

24 APRIL 2022, SUNDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR Recognizes Success of Homegrown Lawyers in 2020/2021 Bar Exam

Saturday, April 23, 2022 Journal Online



The **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)**, led by acting secretary Jim O. Sampulna (middle, first row) and officials (2nd row) recognize the feat of **DENR employees who passed the 2020/2021 bar examination** when they were presented in simple rites held during the April 18 flag raising ceremony at the DENR Central Office in Quezon City. A total of 17 employees from the **DENR** Central Office passed the examination, with De La Salle University College of Law graduate Joseph Lorenz Asuncion (4th from left, first row) among this year's passers recognized for exemplary performance. A total of 50 law-graduate employees from the agency's regional offices including provincial and community environment and natural resources offices, bureaus, and attached agencies also successfully-passed the exam.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/04/23/on-earth-day-legarda-calls-on-filipinos-to-invest-and-defend-it-for-the-next-generation/>



Tree planting activity para sa Earth Day 2022 umarangkada sa QC



April 23, 2022 @ 10:23 AM 20 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines- Nagsama-sama sina Manila Water President at CEO Jocot de Dios (gitna); MWSS-RO Chief Regulator Atty Patrick Lester Ty (ika-apat mula sa kaliwa); NWRB Water Rights Division Head Mary Jane Dominguez (ikalawa mula sa kaliwa); DILG Central Office Disaster Information Coordinating Center Director Allan Tabell, ABS-CBN Foundation Managing Director Roberta Lopez-Feliciano (ika-lima mula sa kaliwa); LWUA Officer-in-Charge Eileen Dela Vega (ika-pito mula sa kaliwa); CCESD – Division Chief of Environmental Education Division (kinatawan ni Mayor Joy Belmonte ng Quezon City) Lea Gaon; DENR- NCR Regional Executive Director Jacqueline Caancan, MWSS-CO Water and Sewerage Department Manager Ramon Fabul sa ceremonial kick-off ng tree planting activity para sa Earth Day 2022 celebration sa Orosa Hall, Balara Filters Park, Brgy. Pansol, Quezon City. **Danny Querubin**



Source: <https://www.remate.ph/tree-planting-activity-para-sa-earth-day-2022-umarangkada-sa-qc/>



CAB lifts capacity limit on flights to Boracay

By TED CORDERO, GMA News

Published April 21, 2022 6:55pm

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) has lifted the aircraft seat capacity limit on flights going to Kalibo and Caticlan in Aklan—the usual routes taken to get to the prime tourist destination of Boracay.

In a resolution dated February 28, the CAB resolved to “lift the limitation on the use of aircraft with more than 200-seat capacity on flights to Kalibo and Caticlan.”

The resolution was adopted after budget carrier Cebu Pacific filed a request on February 21 to remove the 200-seat cap, which took effect on July 15, 2019 following the rehabilitation of Boracay "in an effort to rationalize visitor numbers to the island and maintain its carrying capacity."

Cebu Pacific had requested the removal of the flight seat limitation to further revitalize tourism and recover from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the Holy Week break, Boracay’s carrying capacity was [breached](#), with the Department of Tourism (DOT) urging concerned agencies to appropriate measures to prevent such incidents from occurring again.

Based on a study conducted by the University of the Philippines and commissioned by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the island’s carrying capacity is 19,215 tourists at a given time.

The island recorded 21,252 tourists on April 14 (Maundy Thursday) and 22,519 tourists on April 15 (Good Friday), surpassing the recommended daily threshold.

Local officials have reportedly appealed for the island's carrying capacity to be increased, but the DOT said it has to [consult](#) the experts first. —**VBL, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/829279/cab-lifts-capacity-limit-on-flights-to-boracay/story/?fbclid=IwAR2uF57WWDxCLm1CI0ZJyRKApSGhPYx2sG5YGIHNp5-A1pp8xFUoRDPAcLw>



EDITORIAL - Magiging maburak na naman ang Boracay

Pang-masa April 24, 2022 | 12:00am



MARAMING turista ang nagtungo sa Boracay noong Semana Santa. Lumampas sa itinakdang kapasidad na 19,000. Sa report ng Malay Tourism Office sa Department of Tourism, 21,252 ang bumisita sa Boracay noong Huwebes Santo at 22,519 noong Biyernes Santo.

Dahil sa paglampas sa kapasidad, binalaan ni Tourism Sec. Berna Romulo Puyat ang local government ng Malay, Aklan. Ayon kay Romulo Puyat, ang DILG na ang mag-iisyu ng warning sa Malay LGU.

Isa sa pinangangambahan ngayon ay ang pagtaas muli ng COVID-19 cases dahil sa pagdagsa ng mga turista sa island resort. Bagama't pawang mga bakunado ang pinapasok sa Boracay, naghahatid ng pangamba ang sobrang tao. Nagbabala ang World Health Organization (WHO) kamakailan na posibleng sa katapusan ng Mayo ay magkakaroon ng surge dahil sa pagdagsa ng mga tao sa probinsiya noong Mahal na Araw at idagdag pa ang kampanya ng mga kandidato para sa May 9 elections. Paalala ng WHO, ipatupad ang health protocols.

Bukod sa posibleng pagkalat ng virus, ang pagkasira rin naman ng Boracay ay isa rin sa pinangangambahan. Kung hindi mapipigil ang dagsa ng tao roon, muling babalik ang maruming Boracay na tinawag noon ni President Duterte na "cesspool". Ipinasara ng presidente ang Boracay noong 2018 sa loob ng anim na buwan.

Maraming establimento sa Boracay ang lumabag sa environmental laws. Sa 562 establimento na ininspeksyon ng DENR, 161 ang lumalabag. Ang mga ito ay walang water waste treatment facility kaya ang dumi ng tao ay direktang iniluluwa sa dagat. Lahat nang klase ng dumi mula sa resort ay itinatapon sa dagat. Pati ang mga basura sa paligid ng resort ay nagkalat din kaya sinampahan na ang mga establimento nang paglabag sa Clean Water Act at Clean Air Act.

Ngayon dahil sa hindi na namang mapigilan na pagdagsa ng tao, asahan na tatawagin na namang "cesspool" ang Boracay. Pagpaliwanagin ang LGU ng Malay kung bakit hindi ipinasusunod ang tamang kapasidad.

Hindi lamang pagdami ng COVID ang pinangangambahan ngayon sa pagdagsa ng mga turista kundi ang dumi na iiwan sa Boracay. Sana sumunod ang Malay LGU sa mga alituntunin upang maiwasan ang pagkasira ng Boracay. Huwag hayaang maging maburak muli.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/punto-mo/2022/04/24/2176350/editorial-magiging-maburak-na-naman-ang-boracay>



Pemsea presents solutions to rid rivers of plastics for Earth Day

BY BUSINESSMIRROR APRIL 24, 2022



[Gregg Yan/Pemsea photo](#)

The Imus River in Cavite province originates from the upland streams of Silang and flows down to the ocean via Manila Bay. All segments of the river span 186.5 kilometers and pass through major towns and cities of the province like Silang, Imus, Dasmariñas, Kawit and Bacoor, as shown in the photo..

A Southeast Asia environment agency is finding ways to help manage plastic waste entering the world's rivers as it celebrated Earth Day 2022 on April 22.

The Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (Pemsea) released a set of five studies under Project Aseano, a three-year initiative to stop plastic pollution in two pilot sites—the Imus River in Cavite province in the Philippines and the Citarum River in Indonesia, a Pemsea news release said.

Funded by the Norwegian Development Program to Combat Marine Litter and Microplastics, Project Aseano is led by the Norwegian Institute for Water Research, and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies in Indonesia.

It is together with the Pemsea Resource Facility and the Asean Secretariat under the purview of the Asean Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment.

Layman versions of the studies are publicly downloadable. The studies cover the social implications of plastic pollution mitigation, assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices on plastic waste and offer maps of the Imus River watershed.

It also identified hotspots of plastic waste. Waste entering this river system is liable to flow into the ocean via Manila Bay.

The studies were led by two academic institutions based within the Imus River watershed—the Cavite State University and De La Salle University Dasmariñas (DLSU-D).

“We wanted to understand not just what types of waste enter the Imus River, but how the people who live near the river itself perceived plastic pollution as well as local efforts to combat it,” explained Dr. Edwin Lineses of DLSU-D.

“Through this, we were able to contextualize possible policies and initiatives that might once more make the river safe for bathing, fishing and recreation,” Lineses said.

East Asian countries produce over half of the world's marine plastic pollution, and waterways like the Imus River act as conveyor belts that discharge waste to the oceans.



“Project Asean is developing practical measures to reduce the entry of plastic waste into rivers, while carefully assessing the interlinked dynamics between residents, local economies and the environment,” explained Aseano Project Manager Thomas Bell.

Project Aseano promises to share proven and cost-efficient actions to help local communities better manage plastic waste from source to sea.

The project enhances capacity, monitoring, evaluation and inter-local government unit cooperation for various groups tackling river pollution. Its solutions are designed to be replicated and upscaled across the region, the news release said.

“For almost three decades, Pemsea has been developing and sharing solutions to revive the seas of East Asia,” said Pemsea Executive Director Aimee Gonzales.

“This Earth Day, let’s revive our rivers. Promoting integrated river management, just like integrated coastal management, translates to more productive waterways and healthier communities,” Gonzales said.

Image credits: [Gregg Yan/Pemsea photo](#)



On Earth Day, Legarda calls on Filipinos to invest and defend it for the next generation

BY BUSINESSMIRROR APRIL 23, 2022



Senatorial aspirant Loren Legarda

Environmentalist and Senatorial candidate Loren Legarda called on all Filipinos to be defenders and stewards of creation for the next generation as the world marks Earth Day on Friday, April 22.

“We should not simply appreciate our planet and all life in it. We have to protect it, we have to fight for it, and as this year’s theme tells us, we have to invest in it,” Legarda said during the Pagyabong 2022: Enrichment Tree Planting Activity” held at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center (NAPWC) in Quezon City.

With this year’s global theme “Invest in our Planet,” Legarda, who is currently serving as Antique’s congresswoman, said that existing environmental laws should be strictly implemented like the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018, which she authored and declared 94 natural parks, protected landscapes or seascapes, and reserves as protected areas under national law.

