>



## Año cracks down on illegal mining as DILG releases P1.5-B to typhoon-hit LGUs

November 21, 2020 2 min read

By Junex Doronio

MANILA — OUTRAGED BY THE ILLEGAL LOGGING AND MINING that caused “widespread, unprecedented flooding” in some parts of the country, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año has ordered a crackdown on the said nefarious activities.

“Si Secretary Año po ay nagbigay ng kautusan kay General Debold Sinas, ang pinuno ng Philippine National Police na mag-crackdown sa lahat ng uri ng illegal logging at mga illegal mining sa mga lugar na nasalanta ng bagyo partikular sa Cagayan, Isabela kahit na po sa Kabikulan,” DILG Undesecretary Jonathan Malaya said on Saturday.

At the same time, the DILG also released some P1.5 billion to aid localities hard-hit by recent strong typhoons, Malaya further bared during the state-run PTV’s Laging Handa briefing.

“Dahil nga po sa deklarasyon ng state of calamity ay nailabas na po ang SARO (Special Allotment Release Order) at NCA (Notice of Cash Allocation) amounting to P1.5 billion para sa mga LGU (local government units) na lubhang tinamaan ng sunod-sunod na bagyo natin karamihan dito ay nasa Regions V, IV-A, IV-B, at kasama na rin po ang Region II,” Malaya said.

He added that other LGUs affected by calamities can request funding from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) through the Office of Civil Defense.

“Sa ibang LGUs na apektado ng kalamidad meron din pong augmentation na ibinigay ang DBM (Department of Budget and Management) kaya meron tayong total na P16 billion dahil may naiwan na P6 billion at merong supplemental na P10 billion... so dito po kukunin ‘yung ibibigay sa mga select LGUs na lubhang nasalanta ng bagyo,” Malaya said.

The DILG official said that in addition to the war on drugs and criminality, the PNP will now launch “war on illegal logging.”

He said the DILG would also launch a nationwide tree-planting program next year.

“Yung pagpapalakas sa national tree planting natin ang goal po nito ay makapagtanim ng 200 million trees at ang target po ni Año na masimulan ito next year,” Malaya disclosed.

He added: “Maglalabas ng memorandum circulars para hikayatin ang malawakang tree planting in support of the national greening program mula sa barangay at pinakamataas na antas. (AI/MTVN)

Source: [https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/21/ano-cracks-down-on-illegal-mining-as-dilg-releases-p1-5-b-to-typhoon-hit-lgus/?fbclid=IwAR1TnAtRYQ8paeFKZnGZM2dwnePZUQIlqvs9hl1rrrz-P\\_-45Wu3N2gTXJc](https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/21/ano-cracks-down-on-illegal-mining-as-dilg-releases-p1-5-b-to-typhoon-hit-lgus/?fbclid=IwAR1TnAtRYQ8paeFKZnGZM2dwnePZUQIlqvs9hl1rrrz-P_-45Wu3N2gTXJc)



# Mining firm disputes claim operations caused Nueva Vizcaya landslide

**Published** November 21, 2020 7:39pm

After Nueva Vizcaya locals blamed FCF Minerals for a [landslide that killed 10 people](#), the mining firm on Saturday denied that their operations had caused the landslide and that they had undertaken work that "stopped the landslide from being larger."

According to Saturday FCF statement, the area where the landslide took place had been stripped of natural flora by the residents of Barangay Runruno and replaced with sweet potato and other small crop plantations.

"With no trees to protect and bind the soil, following high rainfall, this will only result in a landslide," the mining company argued.

Additionally, the test blasting the company undertook in the area was over 500 meters away from the barangay, and there was thus no possibility of harm or damage from it.

The company went on to blame unregulated and uncontrolled small-scale mining as the actual danger to the community. That was why authorities in 2014 demolished the tunnels and ball mills of these illegal small-scale mines.

FCF added that they had offered compensation to those who wanted to voluntarily dismantle their structure and vacate the area.

Out of more than 400 occupants, many of whom the company alleged were illegal small-scale miners, more than 200 accepted the offer and vacated the area.

Some of the remaining occupants are continuing to negotiate but had so far refused FCF's offer.

"Every aspect of operation of our Company is with prior approval of the regulatory bodies such as the MGB to ensure that it complies with all regulations pertaining to safety, environment and community relations. FCF work hand in hand with our local communities for their long-term benefits," the company said in their statement. — **DVM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/765097/mining-firm-disputes-claim-operations-caused-nueva-vizcaya-landslide/story/>





# Firm not liable for Marikina flood — lawmaker

[Edu Punay](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 22, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Marikina Rep. Bayani Fernando yesterday denied an allegation by Mayor Marcelino Teodoro that a reclamation project of his private company is to blame for the massive flooding in the city during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses last week.

Fernando belied Teodoro's claims that the project of his BF Corp. along the Marikina River was among the causes of the massive flooding in the city and that it has no environmental compliance certificate (ECC).

Fernando explained the project mentioned by Teodoro is being implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and has an ECC.

"BF Corp. has nothing to do with the existing Provident Village flood control dike. As congressman, I am the sponsor of another project to raise that dike which is ready for construction, already funded and has been bidded out, and is now just waiting for approval of the mayor," the former Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman told The STAR.

Fernando believed that the mayor was pertaining to the DPWH project found "on the other side of the river and part of Barangay Calumpang where they saw trucks dumping soil by the river."

"The truck is owned by the contractor of DPWH for that ongoing work. This is part of the road as planned on each side of the river running the whole length of the river system," he explained.

Fernando added that he just personally assisted the DPWH in the engineering design of the project, having a good knowledge of this place as its former mayor and MMDA chairman.

"I have assisted the DPWH and JICA, the project funder, in drawing up the completed flood control plans for the barangays of Dela Peña, Tañong, Barangka, Industrial Valley, Calumpang and Malanday, all in my congressional district here in Marikina. I have also sourced initial funds to start implementation of these works," he said.

Fernando stressed that he has been helping in finding solution to perennial flooding in the city.

"I have filed a resolution in Congress since August last year for an enquiry on this Marikina River flood control program, which has been going on for 50 years now and about P50 billion spent and here we are still wallowing in mud," he said.

## Raps set to be filed

Meanwhile, the city government is set to file an administrative complaint against BF Corp. next week, Teodoro said yesterday.

He said they have drafted a complaint that they will submit to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).



“Our prayer is for the natural river course to be restored because alteration has been done,” he said in Filipino in a phone interview.

Teodoro and DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu inspected the reclamation project located on the side of Providence Village in Barangay Tañong.

He earlier said the project has reduced the 100-meter-wide river by about 20 meters, which caused a bottleneck that slowed down the flow of water.

Teodoro said BF Corp. violated provisions of Presidential Decree 1586 or the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System when it did not secure an ECC from the DENR. – **Emmanuel Tupas**



## Mining quashes ‘Yolanda’ rehab gains

I have a lot to thank the international organizations who helped us recover from the devastation of typhoon ‘Yolanda’.

Published 59 mins ago on November 22, 2020 12:20 AM

By [Elmer Recuerdo](#)



MACARTHUR, Leyte — Before the sun rises, Ron Baranda, a 38-year old farmer, would leave his house armed with a water sprinkler, a pail filled with humus and a few tools to tend to his two-hectare farm that he inherited from his parents. His farm — which he calls his Bahay Kubo — consists of one hectare of riceland, a few plots planted with eggplant, string beans, squash, okra and bitter melon, and a hut that he built as his resting place when the sun is at its scorching high.

“I have a lot to thank the international organizations who helped us recover from the devastation of typhoon ‘Yolanda.’ They provided us with tools, seeds, implements and money and they trained us on new technologies that increased farm output without harming the environment,” he said.

Among the groups that helped him, he recalls, were the Catholic Relief Services, Christian Aid, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Red Cross.