“The enactment of the ENIPAS measure has benefited protected areas in the country, by giving more access to funding for conservation programs as well as the prosecution of prohibited acts enumerated in the law,” she said.

Legarda, the only candidate who is an acknowledged environment and climate champion (locally and internationally) and author of multiple landmark environment and climate laws, strengthened her call to all sectors – government, private, and civil groups to invest and engage in projects that will help in solving issues such overexploitation of natural resources and pollution.

“In light of the fast-declining state of our environment due to our destructive ways and the intensifying effects of the climate crisis, let us be the Earth’s defenders who are needed today and tomorrow,” she said. “Let us continue to help bring back the life of our planet, so our children and future generations can also marvel at its beauty. Patuloy nating payabungin ang ganda at sigla ng ating kalikasan,” Legarda concluded.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/04/23/on-earth-day-legarda-calls-on-filipinos-to-invest-and-defend-it-for-the-next-generation/>



On Earth Day, Legarda calls on Filipinos to invest and defend it for the next generation

23 hours ago jake



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Source: <https://saksingayon.com/news-break/on-earth-day-legarda-calls-on-filipinos-to-invest-and-defend-it-for-the-next-generation/?fbclid=IwAR2qfR89QYxCYQ71QPMQGHHA5dYVr3AMCBiPX0rgFFsOHCmoXGbi3OFpDnA>



Loren sa Earth Day: Pangalagaan, ipaglaban ang planeta

By Abante Tonite Last updated Apr 23, 2022



Sa paggunita ng Earth Day noong Biyernes, nanawagan si Deputy Speaker at Nationalist People's Coalition senatorial bet Loren Legarda sa mga mamamayan na maging tagapagtanggol ng daigdig o "Earth Defenders."

Kilala bilang kampeon sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan, sinabi ni Legarda na hindi lang dapat 'pahalagahan ang daigdig', kundi dapat mamuhunan ang lahat sa pagsusulong ng isang malinis, masigla at malusog na 'Mother Earth.'

Ginawa ng beteranong mambabatas ang pahayag sa okasyon ng Earth Day celebration na may pangdaigdigang tema na 'Invest in our Planet'.

Hinimok ni Legarda ang pamahalaan, pribadong sektor at civil society na aktibong makilahok at isulong ang mga programa at proyektong lulutas sa pang-aabuso sa kalikasan, habitat loss o pagkawala ng mga tirahan ng hayop, at pagkasira ng mga komunidad dahil sa polusyon.

Sa harap ng mga nagaganap na kalamidad, dulot na rin ng mapanirang galaw ng sangkatauhan at climate change, sinabi ni Legarda na dapat lang kumilos ang komunidad – ang mga mamamayan – bilang 'Earth Defenders' o tagapagtanggol ng daigdig – hindi lang ngayon, kundi gayundin sa hinaharap.

Noong nasa Senado, si Legarda ang nag-akda ng Republic Act 11038 o Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018. Sa ilalim ng batas, idineklara ang 94 na lugar sa bansa bilang natural parks, protected landscapes at seascapes.

Ayon kay Legarda kapag nakabalik siyang muli sa Senado ay lalo pa niyang pag-iibayuhin ang mga batas kalikasan para sa mga susunod na henerasyon. Hinimok niya rin ang publiko na sama-samang payabungin ang ganda at sigla ng ating kalikasan."

Sa lahat ng mga tumatakbong kandidato sa darating na halalan sa Mayo, tanging si Legarda lamang ang may mahabang karanasan, malinaw na adbokasiya at epektibong action plan sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan.



Loren urges candidates to bare climate action plans

[Edu Punay](#) - The Philippine Star April 24, 2022 | 12:00am



“Our people are looking for the climate agenda not just of national candidates, but of local ones. After all, local governments are frontliners in planning and implementing programs for climate resilience. LGUs see firsthand the impacts of the climate crisis, and they are often the first responders when the worst of the consequences come,” UniTeam senatorial candidate Loren Legarda said.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Plans for climate change adaptation and mitigation must be laid out, according to UniTeam senatorial candidate Loren Legarda, as she urged all candidates to make it part of their campaign thrusts this election.

As she led the country’s observance of 52nd Earth Day last Friday, the three-term senator and environmental champion cited the need for candidates in both national and local elections to come up with their plans on how to protect and preserve the environment.

“I urge all my fellow candidates, from the national level to the cities and municipalities, to present their environmental agenda to the voters. We can start by focusing on three things: Managing risks instead of managing disasters, protecting our ecosystems and improving rural livelihoods,” Legarda said.

“Our people need to know how we as public servants plan to invest in our planet in order to address the climate emergency we are in. I know that regardless of our parties and colors, we all agree that we need to save our planet – and I hope we all campaign just as hard for our climate and lead much-needed discussions on climate change,” she said.

Legarda emphasized the important role played by elected officials in addressing the climate crisis, especially on the level of the local government.

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At the Earth Day celebration, Legarda led the “Pagyabong 2022: Enrichment Tree Planting Activity” of Philippine native tree species, organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity and the Climate Change Commission at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City.

This year’s theme of Earth Day, “Invest in Our Planet,” calls on everyone to act boldly, innovate broadly and implement equitably in order to preserve and protect our health, our families and our livelihoods.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/04/24/2176301/loren-urges-candidates-bare-climate-action-plans>



Environmental group calls Gwen, Mike ‘Destroyers of Mother Earth’

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio April 23, 2022 - 10:44 AM



Members of the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) Cebu held a rally near the Fuente Osmeña rotunda in Cebu City on Earth Day 2022. | Photo Courtesy of PMCJ

CEBU CITY, Philippines — “Destroyers of Mother Earth.”

This is what members of the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) Cebu called Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia and Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama in a protest rally held on Earth Day, April 22, 2022.

Both officials, the group said, support the establishment of Waste to Energy (WTE) incineration facilities here that would destroy Cebu’s natural environment.

“This is for pursuing and/or supporting dirty energy projects such as coal-fired power plants that harm the environment and pose significant risk to public health. Both officials are also in favor of the establishment of waste to energy (WTE) incinerators where trash are burned producing more greenhouse gases that aggravate global warming,” PMCJ Cebu said in a statement.

“Natural resource extraction continues unabated as long as parties involved provide a share of the proceeds to host LGUs (local government units), posing a continuing threat to the life of poor communities who are most affected by landslides, floods, and other disasters,” it added.

Members of the environmental group conducted a 30-minute rally near the Fuente Osmeña Circle on Friday, April 22, with hopes that they would be heard by the chief executives of Cebu Province and Cebu City.

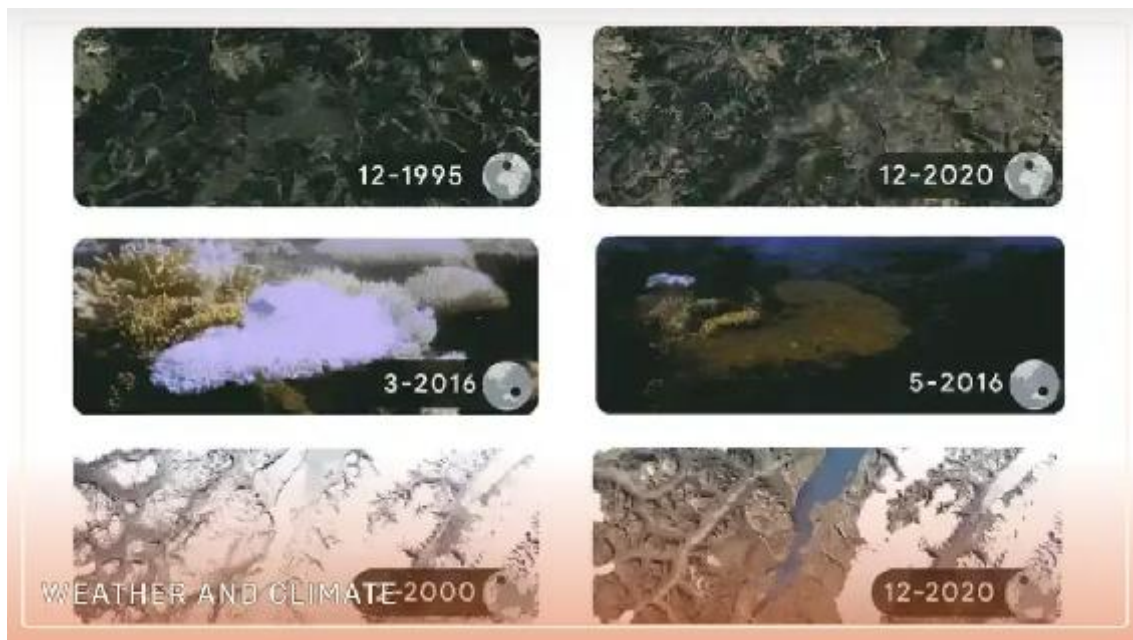
They said that progress should not compromise environmental protection.

For PMCJ Cebu, progress and environmental protection must go “hand in hand” in order to ensure a sustainable community for future generations.

Teddy Navea, the group’s spokesperson, said Garcia and Rama need to rethink their plan to have a WTE facility here and reassess how garbage should be managed.

Navea said they are looking forward to seeing “more sustainable solutions” set in place.

Source: https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/437030/environmental-group-calls-gwen-mike-destroyers-of-mother-earth?fbclid=IwAR2qWi6ZyzzKKDY7E9_BUp6fnPhvwItyIEzYo6g54hGepWEML_AtPxOeDk#ixzz7RGceKCQZ



Google Earth Day 2022 doodle is a reminder of climate crisis

APR 23, 2022, 1:34 PM

Heloise Diamante
Writer

Google is telling its 5.4 billion users, that nature is warning us. Don't let it fall on deaf ears.

Today's Google doodle is a grim reminder of the climate crisis with time-lapse Google Earth images of glacial melt, coral reef bleaching, deforestation, and glacial retreat.

In partnership with The Ocean Agency, Google's 2022 Earth Day doodle shows four pairs of satellite imagery and images not unlike those haunting photos in the 2006 documentary *The Inconvenient Truth*.

One of which shows the continuing coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia between March 2016 and October 2017.

According to climate counselor Lesley Hughes from the Macquarie University in Sydney, the reef is such a major natural icon that its slow death should show that "there's absolutely no time to waste."

Google also showed the glacial retreat at the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro between December 1986 and 2020 and the glacial melt in Greenland, between December 2000 and 2020.

Specialists have been warning the public that the ancient glaciers are thinning. In 2021, a new study showed that an Antarctic glacier larger than the UK may soon break or melt away earlier than expected.

In May 2021, a centuries-old barracks in northern Italy was discovered after the glaciers around it have melted away.

Google isn't the only one calling for immediate climate action on Earth Day. Earlier this month, several scientists made headlines for holding protests in government properties and in private companies.



In America, scientists from NASA chained themselves to an office building of Chase Bank, which is known to have invested more money in fossil fuels than any other bank.

Others chained themselves to a White House fence. In Spain, protesters threw fake blood on the steps of the Spanish Parliament in Madrid.

German scientists demonstrated outside the Ministry of Economy and Climate Protection and many more protested outside the Shell PLC headquarters in England.

Scientists in Mexico also risk arrest by pasting documents on government buildings, while scientists in Italy occupied an oil and gas company's headquarters.

The demonstrations were initiated by a climate movement "Scientist Rebellion." According to the group, around 1,000 scientists in 25 countries participated in the global protest.

"Scientists have spent decades writing papers, advising government, briefing the press: all have failed," the group writes. "Now is the time for us to take action so that we show how seriously we take our warnings."

The recent release of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said it's "now or never" for the world to take sharp action to cut greenhouse gas emissions enough.

Otherwise, the world will pass the 1.5-degree threshold where most of the coral-reefs die, more super typhoons like Odette will hit, extreme heatwaves occur more often, and melting ice floods more land areas becoming uninhabitable.



Earth Day is to protect and celebrate life

By Fr. Shay Cullen April 24, 2022

EARTH Day should be every day when we recognize and celebrate the miracle of life itself on this unique planet with millions of diverse amazing creatures making up a wondrous biodiversity that exists nowhere else in the known universe. How blessed are we to exist at all. We are still unsure of exactly how life came to be, or how we evolved and why we are the species with the most developed intellect and awesome power over life and death on the planet.

In his now famous Encyclical Letter of 2015, *Laudato Si*, [Pope Francis](#) raised our awareness of the beauty of the earth and the universe and the integrity of creation, which we are called upon to love and protect and warned of how humans are destroying it.

Most people do not value the earth, our home, our source of being and life. Most do not contemplate the value of life, are unaware of the creation, the earth, the natural world, the biodiversity of life, the universe or themselves. Many humans live in an unknowing and mindless daily routine as they struggle to survive in poverty while others, equally mindless, have an abundance of material things and are disconnected from themselves, each other and the natural world of the earth. This is the great tragedy of human life, the only species with intellect, intelligence, knowledge, spiritual values and dignity, and human energy all largely wasted on trivial, useless pursuits.

The human species, with intellect, are living self-destructive lifestyles and economic and industrial activities to the point of destroying the sensitive climate and ecosystems of the earth, and in the process, are destroying each other. The desires of humans to pursue vast material wealth and power and gain domination over others lead to conflicts and destructive activities leading to the extinction of many species and life on the planet. The extraction and burning of fossil fuel is excessive, and is bringing the earth to the point of climatic global warming where there is a tipping point, a point of no return. Then when reached, warming will continue past 2 degrees Celsius until the earth is uninhabitable. Most food crops cannot grow in excessive warm climates.

The majority of people are tragically unconcerned of the looming catastrophe because of misinformation spread by powerful agencies, multinational corporations and their executives. They spread climate change denial and debunk the truth of science to protect their own industries. These fossil fuel industries need to be phased out for replacement by renewable energy sources. The corporate tycoons lobby and control politicians to block legislation that promote renewable energy sources and ban fossil fuels, oil, gas and coal.

Most people are unaware and do not appreciate the complexity of the interdependence of all life forms on Earth of which the human species is an intimate part and whose destinies are intertwined with global warming and life together on the earth. Too many humans are bent on killing the other species and each other.

If humans continue to destroy the forests and all the creatures living in them, then the people will have destroyed their own sources of water and medicine and negated the role of forests to control and contain carbon dioxide and thus control global warming. The balanced level for life to thrive is changing and the humans are at present perishing as drought spreads in parts of [Africa](#).

In [South Africa](#), as I write, devastating floods are destroying vast lands, crops, food reserves, houses and people. In the Philippines, greater, more powerful and more frequent typhoons have already hit the nation. The rains are devastating, the lost forests have left bare hillsides prone to massive landslides and floods that destroy the rice fields and kill hundreds of people.



It is a self-inflicted catastrophe.

As Pope Francis has said in Laudato Si, "The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation..."

The social degradation he speaks of is the impact of poverty among humans and how it affects life on Earth. The evolution of the human species continues. Like a virus, there are mutations, some benign, others deadly. The deadly violent humans are the people likely to have unjustly and unfortunately grown up in poverty, emotional and material suffered deprivation, neglect and abuse: psychological, physical and sexual violence. Most victims suffer in silence all their lives, others veer to the path of greater violence.

They desire to inflict on others vengeful violence in retaliation for what they themselves suffered in childhood. They bully, intimidate, silence and abuse all others to get their way. There is no justification whatsoever for the evil that they do.

These people choose to dominate others by force and lead fanatical groups and even nations on paths of violent attacks and war. They may glory in power to compensate for the powerlessness of an abusive childhood. They are leaders desiring revenge on society and the world and they start conflicts and wars. They lead terrorist groups and oppress and kill their own people. To name a few in history like Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, [Assad](#), [Queen Mary](#), and now Putin and others bent on killing and destruction. These leaders become violent tyrants, dictators, out to destroy their critics and other nations even and the environment with extractive industry, mired in corruption and war crimes.

Wars destroy the earth and the environment. As Pope Francis says: "It is foreseeable that, once certain resources have been depleted, the scene will be set for new wars, albeit under the guise of noble claims. War always does grave harm to the environment and to the cultural riches of peoples, risks which are magnified when one considers nuclear arms and biological weapons. Despite the international agreements which prohibit chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare, the fact is that laboratory research continues to develop new offensive weapons capable of altering the balance of nature."

So, in [Ukraine](#), it may come to chemical or a nuclear strike, unthinkable as that may be. The environment has been destroyed by devastating accidents at nuclear power plants and in the Philippines, agreements of understanding have been signed by government officials to start plans to build a nuclear plant. People should know what is being done in their name and have a right to protect themselves, their nation and the earth.

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Thai Buddhist sect lights 300,000 LED lanterns to mark Earth Day. | 🗨️ AFP

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Saving the mysterious sea cows

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA APRIL 24, 2022



[Danny Ocampo](#)

A dugong feeding on seagrass.

Known locally as “dugong” (*Dugong dugon*), this sea cow is a large, charismatic and gentle creature of the sea that is rarely seen nowadays in coastal and marine areas where they used to thrive.

Shy as it is, very little is known about this very elusive marine mammal—its population and distribution, how and where it breeds or congregates, or where and how it raise its young.

Fortunately, as a species, dugong is surviving the numerous human-induced threats, unlike its cousin, the Steller’s sea cow that lived off the coast of western North America, which became extinct in the 18th century mainly due to hunting.

Dugong is one of four living species of the Order Sirenia, which includes three species of manatees—the Amazonian, the West Indian and the West African manatees. It is the only living representative of the once-diverse Family Dugongidae.

Dugong life cycle

Known to live up to 70 years old, it takes about four years to 17 years for this marine herbivores to become sexually mature.

By feeding on seagrass, an adult dugong can weigh from 250 kilograms to 900 kg. It is not surprising because scientists say its closest land mammal relative is the elephant and not cows. It got the name sea cow only because it feeds on seagrass.

A dugong’s gestation period takes about 13 to 15 months, which means it can only reproduce once every three years, or up to 7 years, and it can only produce one offspring at a time.

A mama dugong should nurture until the baby dugong can fend for itself by eating seagrass 14 months to 18 months after birth.

Population decline

Known to occur in 37 countries in the Indo-Pacific region, the global population of sea cows is on the decline. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species lists dugong as vulnerable.

In the Philippines, the dugong is critically endangered, a conservation status that means the species is just a step shy from being declared extinct.

Yet, despite its conservation status, still very little is known about the dugong and its way of life. Perhaps this is the reason why its population continues to drop.



There are five priority sites for dugong conservation in the Philippines—Calauit Island in Busuanga and Green Island Bay (which has ongoing conservation initiatives), both in Palawan province; the Malita and Davao del Sur area; Sarangani Bay; and the Sulu Archipelago.

Saving the dugongs

In the Philippines, at least one group, the Community-Centered Conservation-Philippines (C3PH), is working closely with the communities to save the species from extinction.

In his online presentation during the World Wildlife Day celebration organized by the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on March 4, Reynante V. Ramilo, programme coordinator of C3PH, said conserving the critically endangered dugong in the Philippines has always been a major challenge.

“The decline of the species and escalating threats led to its classification as critically endangered,” he said.

Human-induced threats

Ramilo said the extinction of dugong can be easily blamed on a number of human-induced threats—such as fishery by-catch, direct hunting, rapid coastal development and habitat degradation.

“Sometimes, fishermen are forced to sacrifice their [dugong] lives even though they know it is illegal to hurt or kill dugongs because they want to save their fishnets more than the dugongs,” Ramilo said in a telephone interview on April 19.

As part of the C3PH’s conservation measure to save dugongs caught in fishnets, Ramilo said they are offering to pay the fishermen the cost of the fishnets to save the life of the poor dugong.

“Just last year, we encountered two incidents wherein we paid the fishermen the cost of the fishnet and we were able to save the lives of the dugongs,” he recalled.

Protected mammal

DENR Administrative Order 55 of 1991 declared the dugong as a Protected Marine Mammal of the Philippines.

This means that hurting, hunting, killing, trading, or even possession of dugong, dead or alive, is punishable by law.