“I also received seeds from the Department of Agriculture and that’s how I started growing vegetables,” he added.

Baranda said that while typhoon “Yolanda” brought devastation to their coastal village, the overwhelming support from other people not only helped them recover but also opened a number of livelihood opportunities for them that they have long been longing for.

But he said the gains they received from the “Yolanda” rehabilitation may not last after a mining operation recently started three villages away from his community which he fears will only take a few years before its operations spread to his village.

They provided us with tools, seeds, implements and money and they trained us on new technologies that increased farm output without harming the environment.

This town, along with four other municipalities covered by the mining permit, are facing the Eastern seaboard of the province, which were among the worst hit towns during typhoon “Yolanda.” Due to the magnitude of devastation in these areas, many aid organizations focused their rehabilitation work pouring in millions of pesos to restore the livelihood of the affected residents.

### Blacksand mining starts

In Barangay Maya of this town, the Strong Built Mining Development Corp. (SBMDC), a Cebu-based company is pilot mining on a seven-hectare former riceland. The initial operation entails the extraction of blacksand from an average depth of 15.3 meters that will have a recovery rate of eight percent that will produce magnetite concentrate of 55 percent iron content.



SBMPC holds a 25-year Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) signed on 28 July 2007. The mining permit allows the company to extract magnetite, a mineral used in the production of steel, on 7,411.55 hectares of land spanning the towns of Dulag, Mayorga, MacArthur, Abuyog and Javier.

The firm's operation, however, did not go full blast due to the slide in metal prices in 2010 and later because of typhoon "Yolanda."

In February 2017, then Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Gina Lopez ordered the cancellation of its mining permit due to alleged violation of certain provisions of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. The company filed a motion for reconsideration but Lopez, instead, imposed a suspension of permit with penalties.

I also received seeds from the Department of Agriculture and that's how I started growing vegetables.

In November 2019, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu lifted the suspension order after the company implemented "full corrective measures."

#### Lucrative quarrying business

Regional Director Leo Van Juguan of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Eastern Visayas said based on the agreement between the company and Barangay Maya, the mining operations cannot go beyond the seven-hectare area unless it has conducted a progressive rehabilitation of the area.

The progressive rehabilitation, he said, includes pumping back rejected material from the mineral separators as its backfill and incorporating the stripped topsoil for revegetation. He said it is a commitment to ensure that land will be productive for local farmers.

Juguan said the proposed mining area covers 200 hectares of land in the first three years of operation in three barangays. The area is projected to produce one million metric tons of magnetite concentrate every year.

But town residents are wary of the impact of the mining operations. Farmer and development worker Roger Abeto said he is concerned of the erosion and other environmental problems that may arise once excavation on their farm lands start.

#### Erosion fears raised

"When they do the backfilling during rehabilitation, definitely it will not put back everything that they took away so there will be a difference in elevation which can cause massive soil erosion," he said.

"There is no alternative when the destruction is already done. Even if you are paid for the restoration, once the environment is disturbed its effect will already be lifetime which the future generations will inherit," Abeto said.

Another farmer, 36-years old Noel Colares, said that as much as he wants to get a job in the mining company, he is afraid of what the mining operations will bring to his children and future generations.

Colares points to a community that was subject of a blacksand extraction by another company some 10 years ago but was abandoned without rehabilitation. "If you see it now, it is totally barren like a desert," he said.

The local church has also voiced its concern of the mining activity.



The firm's operation, however, did not go full blast due to the slide in metal prices in 2010 and later because of typhoon 'Yolanda.'

On 19 November, Fr. Amadeo Alvero, parish priest of St. Isidore Parish, appealed to public officials to help stop the blacksand mining.

"In view of what happened to the tremendous and great flooding in Cagayan, Manila, Marikina and many other places, I am pleading with my bended knees to stop the Blank Sand Mining here in MacArthur, Leyte," Fr. Alvero posted on social media.

"This appeal I made on behalf of those who love and want to protect our environment.

If we protect the environment from destruction, the environment will protect us from destructions. If we protect Mother Earth, she will protect us in return," he added.



## Sotto wants to reassess Philippine environment laws following floods

**Published** November 21, 2020 6:38pm

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Saturday said he is seeking for a reassessment of the environmental laws in the Philippines after widespread flooding brought by consecutive typhoons displaced thousands of people across the country.

“Nagkaroon ako ng paninindigan na dapat i-review na ang protocols at batas sa environment, hindi lang on the national level pati sa local level para ma-realize din na first line of defense barangay at mayor,” Sotto said in a radio interview.

Likewise, he pointed out that during emergencies, the public should not immediately seek out the national government if no relief goods have been distributed.

“Dapat pangangailangan doon or mga problema doon dapat talaga pinaghahandaan na ‘yun at hindi ‘yung pagka-nagkaroon ng bagyo tapos wala pang nagpadala ng ayuda, ang hahanapin agad national government, presidente agad [ang hahanapin],” Sotto said.

“Asan ang mayor mo, asan ang governor mo. ‘Wag mo kaagad sisihin ang presidente kasi ibig sabhin noon hindi mo alam ang burukrasya ng gobyerno,” he added.

Sotto said officials need to find out if there are issues with flood control and the ban on logging.

“[M]adali kasi magbintang pero tama ba ang binibintang. Kahapon pinag-uusapan ‘yun. Bakit hindi agad nagpakawala [ng tubig sa dam] bago ang bagyo. May narinig ako nag sabi, e 'di kung hindi dumating ang ulan, edi kapos tayo ng tubig,” he said.

Residents of Barangay Banglos in General Nakar, Quezon have [blamed illegal logging for the destruction of their houses](#) at the height of the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Meanwhile, President [Rodrigo Duterte blamed low-income families for deforestation](#), saying that poor communities in farms cut down trees and use the wood to build their houses and that this causes deforestation.

The agricultural damage brought by Ulysses has increased to P6.1 billion while the agricultural damage brought by super typhoon Rolly was recorded at P1.1 billion.

[Deaths related to Rolly](#) was, meanwhile, recorded at 25 while the [death toll due to Ulysses](#) was at 73. —

**LBG, GMA**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/765094/sotto-wants-to-reassess-philippine-environment-laws-following-floods/story/>



# EDITORIAL - Palalimin at linisin ang mga ilog para iwas baha

(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - November 21, 2020 - 12:00am



TAMA si Sen. Manny Pacquiao. Kung malalim ang mga ilog at estero, walang mangyayaring pagbaha. Walang magiging problema gaya nang nangyari sa Marikina, Rodriguez sa Rizal, Cagayan at Isabela. Mungkahi ni Pacquiao, chairman ng Committee on Public Works na kailangang palalimin ang mga ilog, lawa, estero at iba pang daanan ng tubig upang hindi magbaha. Sampung metro ang nararapat na lalim para hindi umapaw ang ilog. Sabi ng senador, kapag malalim ang mga ilog at estero, hindi aapaw kahit malakas ang ulan. Hindi magbabaha kaya walang aagos sa mga kabahayan gaya nang nangyari sa Marikina at ang nangyaring baha sa Cagayan noong nakaraang linggo dahil sa pananalasa ng Bagyong Ulysses. Grabe rin ang baha sa Bicol Region na magkasunod na pininsala ng mga Bagyong Rolly at Quinta.

Ayon pa kay Pacquiao, dapat maglunsad ang Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) at Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) nang malawakang paghuhukay sa mga ilog, estero at lawa. Kabilang sa mga dapat isailalim sa dredging program ang Marikina River, Pasig River, Cagayan River, Chico River at Laguna Lake. Iminungkahi rin ng senador na gumawa ang gobyerno ng rain catchment at water impounding facilities.

“Dapat diyan natin ibuhos ang ating flood control program at hindi kung saan-saan na mga proyekto na paulit-ulit lang. What we need is a long-term and sustained flood control program,” sabi ng senador.