The declaration gives it unique importance as a species, perhaps equal to that of other iconic animals like the Philippine eagle, which is protected by Republic Act 6147, which declared it as a Protected Bird in the Philippines.

At the same time, the Philippine tamaraw is protected by Commonwealth Act 73 that prohibits the killing, hunting, wounding or taking away of the tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*), that was approved on October 23, 1936.

Important ecosystem function

In his presentation, Ramilo said dugong’s importance to fisheries and marine biodiversity cannot be overemphasized.

A member of the IUCN-Sirenia Specialist Group, Ramilo said dugongs help stabilize sediments, filter large quantities of nutrients and play an important role in the marine ecosystem.

“The dugong that lives in these seagrass ecosystems are excellent barometers indicative of the overall health of the ecosystem,” Ramilo said in a mix of Filipino and English.



He said the dugong's constant browsing of seagrass encourages regrowth, ensuring critical habitat and feeding sites for a host of other marine species, including turtles, dolphins and sawfish.

Elusive

While it is widely known that they inhabit and can only be found among seagrass, actually "finding" them is easier said than done.

Take it from scuba diver and explorer Gregg Yan. "It took me decades to see a wild dugong," he recalled.

"Sizeable herds of dugongs once plied the Philippine archipelago until hunting and habitat loss greatly reduced their numbers. Some herds are still holding out in Isabela, Mindanao, Guimaras and Palawan, but encounters are extremely rare," Yan told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on April 19.

He explained that encountering a dugong is unlike seeing a whale, "which steals your breath away because of sheer size, nor a shark that inspires just a primeval bit of fear."

"Dugongs are huge but cute and friendly, just like a mermaid Hodor," he said.

Tourist magnet

While they are indeed elusive and hard to find, on Calauit Island, "dugong hunt" is being offered as part of the diving experience to tourists.

Danny Ocampo, ocean conservation advocate, master scuba diver, and photography expert, told the BusinessMirror via Messenger that because finding sea cows is not easy, a local Tagbanua tour guide will give the chances of finding them a big boost.

However, observing and interacting with dugongs require permission from the Tagbanuas that protect them, he pointed out.

Raising awareness

Ocampo said ecotourism can help raise awareness about wildlife.

"With that awareness, it can help people to care for them," he said when sought for a comment last April 19.

"Ecotourism can also help raise needed funds for the management of protected areas/habitats to ensure that endangered wildlife, such as dugongs, can thrive and recover from population decline," he added.

According to Ocampo, interaction guidelines were already set for dugong and other wildlife tourism. It limits the number of people interacting with them at a given time or the amount of time they are exposed to tourists, which can be stressful to them or alter their behavior.

"These [guidelines] should be strictly followed and regular studies should be conducted to assess if these measures are enough," he said.

Way forward

According to Ramilo, C3PH will continue to work with communities and local government units in Palawan with the goal of establishing a network of dugong conservation sites in Palawan.

C3PH intends to push for the development and implementation of the Dugong Conservation Area Management Plan in coordination with concerned government agencies, and work with the DENR and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) for the declaration of certain areas as Critical Habitat for Dugong.



“We want to promote participatory research and monitoring with the communities and the practice of citizen science,” he said.

Hopefully, he said, between 2022 to 2025, C3PH will be able to replicate dugong conservation in Calauit Island in eight or more other critical sites across Palawan.

Image credits: [Danny Ocampo](#)



ABS-CBN News

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Dalawang sako ng iba't ibang klase ng basura gaya ng sachets, plastic cups, diapers, at face masks ang nakolekta ng iba't ibang grupo sa Panigan-Tamugan watershed sa Davao City nitong Earth Day.

Nagsagawa rin ng pagtatanim ng 210 native seedlings ang grupo sa lugar na susunod na water source ng lungsod.

Umaasa ang mga lumahok sa aktibidad na mapangalagaan pa ang kalikasan at iwasan ang pagtapon ng basura kung saan-saan. (📺: Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability) | via Hernel Tocmo

BASA HIN ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/.../face-masks-face-shields...>



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



RITM receives new land for expansion By CORY MARTINEZ

THE Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) can soon expand its healthcare services and technologies following the donation of a 9,077-square-meter land.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) donated the said land to the RITM after Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna signed the deed of conveyance.

"This deed of conveyance is the DENR's simple gift and contribution (to) RITM to further advance their research work and prepare to address the current pandemic and health concerns that may arise in the future," said Sampulna.

The ceremonial signing of the deed of conveyance was in compliance with Pres-

idential Decree No. 1276 issued by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte on Jan. 6, 2022, which states that a parcel of patrimonial land within the Alabang Stock Farm, Muntinlupa City, will be for RITM building site purposes.

The 9,077-square-meter land is adjacent to the current site of the health research facility in Alabang.

RITM Director Celis C. Carlos, MD, meanwhile, expressed her gratitude to the DENR for facilitating the preparation of the deed of conveyance and for allocating the land in their favor, noting that one of the facility's problems was the lack of space.

"I wish to acknowledge the big help provided by Land Management Bureau Director Atty. Emelvine V. Talabis and her staff, who

guided and supported us in all stages of this journey towards RITM acquisition of additional lots," said Carlos.

The RITM, the main research arm of the Department of Health (DOH), has been responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases for the last 70 years, including the first severe acute respiratory syndrome-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV) outbreak in 2003.

It was also on the forefront of controlling the A/H1N1 pandemic in 2009, a measles outbreak in 2013, Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) outbreak from 2014 to 2015, polio outbreak in 2018, and the SARS-CoV outbreak in 2019.



DEPARTMENT OF
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Boracay advised to observe 19K daily carrying capacity

ILOILO CITY - The Department of Tourism (DOT) urged the local government of Malay, Aklan to comply with the allowed 19,215 daily carrying capacity of Boracay Island while its carrying capacity is being reviewed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"DENR is currently doing a review on the carrying capacity study in 2018. They are expecting that the study will be released by June 15," said DOT Regional Director Cristine Mansinares on Friday, April 22.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat earlier called the attention of the local government unit

(LGU) of Malay for exceeding the daily threshold on the island during the Holy Week.

The number of tourists on the island was recorded at 21,252 on April 14 and 22,519 on April 15.

The figures differ from the data of the Malay Tourism Office which showed arrivals of 44,981 from April 11 to 17 (Holy Week), with the highest arrival of guests recorded on Maundy Thursday at 12,266.

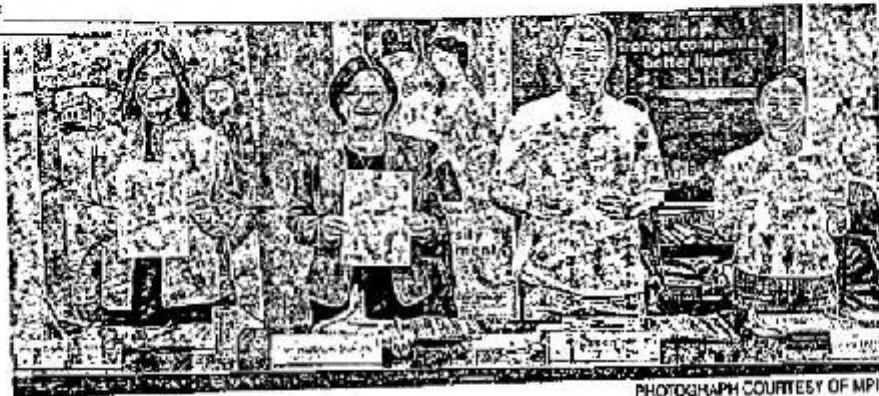
The Malay data, however, referred to the new arrivals and did not include the guests already staying on the island, who were still part of the carrying capacity, according to Mansinares. (PNA)



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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MPIC

BUILDING a biodiversity-friendly city are (from left) DENR-BMB Director Natividad Bernardino, DENR-NCR Regional Executive Director Jacqueline Caantan, QC-LGU City Administrator Michael Victor Alimung and MPIC chief finance, Risk and Sustainability officer Chaye Caba-Revilla. They hold copies of the landmark memorandum of agreement for the conservation program.

MPIC builds Biodiversity City

Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC), the country's leading infrastructure investment company, partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - National Capital Region (DENR-NCR), and the local government unit of Quezon City to implement the project "Building a Biodiversity-Friendly Environment in Metro Manila." The parties signed a memorandum of agreement to signify their three-year commitment to implement the urban biodiversity program in Quezon City. To jumpstart this partnership, MPIC will adopt the Madison Park along Aurora Boulevard and develop it into an urban green park model, which will be formally known as the Gabay Kalikasan Park. "We at MPIC have embedded environmental stewardship into our key business and investment strategies, which emphasizes our commitment to building a biodiversity-friendly environment for all," MPIC chairperson, president and CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan said. "This partnership is another step that helps us move towards uplifting the lives of Filipinos by ensuring that environmental sustainability is a top priority," he added.

Search on for best entrepreneur

The SGV Foundation announced the launch of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Philippines 2022 program. This is the 18th year of the program, which aims to recognize the inspiring men and women whose remarkable contributions are pivotal in shaping the Philippine entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Home Credit snares Gold Stevie

Consumer finance company Home Credit Philippines was named Gold Stevie awardee in the ninth annual Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards for the Innovative Use of Technology in Human Resources category. The award recognizes technology-driven human resource initiatives of Home Credit Philippines as "a way to connect, engage and transform people as they use technology to adapt to the future of human resource in the Philippines." Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, Home Credit Philippines has been focusing on creating initiatives driven by technology to connect and engage with its employees all over the country and help streamline the company's overall processes. As a global company with more than 13 thousand employees in the country alone, Home Credit Philippines always makes its people the core of its business. In early 2021, the company launched its IIR Gateway and Intranet to help HR Management connect and engage with its employees on a daily basis. It also developed an E-recruitment portal that serves as its primary gateway for all candidate applications. The portal can integrate with external job bulletins that allow recruiters to reach a diverse set of applicant pool. "We at Home Credit Philippines are proud of this achievement which testifies our commitment to putting our people at the heart of all our actions and decisions. The dedication and commitment of our employees serve as the driving force and our motivation to stay focused on creating ways and initiatives to provide them easy access to all our resources," shares Home Credit Philippines' chief people officer, Alpha Omega Aquino.



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BULGAR

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MAY hawak na halaman sina (mula kaliwa) ABS-CBN Foundation Managing Director Roberta Lopez-Feliciano, Manila Water President and CEO Jocot de Dios at DENR-NCR Regional Executive Director Joceline Caarean sa ceremonial kick-off ng tree planting activity para sa Earth Day 2022 celebration na ginanap sa Orosa Hall, Balara Filters Park, Bgy. Parool, Quezon City. (Jeff Tambado)



Pangalagaan, ipaglagaan ang planeta, mensahe ni Loren sa 'Earth Day'

SA paggunita ng Earth Day noong Biyernes, nanawagan si Deputy Speaker at Nationalist People's Coalition senatorial bet Loren Legarda sa mga mamamayan na maging tagapagtanggol ng daigdig o "Earth Defenders."

Kilala bilang kampeon sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan, sinabi ni Legarda na hindi lang dapat 'babalagahan ang daigdig', kundi dapat 'mamuhunan ang lahat sa pagsusulong ng isang malinis, masigla at malusog na 'Mother Earth.'

Ginawa ng beteranong mambabatas ang pahay-

ag sa okasyon ng 'Earth Day celebration' na may pangdaigdigang tema na 'Invest in our Planet'.

Hinimokni Legarda ang pamahalaan, pribadong sektor at civil society na aktibong makilabok at isulong ang mga programa at proyektong luhitas sa pang-abuso sa kalikasan, habitat loss o pagkawala ng mga tirahan ng hayop, at pagkasera ng mga komunidad dahil sa polusyon.

Sa harap ng mga paggagawin na kalamidad, dulot na rin ng maparirang galaw ng sangkatauhan at

'climate change', sinabi ni Legarda na dapat lang kurulos ang komunidad - ang mga mamamayan - bilang 'Earth Defenders' o tagapagtanggol ng daigdig - hindi lang ngayon, kundi gayundin sa hinaharap.

Noong nasa Senado, si Legarda ang nag-akda ng Republic Act 11038 o Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018. Sa ilalim ng batas, idinuklaa ang 94 na lugar sa bansa bilang natural parks, protected landscapes at seascapes.

Ayon kay Legarda kapag nakabalik siyang multi sa Senado ay lalo pa niyang pag-iibayuhin ang mga batas kalikasan para sa mga susunod na lencrasyon. Hinimok niya rin ang publiko na sama-sama magpayabungin ang ganda at sigla ng ating kalikasan.

Sa lahat ng mga tumatakbong kandidato sa darating na halalan sa Mayo, tingin si Legarda lamang ang may mahabang karanasan, malinaw na adbokasiya at epektibong action plan sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan.



Loren sa Earth Day Pangalagaan ipaglaban ang planeta

Sa paggunita ng Earth Day noong Biyernes, nanawagan si Deputy Speaker at Nationalist People's Coalition senadorial bet Loren Legarda sa mga mamamayan na maglingagapagtanggol ng daigdig o "Earth Defenders".

Kilala bilang kampeon sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan, sinabi ni Legarda na hindi lang dapat "ipahalagahan ang daigdig", kundi dapat mamuhunan ang lahat sa pagsubalang ng isang malinis, masigla at malusog na "Mother Earth". Ginaww ng bererangong mamuhutus ang pahayag sa okasyon ng Earth Day celebration na may pangdaigdigang tema na "Invest in our Planet".

Hinihikok ni Legarda ang pamahalaan, pribadong sektor at civil society na a-ribong makilahok at isulong ang mga programa at proyektong luluos sa pang-abuso sa kalikasan, habitat loss o pagkawala ng mga uri ng hayop, at pagkasira ng mga komunidad dahil sa polusyon.

Sa harap ng mga nagaganap na kalamidad, duktor na rin ng mapanirang galaw ng sangkalan-han at climate change, sinabi ni Legarda na dapat ang kumilos ang komunidad - ang mga mamamayan - bilang "Earth Defenders" o ragapagtanggol ng daigdig - hindi lang ngayon, kundi ngayon sa hinaharap.

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Sa lahat ng mga tumatakbong kandidato sa darating na halalan sa Mayo, tanging si Legarda lamang ang may mahabang karanasan, malinaw na obobansya at epekibong action plan sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan.



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TOPIC: Loren urges candidates to bare climate action plans PAGE

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Loren urges candidates to bare climate action plans

By EDU PUNAY

Plans for climate change, adaptation and mitigation must be laid out, according to UniTeam senatorial candidate Loren Legarda, as she urged all candidates to make it part of their campaign thrusts this election.

As she led the country's observance of 52nd Earth Day last Friday, the three-term senator and environmental champion cited the need for candidates in both national and local elections to come up with their plans on how to protect and preserve the environment.

"I urge all my fellow candidates, from the national level to the cities and municipalities, to present their environmental agenda to the voters. We can start by focusing on three things: Managing risks instead of managing disasters, protecting our ecosystems and improving rural livelihoods," Legarda said.

"Our people need to know how we as public servants plan to invest in our planet in order to address the climate emergency we are in. I know that regardless of our parties and colors, we all agree that we need to save our planet — and I hope we all campaign just as hard for our climate and lead much-needed discussions

on climate change," she said.

Legarda emphasized the important role played by elected officials in addressing the climate crisis, especially on the level of the local government.

"Our people are looking for the climate agenda not just of national candidates, but of local ones. After all, local governments are frontliners in planning and implementing programs for climate resilience. LGUs see firsthand the impacts of the climate crisis, and they are often the first responders when the worst of the consequences come," she said.

At the Earth Day celebration, Legarda led the "Pagyabong 2022: Enrichment Tree Planting Activity" of Philippine native tree species, organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, and the Climate Change Commission at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City.

This year's theme of Earth Day, "Invest in Our Planet," calls on everyone to act boldly, innovate broadly and implement equitably in order to preserve and protect our health, our families and our livelihoods.



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THE Imus River in Cavite province originates from the upland streams of Silang and flows down to the ocean via Manila Bay. All segments of the river span 186.5 kilometers and pass through major towns and cities of the province like Silang, Imus, Osmarinas, Kawit and Bacoor, as shown in the photo. GREGG WAMPENSA/PHOTO

Pemsea presents solutions to rid rivers of plastics for Earth Day

ASOUTHEAST Asia environment agency is finding ways to help manage plastic waste entering the world's rivers as it celebrated Earth Day 2022 on April 22.

The Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (Pemsea) released a set of five studies under Project Aseano, a three-year initiative to stop plastic pollution in two pilot sites—the Imus River in Cavite province in the Philippines and the Citarum River in Indonesia, a Pemsea news release said.

Funded by the Norwegian Development Program to Combat Marine Litter and Microplastics, Project Aseano is led by the Norwegian Institute for Water Research, and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies in Indonesia.

It is together with the Pemsea Resource Facility and the Asean Secretariat under the purview of the Asean Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment.

Layman versions of the studies are publicly downloadable. The studies cover the social implications of plastic pollution mitigation, assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices on plastic waste and offer maps of the Imus River watershed.

It also identified hotspots of plastic waste. Waste entering this river system is liable to flow into the ocean via Manila Bay.

The studies were led by two academic institutions based within the Imus River watershed—the Cavite State University and De La Salle

University Dasmariñas (DLSU-D).

"We wanted to understand not just what types of waste enter the Imus River, but how the people who live near the river itself perceived plastic pollution as well as local efforts to combat it," explained Dr. Edwin Lineses of DLSU-D.

"Through this, we were able to contextualize possible policies and initiatives that might once more make the river safe for bathing, fishing and recreation," Lineses said.

East Asian countries produce over half of the world's marine plastic pollution, and waterways like the Imus River act as conveyor belts that discharge waste to the oceans.

"Project Aseano is developing practical measures to reduce the entry of plastic waste into rivers, while carefully assessing the interlinked dynamics between residents, local economies and the environment," explained Aseano Project Manager Thomas Bell.

Project Aseano promises to share proven and cost-efficient actions to help local communities better manage plastic waste from source to sea.

The project enhances capacity, monitoring, evaluation and inter-local government unit cooperation for various groups tackling river pollution. Its solutions are designed to be replicated and upscaled across the region, the news release said.

"For almost three decades, Pemsea has been developing and sharing solutions to revive the seas of East Asia," said Pemsea Executive Director Aimee Gonzales.

"This Earth Day, let's revive our rivers. Promoting integrated river management, just like integrated coastal management, translates to more productive waterways and healthier communities," Gonzales said.



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Resorts World Manila takes Earth Day to heart

The warm summer of April is usually a call for celebration, but as temperatures continue to rise, focus is shifted towards taking better care of the planet. Earth Day was on April 22 this year and the country's premier entertainment and lifestyle hub, Resorts World Manila (RWM), is putting its heart into celebrating all things Earth for the rest of the month. The celebration of all good things for the planet is part of the country's first fully integrated resort's overall commitment to championing sustainability. RWM's "I Love Earth" campaign recognizes the importance of putting the Earth into the heart of every individual, community, and business.

Go green with glee at the Plant and Sustainability Fair at The Plaza 2F Newport Mall from April 18-24. Stop by and smell the flora by premium plant nursery, Arid & Aroids,

with their best collection of plants on sale and displayed at the festival. Merchants from The Good Trade PH are also in on the fair with booths selling Earth-loving products from apparel, accessories, and skin care.

RWM's Newport Garden Wing's The Grove at the 2nd floor is also hosting a Mall-seum exhibit for long established Filipino sculptor Arnel Borja. The artist is known for his large pieces that are based on the principle of fulcrum balance. Witness his art and behold the intricate equilibrium that extends the fulcrum from theory to reality with the awe-inspiring display from April 21-May 4. Selected art pieces are available for purchase through www.rwm-exclusives.com using cash, credit, and RWM membership points.

Visits to RWM can be made more memorable with a can't-be-missed photo opportunity at



Can't-be-missed photo opportunity: RWM's new Green Earth One (GEO) installation at the ground floor of the Newport Garden Wing

the new Green Earth One (GEO) installation at the ground floor of the Newport Garden Wing, right beside the Garden Wing Cafe. GEO is a living spherical garden that features a variety of plant species that exude real beauty that thrives in this environment. The installation in itself represents the Earth and the fragile ecological balance of life and human development.