Napakaganda ng mungkahi ng senador at dapat itong magkaroon ng katuparan. Kapag napalalim ang mga ilog, estero at iba pang dinaraan ng tubig, hindi na magbabaha. Sa Maynila, hindi na nalutas ang baha sapagkat ang mga estero ay punumpuno ng basura. Hukayin na ang mga ito para mawakasan na ang problemang baha.

Ipursigi ni Senator Pacquiao ang pagpapalalim sa mga ilog. Kaisa niya kami sa adbokasiya. Bukod sa pagpapalalim, linisin na rin ang mga ilog at estero sa tambak ng basura. Isa ito sa dahilan ng pagbaha. Kapag napalalim ang mga ilog, hindi magbabaha at wala nang aakyat sa bubong ng kanilang mga bahay.





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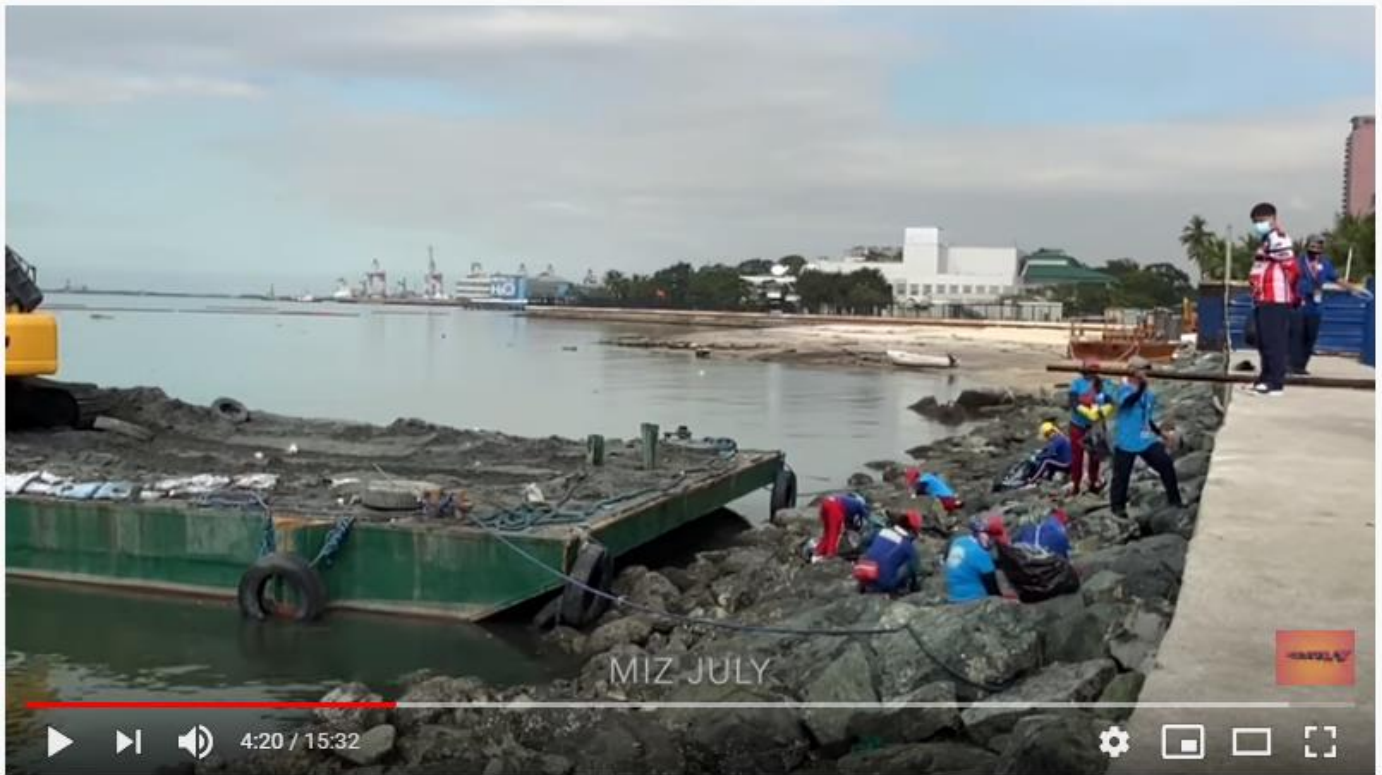


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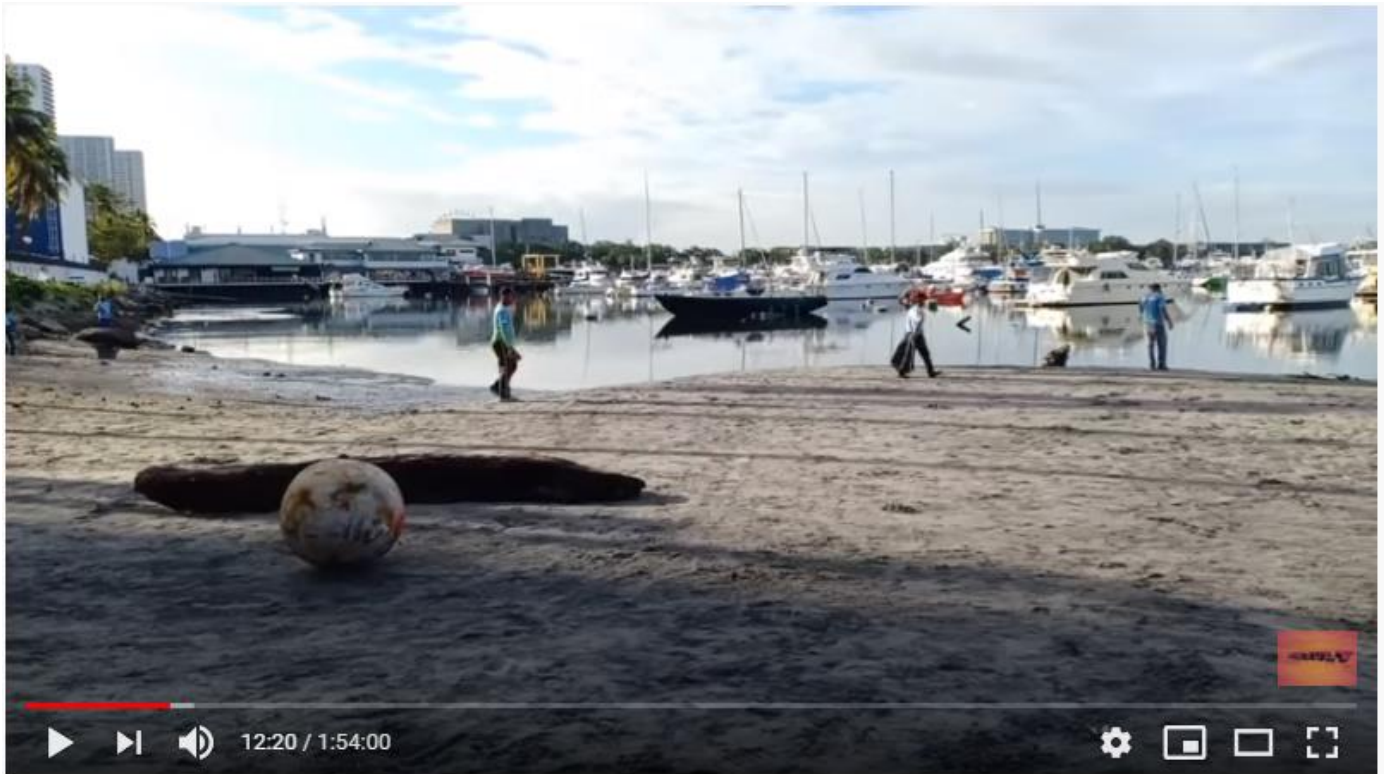
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In this photo taken September 3, a worker prepares the white sand at the Manila Bay, which has been under rehabilitation since January 2019.