To know more about RWM's Earth Day events, including the Newport Mall's Heart Earth activities, visit www.rwmanila.com or follow @rwmanila and @newportmall on Facebook and Twitter, and @resortsworldmanila on Instagram. Take your experience to the next level and download the RWM mobile app for free to get instant access to numerous discounts, freebies, and exclusive invites to RWM events.



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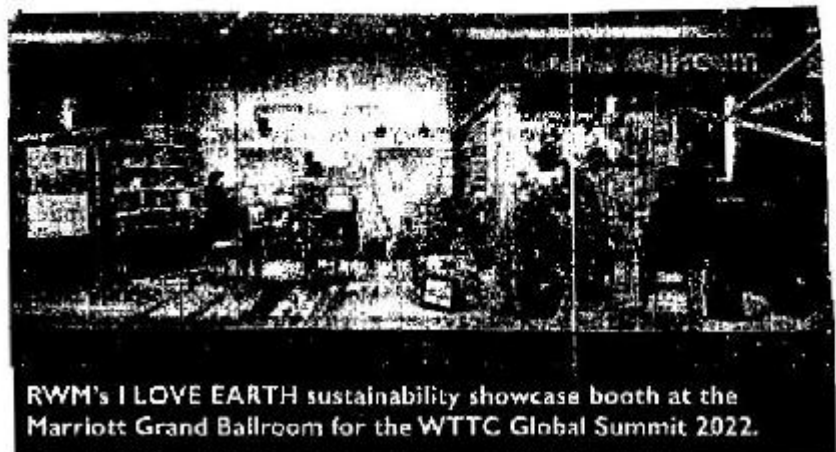
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Resorts World Manila is putting the Earth to heart

By BE Castillo

The warm summer of April is usually a call for celebration but as temperatures continue to rise, focus is shifted towards taking better care of the planet. Earth Day was held on April 22 this year and the country's premier entertainment and lifestyle hub, Resorts World Manila (RWM), along with its partner hotels Marriott Hotel Manila, Hotel Okura Manila, Hilton Manila, Sheraton Manila Hotel and Holiday Inn Express Manila Newport City, are putting its heart into celebrating all the things we love about this green sphere we call home. The celebration is part of the country's first fully integrated resort's overall commitment



RWM's I LOVE EARTH sustainability showcase booth at the Marriott Grand Ballroom for the WTTC Global Summit 2022.

to championing sustainability. RWM's "I LOVE EARTH" campaign recognizes the importance of putting the EARTH into the HEART of every individual, community, and business.

A month before the annual

celebration of Earth Day, RWM launched its first foray into its Sustainable Culinary journey with the use of Cage-Free eggs. This is just one of the many steps RWM is taking towards the Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing of its

world-class offers:

RWM guests went green with glee at the recent Plant and Sustainability Fair at The Plaza 2F Newport Mall. Patrons stopped by and smelled the flora by premium plant nursery, Arid & Aroids, with their best collection of plants on sale and displayed at the festival. Merchants from The Good Trade PH were also part of the fair with booths selling Earth-loving products from apparel, accessories, and skin care.

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Green Earth One (GEO) living spherical garden installation at the Newport Garden Wing.

the fulcrum from theory to reality with the awe-inspiring display from April 21-May 4. Selected art pieces are available for purchase through www.rwmexclusives.com using cash, credit, and RWM membership points.

Visits to RWM can be made more memorable with a can't-be-missed photo opportunity at the new Green Earth One (GEO) installation at the ground floor of the Newport Garden Wing, right beside the Garden Wing Cafe. GEO is a living spherical garden that features a variety of plant species that exude real beauty that thrives in this environment. The installation in itself represents the Earth and the fragile ecological balance of life and human development.

To know more about RWM's I LOVE EARTH campaign, visit www.rwmanila.com or follow @rwmanila on Facebook and Twitter, and @resortsworldmanila on Instagram. Take your experience to the next level and download the RWM mobile app for free to get instant access to numerous discounts, freebies, and exclusive invites to RWM events.



Earth Day is to protect and celebrate life

EARTH Day should be every day when we recognize and celebrate the miracle of life itself on this unique planet with millions of diverse amazing creatures making up a wondrous biodiversity that exists nowhere else in the known universe. How blessed are we to exist at all. We are still unsure of exactly how life came to be, or how we evolved and why we are the species with the most developed intellect and awesome power over life and death on the planet.

In his now famous Encyclical Letter of 2015, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis raised our awareness of the beauty of the earth and the universe and the integrity of creation, which we are called upon to love and protect and warned of how humans are destroying it.

Most people do not value the earth, our home, our source of being and life. Most do not contemplate the value of life, are unaware of the creation, the earth, the natural world, the biodiversity of life, the universe or themselves. Many humans live in an unknowing and mindless daily routine as they struggle to survive in poverty while others, equally mindless, have an abundance of material things and are disconnected from themselves, each other and the natural world of the earth. This is the great tragedy of human life, the only species with intellect, intelligence, knowledge, spiritual values and dignity, and human energy all largely wasted on trivial, useless pursuits.

The human species, with intellect, are living self-destructive lifestyles and economic and industrial activities to the point of destroying the sensitive climate and ecosystems of the earth, and in the process, are destroying each other. The desires of humans to pursue vast material wealth and power and gain domination over others lead to conflicts and destructive activities



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FR. SHAY CULLEN SSC

leading to the extinction of many species and life on the planet. The extraction and burning of fossil fuel is excessive, and is bringing the earth to the point of climatic global warming where there is a tipping point, a point of no return. Then when reached, warming will continue past 2 degrees Celsius until the earth is uninhabitable. Most food crops cannot grow in excessive warm climates.

The majority of people are tragically unconcerned of the looming catastrophe because of misinformation spread by powerful agencies, multinational corporations and their executives. They spread climate change denial and debunk the truth of science to protect their own industries. These fossil fuel industries need to be phased out for replacement by renewable energy sources. The corporate tycoons lobby and control politicians to block legislation that promote renewable energy sources and ban fossil fuels, oil, gas and coal.

Most people are unaware and do not appreciate the complexity of the interdependence of all life forms on Earth of which the human species is an intimate part and whose destinies are intertwined with global warming and life together on the earth. Too many humans are bent on killing the other species and each other.

If humans continue to destroy the forests and all the creatures living in them, then the people will have destroyed their own sources of water and medicine and negated the role of forests to control and contain carbon dioxide and thus control global warm-

ing. The balanced level for life to thrive is changing and the humans are at present perishing as drought spreads in parts of Africa.

In South Africa, as I write, devastating floods are destroying vast lands, crops, food reserves, houses and people. In the Philippines, greater, more powerful and more frequent typhoons have already hit the nation. The rains are devastating, the lost forests have left bare hillsides prone to massive landslides and floods that destroy the rice fields and kill hundreds of people. It is a self-inflicted catastrophe.

As Pope Francis has said in *Laudato Si*, "The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation..."

The social degradation he speaks of is the impact of poverty among humans and how it affects life on Earth. The evolution of the human species continues. Like a virus, there are mutations, some benign, others deadly. The deadly violent humans are the people likely to have unjustly and unfortunately grown up in poverty, emotional and material suffered deprivation, neglect and abuse: psychological, physical and sexual violence. Most victims suffer in silence all their lives, others veer to the path of greater violence.

They desire to inflict on others vengeful violence in retaliation for what they themselves suffered in childhood. They bully, intimidate, silence and abuse all others to get their way. There is no justification whatsoever for the evil that they do.

These people choose to dominate others by force and lead fanatical groups and even nations

on paths of violent attacks and war. They may glory in power to compensate for the powerlessness of an abusive childhood. They are leaders desiring revenge on society and the world and they start conflicts and wars. They lead terrorist groups and oppress and kill their own people. To name a few in history like Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Assad, Queen Mary, and now Putin and others bent on killing and destruction. These leaders become violent tyrants, dictators, out to destroy their critics and other nations even and the environment with extractive industry, riddled with corruption and war crimes.

Wars destroy the earth and the environment. As Pope Francis says: "It is foreseeable that, once certain resources have been depleted, the scene will be set for new wars, albeit under the guise of noble claims. War always does grave harm to the environment and to the cultural riches of peoples, risks which are magnified when one considers nuclear arms and biological weapons. Despite the international agreements which prohibit chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare, the fact is that laboratory research continues to develop new offensive weapons capable of altering the balance of nature."

So, in Ukraine, it may come to chemical or a nuclear strike, unthinkable as that may be. The environment has been destroyed by devastating accidents at nuclear power plants and in the Philippines, agreements of understanding have been signed by government officials to start plans to build a nuclear plant. People should know what is being done in their name and have a right to protect themselves, their nation and the earth.



Saving the mysterious sea COWS

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

KKNOWN locally as "dugong" (Dugong dugon), this sea cow is a large, charismatic and gentle creature of the sea that is rarely seen nowadays in coastal and marine areas where they used to thrive.

Shy as it is, very little is known about this very elusive marine mammal—its population and distribution, how and where it breeds or congregates, or where and how it raise its young.

Fortunately, as a species, dugong is surviving the numerous human-induced threats, unlike its cousin, the Steller's sea cow that lived off the coast of western North America, which became extinct in the 18th century mainly due to hunting.

Dugong is one of four living species of the Order Sirenia, which includes three species of manatees—the Amazonian, the West Indian and the West African manatees. It is the only living representative of the once-diverse family Dugongidae.

Dugong life cycle

KNOWN to live up to 70 years old, it takes about four years to 17 years for this marine herbivores to become sexually mature.

By feeding on seagrass, an adult dugong can weigh from 250 kilograms to 900 kg. It is not surprising because scientists say its closest land mammal relative is the elephant and not cows. It got the name sea cow only because it feeds on seagrass.

A dugong's gestation period takes about 13 to 15 months, which means it can only reproduce once every three years, or up to 7 years, and it can only produce one offspring at a time.

A mama dugong should nurture

until the baby dugong can fend for itself by eating seagrass 14 months to 18 months after birth.