The STAR/KJ Rosales

## Akbayan tells SC: You lost chance to help determine safeness of 'Manila Bay Sands' project

[Kristine Joy Pataog](#) (Philstar.com) - November 20, 2020 - 3:51pm

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court’s denial of Akbayan’s motion is a missed opportunity to help the public determine the safeness of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ controversial Manila Bay Sands project, the group said.

Akbayan on Friday lamented the “hands-off approach” of the SC on their motion seeking to intervene in the 2008 landmark case on Manila Bay rehabilitation and cite in contempt the DENR over its project.

“It lost the opportunity to protect the rights of Filipinos to a balanced and healthful ecology,” Akbayan chair emeritus Etta Rosales said.

The SC has dismissed Akbayan’s motion, saying that the case has long been deemed final. It also said that pleading seeks to challenge the wisdom behind use of dolomite in the project, “which is a factual issue not ordinarily entertained by the Court.”

The controversial “beach nourishment” of Manila Bay, classified as “enhancement” project—was part of the government’s Manila Bay rehabilitation program launched in January 2019. The project involved filing the stretch of the bay’s shore with crushed dolomite—which environmental groups have raised may pose risk to the marine ecosystem but also in communities around the area.

It also said that the court has so far not found any violation to the writ of continuing mandamus it issued to DENR, as the agency has not been remiss in its reportorial duty to the Manila Bay Advisory Committee.

But Rosales said that the SC finding of no violation on DENR is “discouraging.”

She pointed out that the court only limited its findings on the department’s submission of reports on cleaning the waters and maintaining it, but did not cover assessment of dumping of fake sand as pollutive act.



“We now call on the original parties to the 2008 environmental protection case to add their voices and take action on this matter even as we study our next legal steps to best respond to this development,” she added.

Rosales said they continue to stand by the scientific evidence and expert opinions of University of the Philippines marine scientists and other environmental groups.

“The opinion of experts throughout the scientific community has repeatedly expressed the hazards, both in the short and long term, of the dolomite project,” she added.

“The public would do well to listen to their advice. Let us not entrust our environment and health to the likes of [DENR Undersecretary] Benny Antiporda,” Rosales added.





## Akbayan denounces SC for ‘hands-off’ approach in Manila Bay’s artificial white sand project

November 20, 2020 | 6:45 pm



BW FILE PHOTO

THE Supreme Court took a “hands-off approach” when it denied Akbayan’s motion to reprimand the Environment department for its controversial “white sand” project along the coast of Manila Bay, the party-list said in a statement on Friday.

“The Supreme Court has taken, quite sadly, a hands-off approach on an issue of transcendental importance. By denying our motion to intervene in the 2008 Manila Bay environmental protection case, it failed to help the public determine the safeness and sustainability of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ (DENR) dolomite sand dumping along the Manila Bay,” Akbayan Chair Emeritus Etta P. Rosales said in a statement.

“It lost the opportunity to protect the rights of Filipinos to a balanced and healthful ecology,” she said.

The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected Akbayan’s motion to “intervene with prayer” to hold the DENR in contempt for installing artificial white sand on a portion of Manila Bay.

“The Court held that it has not yet found any violation of the continuing mandamus amidst the quarterly reports submitted by the concerned agencies and the on-site ocular inspection conducted by the Manila Bay Advisory Committee (MBAC),” the SC said.

It explained that the project was not an “allied or related activity sanctioned by the writ, and this could hardly be objectively measured as a deviation from the government’s mandate.”

It added that the contention lies with the material used to carry the project out — the crushed dolomite.

“The Court held that the instant recourse is a challenge to the wisdom behind the use of the component dolomite, which is a factual issue not ordinarily entertained by the Court,” the high court said.



Akbayan said the high tribunal's decision was "discouraging." Public policy think-tank Infracore PH convenor Terry L. Ridon told *BusinessWorld* that the rejection of Akbayan's petition was "unfortunate, but expected because of the procedural concerns on the petition."

"This, however, does not preclude a full Writ of Kalikasan petition at a future time. A kalikasan petition will be more exhaustive than the dismissed petition," Mr. Ridon said in an email message on Friday.

When earlier sought for comment on the artificial white sand project, DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the agency is "prepared to defend their decision." — **Angelica Y. Yang**

Source: [https://www.bworldonline.com/akbayan-denounces-sc-for-hands-off-approach-in-manila-bays-artificial-white-sand-project/?fbclid=IwAR3viv\\_z5kwHYxi5SoSY5smmTMP5x2IJqxK0JGvcGF3oPmgCtmN82jnVgtI](https://www.bworldonline.com/akbayan-denounces-sc-for-hands-off-approach-in-manila-bays-artificial-white-sand-project/?fbclid=IwAR3viv_z5kwHYxi5SoSY5smmTMP5x2IJqxK0JGvcGF3oPmgCtmN82jnVgtI)



# Peatlands, genuine tool for climate resiliency

In a typhoon-prone country like the Philippines, peatlands can help minimize flooding by preventing seawater intrusion.

Published 6 hours ago on November 22, 2020 12:50 AM

By **Care Balleras** @tribunephil\_care



Preserving peatlands is a great investment for the future of environment. / Photograph courtesy of aseanpeat.net

Relief efforts following typhoon onslaughts are just plan Z in a country like the Philippines with a geographical location susceptible to tropical cyclones.

Because thousands of lives and properties have been lost from calamities, the target should be making the entire archipelago climate-resilient instead of repetitive band-aid solutions that only lead to more national debt and a low morale among Filipinos.

Yet how exactly do we make climate resiliency happen? By preserving the peatlands.

Peatland refers to the combination of peat soil and wetland.

In the Philippines, there are two confirmed peatlands: Agusan Marsh which is the larger of the Leyte Sab-a Basin, measuring approximately 3,088 hectares in elongated form.

Peatlands are the “most valuable ecosystems on Earth,” according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Being the largest terrestrial carbon storage despite covering only three percent of the Earth’s surface, a peatland is significant in pursuing a low-carbon and circular economy allowing biodiversity to thrive. Its vegetation also provides potable drinking water.

And in a typhoon-prone country like the Philippines, peatlands can help minimize flooding by preventing seawater intrusion.

The two Philippine peatlands have proven to be not only an environmental tool but also a striking natural aesthetic with impressive views of vast wetlands.

## Protection with peatlands

Initiatives to sustain peatlands have been around since 2010, heralded by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, but it is not enough for a full-blown awareness on how these lands are beneficial when restored and detrimental when destroyed.

This prompted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) and its wireless unit Smart Communications Inc. (Smart) to launch its peatland conservation program.



The program features the preservation of Caimpugan Peatland in Agusan Marsh through technological means provided by PLDT-Smart and is expected to cultivate more undiscovered peatlands around the country.

“Peatlands matter,” American actor and political activist Alec Baldwin remarked during the virtual launch of the program.

Meanwhile, praising the DENR-PLDT tandem in this project, Ramsar secretary general Martha Urrego said: “This partnership is an example of how both the government and the private sector can work together using innovative solutions and modern technology to enable and scale up the wetlands for a better future.”



# Climate at disaster emergency pinadedeklara

By [Joy Cantos](#)(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - November 21, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Panahon na upang pakinggan ng pamahalaan ang lumalakas na panawagang ideklara ang 'national climate and disaster emergency' matapos salantahin ang bansa ng dalawang magkakasunod na malalakas na bagyo na nagdulot ng matinding mga pagbaha na nagpalubog sa malaking bahagi ng Luzon.

Ayon kay 2nd District Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, Chairman ng House Committee on Ways and Means, sadyang kailangan ang naturang deklarasyon para sa "climate justice" sa pinakamahihirap na mga Pilipino na dumaranas ng matinding kahirapan dulot ng mga kalamidad at sumusubok sa kakayanan ng pamahalaan sa pagtugon sa grabeng epekto ng kalamidad.

Sinabi ni Salceda na lalo lamang dinagdagan ng mga nagdaang kalamidad at krisis sa kalusugan dulot ng COVID-19 pandemic na pumaralisa sa ekonomiya ng halos isang taon na ngayon kung saan marami ang nawalan ng trabaho kabuhayang mga pamilya.

Ayon sa mambabatas, una nang nagbabala ang mga 'scientists at environmentalists,' gayundin ang mga lider sa mundo sa banta ng mga kaganapang kaugnay sa pagbabago ng panahon at ang mga kalamidad na naganap nitong mga nagdaang linggo ay maaring masundan pa.

Inihayag pa ni Salceda na bugbog sa tuwina ang Pilipinas sa mga bagyo. Bukod sa mababagsik na bagyong Ulysses, Rolly at Quinta ngayong taon, matindi rin ang pananalasang iniwan ng mga bagyong Reming noong 2006, Ondoy at Pepeng noong 2009, at Super typhoons Yolanda noong 2013 na pumatay ng mahigit 6,000 at nagpahirap sa 16 milyong Pinoy.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2020/11/21/2058405/climate-disaster-emergency-pinadedeklara/amp/>



# DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula sets youth summit

November 21, 2020

THE Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) is inviting young people aged 16 to 30 years old to join the three-day Hugyaw Zamboanga Peninsula: The ENR (Environment and Natural Resources) Ambassador Summit 2020.

The DENR said the three-day virtual summit will feature some of the best environment advocates in the country and in-house local implementers in the Zamboanga Peninsula.

Interested individuals can apply through [bit.ly/DENRHugyawZamPenRegistration](https://bit.ly/DENRHugyawZamPenRegistration).

The youth summit will be held from November 25 to 27. Submission of applications are open until November 22.

The DENR said the summit will be anchored on the theme “Youth Raising Voices in Nation-Building.” **(SunStar Zamboanga)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1877614/Zamboanga/Local-News/DENR-Zamboanga-Peninsula-sets-youth-summit>



## Puslit na parrot siniksik sa bote

By Abante News Online — Last updated Nov 21, 2020

NEWS



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Ilang dosena ng mga smuggled na parrot ang nabuking na siniksik sa plastic water bottle sa isang barko sa Indonesia.

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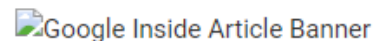
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Ayon sa ulat,



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Hindi pa malinaw kung saan sana dadalhin ang mga pinuslit na ibon, hindi pa rin nahuhuli ang mga salarin.

Source: <https://www.abante.com.ph/puslit-na-parrot-siniksik-sa-bote/>



## OceanaGold: No emissions by 2050

By Leander C. Domingo, TMT

November 21, 2020

**KASIBU, Nueva Vizcaya:** OceanaGold Corp. of Australia has committed to achieve zero emissions from its operations by 2050.



*OceanaGold Philippines Didipio gold and copper mine in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya. PHOTO FROM OCEANAGOLD*

A multinational gold producer committed to the highest standards of technical, environmental and social performance, the corporation operates the OceanaGold Philippines' Didipio Gold and Copper Project in the mineral-rich upland town of Kasibu.

However, the firm's management suspended its Didipio operations when the initial validity of its financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA) with the Philippine government covering 25 years expired on June 20, 2019. It is now working with the national government for its renewal for another 25 years.

Core to the company's environmental management strategy, OceanaGold President and Chief Executive Officer Michael Holmes said the goal is to mitigate the risks associated with climate change, establish measures and targets to improve the efficiency of its energy use, and minimize its greenhouse gas (GHG) emission intensity.

"OceanaGold has been strongly committed to responsible mining for 30 years, and with current emissions lower than global industry average, we are already on the journey to reduce our carbon footprint," he said.

He also said the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is fully supported by OceanaGold.

In line with this objective, OceanaGold is setting a goal to achieve net zero GHG emissions from its operations by 2050 and establish milestone intensity targets (GHG emissions per ounce of gold produced) by 2022 to support this goal, he added.

Holmes pointed out that the delivery of net zero carbon emissions production will rely on step changes from new and emerging technologies to decarbonize OceanaGold's electricity supplies and mobile equipment use; incrementally improving energy use and efficiency; and reducing energy consumption.

It was in 2018 when OceanaGold started implementing a company-wide program of automation, digital and process transformation called AdaPT, helping define the company's journey to operate the mines of the future.

Holmes said digital transformation presents an industry-wide opportunity to enhance performance and reduce impact.

"Successful implementation of the rapid advances in technology, innovation, automation, digitization and electrification are central to achieving OceanaGold's commitment to reduce our environmental impact," he said.





Holmes said OceanaGold has established a roadmap of strategic actions to help reduce its carbon footprint and improve energy management.

These include setting the goal to achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2050, establishing milestone interim emission targets by the end of 2021 linked to employment performance incentives; establishing a climate change technical coordinating committee to identify opportunities to reduce GHG emission intensity; identifying risks, opportunities, priorities and costs across OceanaGold; and undertaking climate change management and reporting to meet the requirements of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure.

He claims their targets will be achieved through the implementation of four key strategic areas such as improved energy efficiency and energy reduction; decarbonization of electrical energy supply; decarbonization of mobile equipment fuel; and carbon sequestration.

“For 30 years, we have been contributing to excellence in our industry by delivering sustainable environmental and social outcomes for our communities, and strong returns for our shareholders,” Holmes said.

OceanaGold maintains the Macraes and Waihi operations in New Zealand and Haile Gold Mine in the United States.



## 6 provinces want single-use plastics banned

Published 5 hours ago on November 22, 2020 01:50 AM

By [Elmer Recuerdo](#)



Six coastal provinces and 25 cities and municipalities passed resolutions asking the government to ban single-use plastics that end up in bodies of water and kill marine animals and plants.

An environmentalist group said local governments carry the burden of solving increasing plastic wastes from household, factories and other businesses.

Medical wastes also add to marine woes amid the coronavirus pandemic.

“The Philippines is an archipelagic country and wastes are sure to flow and swell into marine litter that endangers our fisheries and ocean ecosystem,” says Gloria Estenzo Ramos, president of a group implementing programs to guard the environment.

“No wonder that these provinces, cities and municipalities upon whose shoulders the responsibility is lodged to manage the unmanageable plastics wastes are speaking out.” The six provinces that passed resolutions were Cebu, Southern Leyte, Masbate, Davao Oriental, Bohol and Aklan.

No wonder that these provinces, cities and municipalities upon whose shoulders the responsibility is lodged to manage the unmanageable plastics wastes are speaking out.

Twenty-five cities and municipalities approved similar resolutions — Libagon, Liloan, Limasawa, Maasin City, Padre Burgos, Pintuyan, San Juan and Silago in Southern Leyte; Cebu City, Lapu-Lapu City, Badian, Bantayan, Bogu City, Ginatilan, San Remigio and Sibonga in Cebu; Guihulngan, Negros Oriental; Antequera, Panglao, Bien Unido, President Carlos P. Garcia and Trinidad in Bohol; Libmanan, Camarines Sur; Baguio City; and Angeles City, Pampanga.

The local government units asked the National Solid Waste Management Commission to ban single-use plastics nationwide and include it in the priority list of Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products and Packaging, as mandated by Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The Commission, composed of 14 members from the government and three members from the private sector, was established “to formulate action plans for their respective agencies to complement the National Solid Waste Management Framework.”

The Commission is also tasked to formulate and update a list of non-environmentally acceptable materials as provided by this law.



“The government can stop the continuous production of single-use plastics for other purposes and packaging to save our waterways, rivers and seas, and marine organisms that have become the dumping ground of humans’ unbridled consumption and utilization of plastics,” Ramos said.