Population decline

KNOWN to occur in 37 countries in the Indo-Pacific region, the global population of sea cows is on the decline. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species lists dugong as vulnerable.

In the Philippines, the dugong is critically endangered, a conservation status that means the species is just a step shy from being declared extinct.

Yet, despite its conservation status, still very little is known about the dugong and its way of life. Perhaps this is the reason why its population continues to drop.

There are five priority sites for dugong conservation in the Philippines—Galatit Island in Busuanga and Green Island Bay (which has ongoing conservation initiatives), both in Palawan province; the Malita and Davao del Sur area; Sarangani Bay; and the Sulu Archipelago.

Saving the dugongs

In the Philippines, at least one group, the Community-Centered Conservation-Philippines (C3PH), is working closely with the communities to save the species from extinction.

In his online presentation during the World Wildlife Foundation

organized by the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on March 4, Reynante V. Ramilo, programme coordinator of C3PH, said conserving the critically endangered dugong in the Philippines has always been a major challenge.

"The decline of the species and escalating threats led to its classification as critically endangered," he said.

Human-induced threats

RAMILO said the extinction of dugong can be easily blamed on a number of human-induced threats—such as fishery by-catch, direct hunting, rapid coastal development and habitat degradation.

"Sometimes, fishermen are forced to sacrifice their [dugong] lives even though they know it is illegal to hurt or kill dugongs because they want to save their fishnets more than the dugongs," Ramilo said in a telephone interview on April 19.

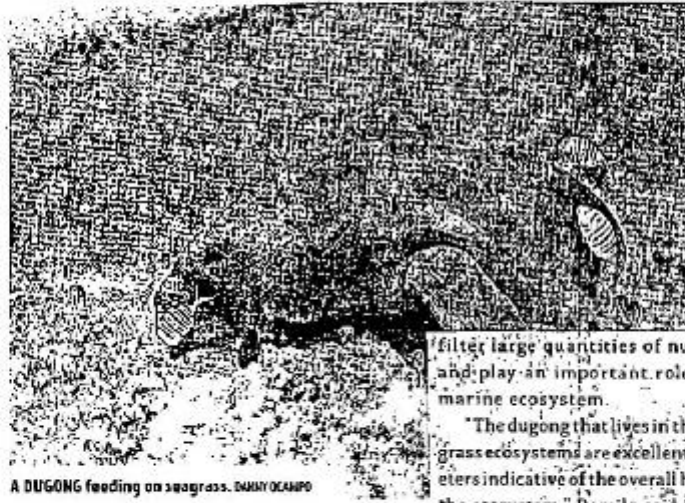
As part of the C3PH's conservation measure to save dugongs caught in fishnets, Ramilo said they are offering to pay the fishermen the cost of the fishnets to save the life of the poor dugong.

"Just last year, we encountered



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A DUGONG feeding on seagrass. DANNY OCAMPO

filter large quantities of nutrients and play an important role in the marine ecosystem.

"The dugong that lives in these seagrass ecosystems are excellent barometers indicative of the overall health of the ecosystem," Ramilo said in a mix of Filipino and English.

He said the dugong's constant browsing of seagrass encourages regrowth, ensuring critical habitat and feeding sites for a host of other marine species, including turtles, dolphins and sawfish.

Elusive

WHILE it is widely known that they inhabit and can only be found among seagrass, actually "finding" them is easier said than done.

Take it from scuba diver and explorer Gregg Yan. "It took me decades to see a wild dugong," he recalled.

"Sizeable herds of dugongs once plied the Philippine archipelago until hunting and habitat loss greatly reduced their numbers. Some herds are still holding out in Isabela, Mindanao, Guimaras and Palawan, but encounters are extremely rare," Yan told the BusinessMirror via Messenger on April 19.

He explained that encountering a dugong is unlike seeing a whale, "which steals your breath away because of sheer size, nor a shark that inspires just a primeval bit of fear."

"Dugongs are huge but cute and friendly, just like a mermaid Hodor," he said.

Tourist-magnet

WHILE they are indeed elusive and hard to find, on Calauit Island, "dugong hunt" is being offered as part of the diving experience to tourists.

Danny Ocampo, ocean conservation advocate, master scuba diver, and photography expert, told the BusinessMirror via Messenger that because finding sea cows is not easy, a local Tagbanua tour guide will give the chances of finding them a big boost.

However, observing and interacting

with dugongs require permission from the Tagbanuas that protect them, he pointed out.

Raising awareness

OCAMPO said ecotourism can help raise awareness about wildlife.

"With that awareness, it can help people to care for them," he said when sought for a comment last April 19.

"Ecotourism can also help raise needed funds for the management of protected areas/habitats to ensure that endangered wildlife, such as dugongs, can thrive and recover from population decline," he added.

According to Ocampo, interaction guidelines were already set for dugong and other wildlife tourism. It limits the number of people interacting with them at a given time or the amount of time they are exposed to tourists, which can be stressful to them or alter their behavior.

"These [guidelines] should be strictly followed and regular studies should be conducted to assess if these measures are enough," he said.

Way forward

ACCORDING to Ramilo, C3PH will continue to work with communities and local government units in Palawan with the goal of establishing a network of dugong conservation sites in Palawan.

C3PH intends to push for the development and implementation of the Dugong Conservation Area Management Plan in coordination with concerned government agencies, and work with the DENR and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) for the declaration of certain areas as Critical Habitat for Dugong.

"We want to promote participatory research and monitoring with the communities and the practice of citizen science," he said.

Hopefully, he said, between 2022 to 2025, C3PH will be able to replicate dugong conservation in Calauit Island in eight or more other critical sites across Palawan.

fishermen the cost of the fishnet and we were able to save the lives of the dugongs," he recalled.

Protected mammal

DENR Administrative Order 55 of 1991 declared the dugong as a Protected Marine Mammal of the Philippines.

This means that hurting, hunting, killing, trading, or even possession of dugong, dead or alive, is punishable by law.

The declaration gives it unique importance as a species, perhaps equal to that of other iconic animals like the Philippine eagle, which is protected by Republic Act 6147, which declared it as a Protected Bird in the Philippines.

At the same time, the Philippine tamaraw is protected by Commonwealth Act 73 that prohibits the killing, hunting, wounding or taking away of the tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*), that was approved on October 23, 1936.

Important ecosystem function

IN his presentation, Ramilo said dugong's importance to fisheries and marine biodiversity cannot be overemphasized.

A member of the IUCN-Sirenia Specialist Group, Ramilo said dugongs help stabilize sediments,



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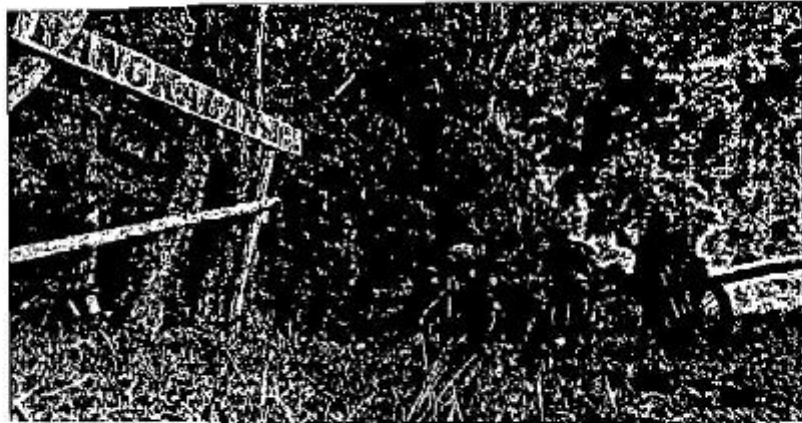
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Employees of Manila Water Co. Inc. and its partner agencies mark Earth Day by taking part in a 'Lakbay Kalikasan Hike and Bike for Nature' at the La Mesa Nature Reserve in Quezon City yesterday.

JOSE BUENOS



POWER, ENVIRONMENT WOES FACE SOUTHERN LUZON BETS

(Third of a series)

Unstable power supply and big-ticket projects that would lead to the displacement of indigenous peoples (IP) from their ancestral domain and damage to the environment are among the major issues confronting candidates in Southern Luzon in this year's elections.

The state of the Sierra Madre mountain ranges, hosting the largest remaining patch of old-growth tropical rainforest in the Philippines, will take center stage as conflicting interests of local and national leaders and IP groups clash.

Spanning Luzon's northeastern coast from Cagayan province in the north to Quezon province in the south, Sierra Madre does not only protect a large part of Luzon by serving as a buffer against typhoons that develop in the Pacific Ocean, it also accounts for 40 percent of the country's forest cover. Yet, it remains heavily under threat of illegal logging, mining activities, and road construction and development, according to Forest Foundation Philippines.

Nilo Tavoria, regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Bacangas, Rizal, and Quezon), challenged candidates to take a stand against the destruction of not just the Sierra Madre, but of the country's forests and natural resources.

The latest Global Forest Resources Assessment report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization showed that the Philippines is left with 7,014,156 hectares of forest cover, or 23.4 percent of the country's total area of 30 million ha, based on the land cover data in 2015.

The need for candidates to protect forests and other natural resources is urgent, Tavoria said, noting that in Quezon alone, 20 illegal logging hot spots within Real, Infanta and General Nakar towns had been identified.

Kaliwa Dam

Oscar Bernardo Catilo, an environmentalist active in protection efforts for the Sierra Madre in Infanta town, urged all candidates to review the P12.2-billion Kaliwa Dam project in northern Quezon, which covers sections of the Sierra Madre.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System has been pushing for the construction of Kaliwa Dam as a major component of its New Centennial Water Source Project to address a projected water crisis in Metro Manila.

But environmental, religious and activist groups and some officials in Quezon have opposed the project, with Fr. Pere Montallana, chair of Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance (SSMNA), noting that every Filipino would end up paying for the cost of building the dam.

Studies done by SSMNA showed that the project would submerge parts of the Sierra Madre in Tanay, Rizal; and General Nakar and Infanta towns in Quezon. It is expected to flood a watershed area of 9,700 ha and affect 1,465 families.

The project, Catilo said, should be viewed from the perspective of the rights of IP communities protected by the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8371), as well as laws aimed at protecting the environment, like Republic Act No. 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992.