Roughly 300 million tons of single-use plastics, like straws, shopping bags and utensils, are produced yearly, studies showed. Not only do they contain harmful chemicals bisphenol A and bisphthalate that disrupt the human endocrine system and cause birth defects, autism and hyperactivity. They can also take a thousand of years to decompose.



## Ayala Land faces bane of pandemic: too much plastics

posted November 21, 2020 at 07:20 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has waged a war not only on human health but also against the environment.



As people need to protect themselves from the virus, the world is seeing an estimated global use of 129 billion face masks and 65 billion gloves every month, according to a study published by the American Chemical Society.

Long after the pandemic is over, personal protective equipment, alongside tons of packaging, plastics, and other scraps that have accumulated over the years could remain in the world's oceans. In a 2020 study by Washington, D.C.-based The Pew Charitable Trusts and London-based SYSTEMIQ, it was estimated that plastic dumped into the ocean will reach 29 million metric tons by 2040, triple the 11 million metric tons seen in 2016.

### Turning plastics into eco products

Government and corporations alike have actively tried to address the problem of plastics and ocean waste. At Ayala Land, one solution involves recycling plastics into eco products.

The property developer recently partnered with Green Antz Builders, a provider of environment friendly products used for the construction industry.

The partnership focuses on shredding clean and dry plastic discards and mixing them with sand, cement, gravel, water and an additive. From there, Green Antz produces eco bricks, eco pavers, and eco casts, among others.

Ayala Land's pilot waste recycling facility, developed with Green Antz, is currently located in its 74-hectare mixed use estate in Taguig called Arca South.

A second facility was opened in the company's Lio ecotourism estate in El Nido, Palawan in the fourth quarter of 2019. Plastic waste from across the company's pilot properties and estates are brought to these facilities to be converted into eco products.

### Eco pavers at the Makati CBD

Advocating the concept of a circular economy wherein waste generated are converted to usable resources, the company then buys these eco products to be used for construction activities in its properties. Eco pavers are currently being used for the sidewalk improvement project at the Makati Central Business District.

Since their partnership, Ayala Land and Green Antz have diverted 55,000 kilos of plastic equivalent to waste generated by 220,000 people in a day. They have also produced 173,000 pieces of eco products, enough to build 50 classrooms covering 60 square meters each.

"Plastics that would have otherwise ended up in the ocean will now become useful construction materials," said Anna Maria Gonzales, Ayala Land sustainability manager.

During the pandemic, Ayala Land stepped up its efforts to spread awareness on how people can keep plastics from the landfill. People have started to segregate, clean and dry plastic waste generated from their homes, such as food containers, bubble wrappers, PET bottles, and plastic sachets, among others. These materials are being brought to drop-off points in Vertis North (QC), Salcedo Saturday Market (Makati) and Sunshine Mall (Taguig), which are then delivered to the Arca South recycling facility.



## Segregation is the key

People can support Ayala Land's zero-waste-to-landfill initiative by promoting segregation and the plastic drop-off venues to their families and friends. They can also buy the eco products such as eco bricks, which can be used as pavers for home gardens, or even for new walls for house renovations.



Educating the public on the importance of recycling plastics and other waste is crucial in the time of the pandemic, especially since studies indicate that 2020 is already on track to see 30% more waste than 2019.



# Films on ants, microplastics win in 4th Indie-Siyensya

By [BusinessMirror](#)

November 22, 2020



*YouTube personality Mikey Bustos in "Into the Minuscule World of Ants."*

Stories on animals like ants, pawikan and fishes surely catch the attention of children, while those on environment and illnesses, such as microplastic pollution, schistosomiasis and E. coli bacteria make young scientists curious.

Putting these subjects into well-crafted films would surely make them winners.

And they did.



*Films on ants, microplastics win in 4th Indie-Siyensya*

The films "Into the Minuscule World of Ants" by Heinrich Domingo of Quezon, Isabela, and "Sansala" by Cyah Angela Somblingo of the youth organization Focus Cavite, were hailed as the Best Films in the Open and Youth Categories, respectively, in the Fourth Indie-Siyensya Filmmaking Competition.

They won against a total of 23 entries in the Open Category, and 55 entries in the Youth group in this year's theme "Communities Beyond the Naked Eye."

The winners were announced recently in an online awarding ceremony, which premiered live in the Department of Science and Technology-Science Education Institute's (DOST-SEI) social media page.

They were judged based on the criteria of scientific content, idea execution, film technique and impact.



## Open category

“Into the Minuscule World of Ants” documents the growing ant-keeping community in the Philippines led by YouTube personality, Mikey Bustos.

Filmmaker Domingo said that making the film made him realize the presence of many scientific groups and communities that are not popularly shown in the media.

“My exposure to the ant-keeping community showed me that there are hundreds of Filipinos venturing into scientific fields like biology that remain unseen. Shooting this documentary film made me see the alternative avenues where science is learned,” he said.

He said he is honored to have competed against great films with equally interesting tales and narratives, and that the win will inspire him to make more films.

“Our communities are filled with stories that need to be told. We do not need to chase stories. Instead, our local tales and narratives are more than enough to make captivating films,” said Domingo, who earned P100,000 cash prize and a trophy.

Coming in second in the Open Category was “Pauwikan,” a documentary about the nature and diversity of the turtle sanctuary in San Juan, La Union, done by Gerylle Vanmarie Palabay of the Film and Media Arts International Academy.

Winning Third is Edward Laurence Opena of Opena Cinematics/Cebu Normal University for his film, “The Man Who Talks to Fishes.”

It narrates how a man enabled the Gilutongan Marine Sanctuary to become one of the country’s top marine sanctuaries. They won P50,000 and P30,000 cash prizes, respectively.

Palabay’s “Pauwikan” also secured the Viewers’ Choice Award for receiving the highest number of votes during the film screenings. The film won P20,000 cash prize for the special award.

## Youth category

On the Youth Category, “Sansala” tackles microplastic pollution in Dalahican, Cavite City. The documentary film explores how microplastics gravely affect the environment and the people relying on the sea for livelihood.

Somblingo, who is a second-timer in the competition, referred to the win as their team’s “comeback victory” after placing second last year for their film, “Lambat.” This time, they bagged the P100,000 cash prize and the top trophy.

Their team considers the opportunity to echo to the residents of Dalahican the results of their microplastic experiment done during the making of the film as their most memorable experience. “Educating people is something we really enjoy. And being able to reach the hearts of thousands of people through a single film was like living a dream,” she added.

Completing the Top 3 in the Youth Category are the films “Sisto” by Ma. Diana Balansag from Bukidnon National School of Home Industries at Second Place, and “Beyond: Escherichia coli” by Juliana Milanbilen from Tagaytay City Science National High School at Third Place.



“Sisto” depicts the problems encountered by the people of Barangay San Miguel in Maramag, Bukidnon, with the schistosomiasis, while “Beyond: Escherichia coli” tackles the unseen community of the E. Coli bacteria and its nature.

The films won P50,000 and P30,000 cash prizes, respectively.

A project of Department of Science and Technology-Science Education Institute, DOST-SEI Director Dr. Josette Biyo congratulated the winners and finalists for taking the competition to another level with the quality and messaging they gave.

“We’re very happy with the films we received this year and we’re especially impressed by how they tell their stories effectively and in a manner that does not stay away from science,” Biyo said.

She added: “We envision our scientists to be able to communicate their works effectively, and film is definitely a great platform. For this, we’re very proud of our contestants.”

Now on its fourth run, Indie-Siyensya remains one of DOST-SEI’s main platforms to promote a culture of science in the country. The competition is also the agency’s response to the growing field of science communication by using film as a medium of information dissemination and behavioral change.

This year’s Board of Judges include Dr. Garry Jay Montemayor of the College of Development Communication, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Director Seymour Sanchez from the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, and Far Eastern University; Prof. Patrick Campos, director of the UP Film Institute; renowned entomologist Dr. Aimee Lynn Dupo of the UPLB Museum of Natural History; and Dr. Ruby Cristobal of DOST-SEI.

Image credits: [DOST-SEI](#)





## 2 pygmy sperm whales rescued in Dagupan City

Published November 21, 2020, 2:32 PM

by [Liezle Basa Iñigo](#)

**DAGUPAN CITY** – A pygmy sperm whale was rescued by personnel of the Regional Maritime Unit 1 and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), which was found stranded on Friday night in Barangay Pugaro here.



Pygmy sperm whale , wounded was found Tondaligan, Dagupan City. (Photo courtesy of Jhun Cadiz / MANILA BULLETIN)

The whale was 1.2 meters long and weighed 80 kgs., and had a wound on its dorsal anterior to the head, according to the BFAR research center.

It was reportedly active, was swimming, and was being forced fed under close monitoring.

Meanwhile, another pygmy sperm whale was found stranded at Tongaligan beach, also in this city.

The whale had an estimated length of three meters, and weighed 300 to 350 kgs. A responding team was able to release the mammal in deeper waters.

According to Dr. Lemnuel Aragon, head of Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network, the pygmy sperm whales were most probably victims of blast fishing in the area.



# DOH reports 90.1% Covid-19 recovery rate

By Marita Moaje **November 21, 2020, 7:10 pm**



MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) announced on Saturday a 90.1-percent recovery rate from the coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

According to the DOH Covid-19 case bulletin, the total number of recoveries in the country is now at 375,548 after recording 328 newly reported recoveries.

The DOH said there were also 1,791 new Covid-19 cases, bringing to 33,224 or 8 percent the total number of confirmed Covid-19 active cases.

Of the total active cases, the DOH registered Tarlac among the provinces and cities with the highest number of recorded Covid-19 with 211 new cases.

This was followed by Davao City with 115 news cases, Laguna with 73, Cavite with 69, and Negros Occidental with 65.

However, the DOH said 93.2 percent of active Covid-19 cases in the country are considered mild and asymptomatic.

Critical cases are at 4.3 percent, where 2.3 percent are considered severe and 0.20 percent are moderate.

The DOH also recorded 55 new deaths. The total number of deaths is now at 8,080 or 1.94 percent.

Because of the downward trend on the country's Covid-19 cases, the DOH said the availabilities of facilities for Covid-19 patients are going up with 57 percent of ICU beds in the country available.

Isolation beds have 61-percent availability, ward beds have a 70-percent availability rate while 81 percent of ventilators are available. (PNA)



# Mga nagpositibo sa COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, umabot na sa 416,852

By Angellic Jordan November 21, 2020 - 07:48 PM

## DOH COVID-19

CASE BULLETIN # 252

## NOBYEMBRE 21, 2020

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



**ILAN ANG NAITALANG NAGPOSITIBO NGAYONG ARAW?**  
DATOS NGAYONG NOBYEMBRE 21 AYON SA REPORTS NOONG NOBYEMBRE 20, 12NN

## 1,398 / 25,430

BILANG NG NAGPOSITIBO

## 5.5%

PORSYENTO NG MGA NAGPOSITIBO

HALOS **93.2%** ANG MILD AT ASYMPTOMATIC NA KASO!

MGA PROBINSYA AT SIYUDAD NA MAY MATAAS NA NAITALANG KASO NGAYONG ARAW	PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?	KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO
TARLAC <b>211</b>	ICU BEDS (1.9K TOTAL BEDS) <b>57%</b> Available	<b>84.5%</b> Mild
DAVAO CITY <b>115</b>	ISOLATION BEDS (13.5K TOTAL BEDS) <b>61%</b> Available	<b>8.7%</b> Asymptomatic
LAGUNA <b>74</b>	WARD BEDS (5.9K TOTAL BEDS) <b>70%</b> Available	<b>4.3%</b> Critical
CAVITE <b>69</b>	VENTILATORS (2.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS) <b>81%</b> Available	<b>2.3%</b> Severe
NEGROS OCCIDENTAL <b>65</b>		<b>0.20%</b> Moderate

### UPDATE AND MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Sa papalapit na Disyembre, muling pinapaalala ng DOH sa publiko na patuloy na sumunod sa minimum public health standards. Iwasan natin ang mga large indoor gatherings, pagkat dala nito ang mataas na risk of COVID-19 infection.

Sa ganitong paraan, ang isang ligtas at malusog na holiday season ay sigurado!



Ihanap ka namin ng lugar para mag-isolate o magpagamot, tumawag lang sa sumusunod:  
SMART: 0919 977 3333  
GLOBE: 0915 777 7777  
TEL NO: (02) 886 505 00



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?  
I-chat na si KIRA!  
VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH  
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH  
KONTRACOVID PH: [kontracovid.ph](http://kontracovid.ph)



Manatiling ligtas!  
I-download ang StaySafe App  
O Gamitin ang WEBAPP at pumunta sa [StaySafe.ph](http://StaySafe.ph)

MARYOON PANNG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

OfficialDOHgov 
 @DOHgovph 
 [doh.gov.ph](http://doh.gov.ph)
 (02) 894-COVID / 1555

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/276267/mga-nagpositibo-sa-covid-19-sa-pilipinas-umabot-na-sa-416852>



# COVID-19 vaccine darating sa Pinas bago 2nd quarter ng 2021

By [Danilo Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - November 21, 2020 - 12:00am



Sinabi ni FDA Director General Eric Domingo na inaasahan na magpapalabas na si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ng Executive Order (EO) para mag-isyu ng 'emergency use authorization (EUA)' para sa mga bakuna makaraang hilingin ng FDA.

AFP/Andrew Caballero-Reynolds

MANILA, Philippines — Pinapabilis na ng Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ang proseso ng pagbili ng mga bakuna na maaaring dumating sa bansa bago ang pagpasok ng ikalawang quarter ng taong 2021.

Sinabi ni FDA Director General Eric Domingo na inaasahan na magpapalabas na si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ng Executive Order (EO) para mag-isyu ng 'emergency use authorization (EUA)' para sa mga bakuna makaraang hilingin ng FDA.

Sa pamamagitan ng EUA, mapapaigsi ang proseso ng ebalwasyon ng bakuna at magbibigay-daan para kilalanin ng FDA ang 'approval' ng mga kahalintulad nilang 'regulatory bodies' ng ibang bansa katulad ng United States FDA.

Una nang sinabi ng pamahalaan na maaaring sa ikalawang quarter pa ng 2021 makakuha ng bakuna ang Pilipinas buhat sa mga debeloper.

"Once makakuha sila (vaccine developers) ng EUA for example sa US FDA, mas mapapabilis talaga 'yung proseso,'" giit ni Domingo.

Ito ay makaraan naman na ihayag ng Pfizer, Moderna, at Russia sa pamamagitan ng kanilang Sputnik V ang pagiging epektibo ng kanilang mga bakuna na lagpas 90 porsyento na ang "efficacy".

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2020/11/21/2058415/covid-19-vaccine-darating-sa-pinas-bago-2nd-quarter-ng-2021/amp/>



# Gordon wants better supervision for NIA to avoid a repeat of massive flooding due to dam's water release

By OSRG Published on November 21, 2020

PASAY CITY, Nov. 21 -- With the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) under fire for the severe flooding in Isabela and Cagayan when Typhoon "Ulysses" swamped the provinces last week, Senator Richard J. Gordon pointed out that the agency should be properly supervised to avoid a repeat of the catastrophic incident.

"We cannot solve everything thru legislation, all the laws are there. What is important is that NIA is properly supervised," he said when asked how he could address the issue thru legislation.

Gordon advised NIA to practice the 4Ps – Predict, Plan, Prepare and Practice, like they do in the Philippine Red Cross where he is chairman and CEO, to mitigate the effect of disasters and more lives and property will be saved.

"They should practice the 4Ps. In the Red Cross we have the 4 Ps, you have to Predict, predict the danger, Plan what you will need. Learn it, then you have to Prepare and you Practice...When you Predict, alam mong bumabagyo, palapit na ang bagyo, dapat may protocols. Dapat pag palapit na ang bagyo, magpakawala ka na, hindi yung hihintayin mo on the last day," he stressed.

The PRC head also supported the call to include dam releasing in the alerts issued by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, adding that in the Red Cross, they conduct regular monitoring of the water level in the different dams so they could warn residents to evacuate if they are nearing spilling level.

"Ako sa Red Cross, naka-monitor kung ano ang status ng mga dams. Halimbawa sa Tullahan River, pinag-eevacuate namin mga tao, sinasabi namin malapit ng mag-overflow," he said.

The release of water from the dams reportedly worsened flooding situations in Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, the Cordillera Administrative Region and Metro Manila. In Cagayan and Isabela, the release of water from Magat Dam, one of the biggest dams in Asia, at the height of the storm allegedly triggered massive flooding in Cagayan Valley and left at least nine dead.

For his part, NIA Administrator Ricardo Visaya said the spillway gates of Magat Dam had to be opened amid the heavy rains from Typhoon Ulysses to prevent the dam from breaking and causing a bigger catastrophe which would have affected millions of people. (OSRG)



# WB finds flood control project ‘unsatisfactory’

By: [Ben O. de Vera](#) - Reporter / [@bendeveraINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:00 AM November 22, 2020

Implementation of the massive Metro Manila flood control project funded by loans from two multilateral lenders has been slow, according to the World Bank (WB).

In a report last week, the Washington-based lender said the overall implementation progress of the Metro Manila Flood Management Project jointly led by the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority was “moderately unsatisfactory” alongside a “substantial” overall risk rating.

In 2017, the World Bank and the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) each chipped in \$207.6 million in loans for this project, while the remaining \$84.7 million of the \$500-million total cost was shelled out by the national government.

This was the first Philippine project financed by the AIIB.

“The modernization of one pumping station, Balut, progressed well. The last new pump is being installed and the works will be substantially completed by the end of December 2020. Procurement for the modernization of Vitas is ongoing, using the innovative method of ‘design, supply and install.’ ... A number of activities related to solid waste management are ongoing, including cleaning of waste from pumping stations and increased efforts to recycle waste, including plastics,” the World Bank said.

Despite the progress, especially after the stringent lockdown was gradually eased in Metro Manila, the World Bank said that “disbursements remain very low, which justifies a moderate unsatisfactory rating for implementation progress.”

To date, only \$6.93 million, or 3.3 percent of the World Bank financing, was spent over two years since the loan took effect in March 2018.

The World Bank nonetheless said the progress toward achieving the project’s development objective, which was to improve flood management in selected Metro Manila areas, was “moderately satisfactory.”

By 2024, this project should make 4,900 hectares of currently flood-prone areas with 1.7 million residents in Metro Manila free of water within 24 hours following a major rainfall.



# Magnitude-4.3 quake jolts Sarangani town, Davao Occidental

**ABS-CBN News**

Posted at Nov 21 2020 11:06 PM

A magnitude-4.3 earthquake hit Sarangani town, Davao Occidental on Saturday night, according to the Phivolcs.

The tremor happened at 9:11 p.m., 19 kilometers southwest of Sarangani.

It was tectonic in origin and had a depth of 165 kilometers, the Phivolcs said.

No damage and aftershocks were expected.



## Bagong planta ng coal, pinatitigil

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Nov 21, 2020

NEWS



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Sa pagdaraos ng 'National Day of Action Against Coal', nanawagan ang iba't-ibang grupong makakalikasan na maglabas ng kautusan na magpapatigil sa pagtatayo ng mga bagong planta ng coal.

Binalak magmartsa ng grupo papunta sa Palasyo para idulog kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang kanilang kahilingan dahil sa patuloy na pagdadalawang isip ng Department of Energy (DOE) na ikansela ang lahat ng aplikasyon para sa pagtatayo ng mga bagong planta, pero pinigil sila ng kapulisan na makarating sa makasaysayang kalye ng Mendiola.

Ad Asia – InsideContent Ad

Ayon sa mga grupong Power for People coalition (P4P) at Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PM CJ), ang usok na binubuga ng mga planta ng coal ang pangunahing nagdudulot ng pagbabago sa klima at nagdudulot ng pinakamaking sanhi ng mga kalamidad na tumatama sa bansa.

"We have been making this call for years. We've heard President Duterte commit to more renewable energy in his SONA. We heard the DOE say they want renewable energy. We even heard DOE say they want a coal moratorium. But all that has happened so far is the proliferation of coal. And now we had a succession of devastating typhoons which has pushed our country's and people's resilience to the limit. We must move to end coal and limit its effect on climate change, and do it now," pahayag ni Gerry Arances, P4P Convenor.

Matapos ang anunsyo ng moratorium ng DoE nitong Oktubre, giit ng mga grupo na ito'y dapat nagresulta na ng hindi paglabas ng mga bagong Certificates of Endorsement para sa mga bagong proyekto, pagkansela ng mga umiiral na COE at pagdedekomisyon sa mga kasalukuyang nakatayong mga planta. Pero patuloy na nanahimik ang ahensiya.

"With the recent devastation caused by a series of five typhoons, DOE must now move to cancel these projects and declare the phaseout period not later than 2030 of the existing 9.88 GW of coal. We are now in a climate emergency. All these plants must be stopped and replaced with clean, affordable renewables," giit naman ni Ian Rivera, National Coordinator ng PM CJ.

Source: <https://tonite.abante.com.ph/bagong-planta-ng-coal-pinatitigil/>



## Climate change in the eyes of young whales

posted November 21, 2020 at 08:40 pm

by [Steph Llarena](#)

Many believe that so long as they're safe and sound and comfortable in their homes, climate change doesn't really affect them.

A survey in the United States shows only one in 10 people worries that global warming will have an impact on their lives, believing it only affects polar bears and plants.

But a California-based Filipino climate specialist and her 10-year-old daughter want to change that, imploring us to look at the worsening impacts of climate change through the eyes of two kid whales who are losing their homes.



*MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.* Environmental scientist Janice Lao-Noche and her 6th grader daughter Esther write a book that aims to educate children and their parents and educators about climate change.

Janiace Lao-Noche, together with 6th grader Esther, wrote Sparky and Benny's Big Home Mystery. According to the mother-daughter author tandem, the book is a personal story for children, parents, and educators to understand what climate change is all about, and why it is personal to all of us.

The book, published by US-based Wise Ink, aims to provide children a template on how they can help make a real difference to address climate change.

"This book is our love letter to nature and to the world, because real love means telling them the truth but also showing them what is possible. The book ends with hope, that if we take action today and do it together, we can solve the greatest threat we face as humanity—climate change," said Lao.

After reading the book, Dr. Elondra Napper, a science educator in the United States, said, "A powerful, practically written book that will change the way you think about climate change."





Meanwhile, She Talks Asia (Philippines) chief executive Lynn Pinugu shared, “Equally informative and heartwarming... may this moving story compel every reader to do their part.”

Janice is a multi-awarded sustainability expert, having won international acclaim for her work in sustainability, including co-developing a mathematical and economic model for reducing carbon emissions in the international aviation sector.

Esther, meanwhile, is a student athlete and a young coder, who wants to be a marine veterinarian when she grows up.

In partnership with Save Philippines Seas, Janice and Esther on Nov. 29, 9:00 a.m. (Nov. 28, 8:00 p.m. EST) are holding Sparky and Benny Book Launch Party.