Sierra Madre's IPs have been firm that they would not give their free, prior and informed consent to the project, a requirement under RA 8371.

The Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro also face the same threat of displacement from the land that their ancestors had nurtured, according to Fr. Edwin Gariguez, director of Diocesan Social Action Center of the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan.

Fr. Gilbert Talabong, Unisan town parish priest, said the continuous construction of coal-fired power plants in Quezon province was an urgent concern that provincial candidates should address.

"There should be no more new plants. And those already existing should be converted to environment-friendly operation," Talabong said.

Quezon is already hosting three coal-fired power plants in Mauban and Pagbilao towns. The construction of another plant in Atimonan town is ongoing amid protests from the Diocese of Lucena and environmentalists.

Last ecological frontier

The island province of Palawan, the country's last ecological frontier, is also facing environmental problems that candidates seeking local positions must address.

Gracilda Mayo-Anda, executive director of Environmental Legal Assistance Center Inc., a nongovernmental organization based in Puerto Princesa City, stressed the importance of local governance in environmental management, protection and preservation.



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Southern Luzon Bets

Anda, an environmental lawyer for over 30 years, said locals "must remember who the environmental champions were."

citing the need for review of the candidates' track record as an important aspect in electing leaders.

"On issues of mining, coal and renewable energy, land grabbing—governance should be

a big factor for our voters to remember in the coming elections. Do your research, if you want to make it right, who are those supportive of the fight against mining, who are active champions of renewable energy, environmental justice champions who actually worked on land-grabbing issues?" Anda said.

On April 5, more than 1,000 antimining residents of Brooke's Point, composed of IPs and farmers, staged a protest in front of the town hall.

Pastor Job Lagrada, one of the protest organizers, lamented that the welfare of marginalized communities that their group represents was being overlooked, despite repeated demands to stop mining operations in the town.

In the tourist town of Coron, environmental advocates got a reprieve when President Duterte halted a massive reclamation under the Coron Bay Reclamation and Development Project (CBRDP) spearheaded by the provincial government of Palawan and its joint venture partners.



SEEKING SAFETY

A resident of Camalig, Albay, carries a pack of clothes for her family as they seek shelter in an evacuation center after Typhoon "Rolly" hit Bicol in 2020.

—GEORGE GIOBRONDIAL

After meeting with Sagip Coron, a group organized by concerned residents, Mr. Duterte on March 22 instructed the DENR and the Philippine Reclamation Authority to issue cease-and-desist orders and the forfeiture of the illegally reclaimed land in favor of the government.

Sagip Coron convener Bob Magallanes said illegal reclamation and quarrying in the town had been causing environmental destruction to its once unspoiled environment.

"Coron is one of the most beautiful and pristine sanctuaries in our country. We must protect it and I will protect it. To quarry and devastate nearby mountains for soil to dump and fill the marine habitats that will also destroy the area's foreshore land for commerce and profit is an assault on the environment and the long-term future of the area for sustainable, nondestructive, businesses like tourism, fisheries and agriculture for the benefit of the people of Coron and its future generations," Magallanes said in a statement on April 5.

Power woes

The CBRDP, according to the town's tourism master plan, is a two-phased 50-ha investment initiative projected to respond to the future demand for land for tourism and commercial activities. It will cover coastal areas in three Coron villages, which has an average depth of 5 to 7 meters from the seafloor.

In the Bicol region, unstable power supply plagues most Bicol provinces despite having two geothermal fields that power Luzon.

Local power distribution firms and cooperatives in the region are saddled by various operational and technical problems such as unpaid consumer bills, system losses caused by rampant power pilferages, and antiquated transmission lines and stations that are easily

damaged by strong typhoons that frequently hit the region.

The island province of Catanduanes suffers unscheduled, and frequent power interruptions that the First Catanduanes Electric Cooperative Inc. attributed to old wires damaged by storms or strong winds.

In Masbate, consumers complain of weekly rotational and unannounced brownouts which could stretch to over 12 hours on Saturdays due to insufficient power supply for its growing number of consumers.

Rosemarie Quinto Rey, president of Albay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), wondered why consumers in Albay have to pay the high cost of electricity when the province and its neighboring Sorsogon produce geothermal energy.

"Is there any possibility of getting a lower electricity rate here? How about the rampant, scheduled and unannounced brownouts, what are their plans to ease the burden of people from experiencing such?" Rey asked.

Disaster preparedness

Added to Bicol's woes is having to deal with destructive typhoons, the region being located on the country's eastern seaboard frequented by typhoons, with often very little quick response fund to go around.

For Lemuel Surtida, provincial administrator of Catanduanes, the creation of a Department of Disaster Resilience would benefit the island province.

"With the creation of the department, it would enhance the disaster risk resilience capability [of local governments] in terms of manpower, equipment and infrastructure," he said.

He said it would also speed up the response and fill the gap in addressing the needs of the affected considering there would be a budget allotment.

According to ACCI president Rey, the Bicol provinces, despite being prone to disaster, do not have concrete plans to build permanent shelters for people who live in high-risk areas. —REPORTS FROM DELFIN T. MALLARI JR., MADONNA T. VIOLA, ROMAR MIRANDA, MAR S. ARGUELLES AND MICHAEL JAUCIAN INC.



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Southern Luzon Bits

HOME OF THE TRIBE

A group of Dumagat crosses the Kaliwa-Agos River in Infanta, Quezon province, in a photo (above) taken in August 2019. Indigenous peoples in the Sierra Madre mountains are opposing the construction of Kaliwa Dam in their midst.

—RICHARD A. REYES



PROTEST Residents of Brooke's Point, Palawan province, gather at the municipal hall on April 5 to protest mining activities in the town.

—ROO NACIS/CONTRIBUTOR



DEALING WITH CALAMITY Bicolanos have learned to live with calamities as they deal with the impact of destructive typhoons and the constant threat of volcanic eruption. In this photo taken in October 2020, a resident of Malinao, Albay province, sorts through the debris left by Typhoon "Rolly" (international name: Goni). —GEORGE GIOBRONDIAL



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UP TO SPEED

Top Southern Luzon developer

Pueblo De Oro Development Corporation (PDO), the property development arm of the ICGP Group, was named among the Top 10 best performing developers in South Luzon (ranked ninth) by the Home Development Mutual Fund during the Pag-IBIG Fund Stakeholders' Accomplishment Report (STAR) for the year 2021. The STAR Awards is the annual recognition of the stakeholders, service partners, employers and top developers for their contributions to the continued growth of the Fund. The PDO Batangas Team was commended for significantly contributing to the Pag-IBIG Fund's efforts of providing every Filipino worker the opportunity to own a home. Among the projects that formed part of the company's outstanding performance are La Aldea del Monte and Park Place Batangas in Sto. Tomas. The projects combined for total loan take-outs of over P321 million for the period. In photo is PDO senior vice president and general manager for Luzon operations Leonardo Dayao Jr. with the Pag-IBIG STAR Award.

Guest speaker Entrepreneur Of The Year Philippines 2019, Benjamin Yao, president and CEO of SteelAsia Manufacturing Corporation, shared his experience of the previous program, saying, "There are opportunities to contribute, build where there was none, correct the wrong and improve or add to what is already good. We need to remain undaunted and unstoppable. I learned much during the Entrepreneur Of The Year experience. The EOY organization and its past winners have reaffirmed our vision, further strengthening our resolve." The program is organized by the SGV Foundation and its co-presenters, namely: the Department of Trade and Industry, the Philippine Business for Social Progress, the Philippine Stock Exchange, the Asian Institute of Management, official media BusinessWorld and ABS-CBN News Channel. The program is sponsored by Gold Sponsors SteelAsia Manufacturing Corporation and Uratex and Silver Sponsors Intellicare, OneWorld Alliance Logistics Corporation and Regan Industrial Sales Inc.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SGV FOUNDATION

At the launch of the Entrepreneur of the Year Philippines 2022 program are (from left) Dr. Jikyeng Kang, president, CEO and Dean of Asian Institute of Management; Wilson Tan, chairperson and Managing Partner of SGV & Co. and president of the SGV Foundation; Wilfredo Reyes, Editor-in-chief of *BusinessWorld*; Elvin Ivan Uy, Executive Director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress; Maria Vivian C. Ruiz, Deputy Managing Partner of SGV & Co.; Ramon Monzon, president and CEO of the Philippine Stock Exchange; Nadia Trinidad, chief operating officer of ABS-CBN News Channel; Jay Sarmiento, Sales & Marketing Director of *BusinessWorld*; Undersecretary Blesila Lantayona, Undersecretary, Regional Operations Group Department of Trade and Industry; Henry Tan, Partner of SGV & Co. and Program Director of the Entrepreneur Of The Year Philippines program; and Jaime Ayala, Entrepreneur Of The Year Philippines 2012 and Founder & CEO of Hybrid Social Solutions.



SIBOL PROJECT TO BOOST ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION, ECONOMY IN RURAL AREAS



MT. Mantalingahan Protected Landscape and Seascape in Palawan province **SHANE PIDO**

A P1.1-billion project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has elevated the Philippines' appreciation for natural resources and biodiversity protection and is seen to boost environmental protection and support economic activity in rural areas.

Called Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (Sibol) and implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the project estimates the economic value of the country's natural resources and has trained Filipino natural resource managers on how to properly account for environment-provided benefits.

A five-year natural resources management and biodiversity conservation project, Sibol is among the biggest and most important initiatives in the country that could profoundly impact the environment in generations to come, according to USAID.

Launched in 2020, Sibol aims to work with the government to achieve its goals of improving natural resource governance,

stimulating public and private sector investments, and reducing environmental crime.

Through the project, a total of 275 government staff and researchers from Philippine public universities have completed a three-month training that will support the government's promotion of economic growth through the conservation of the country's ecosystems.

The training serves as a foundation for incorporating environmental valuation into the design of economic plans at the local level.

The Philippines' capability to quantify the economic value of its natural resources will be applied in natural capital accounting.

"When we have competent natural resource managers who are able to account for and monitor the economic value of ecosystem services, the country is in a better position to understand the drivers behind natural resource depletion," said John Edgar, USAID Philippines Environment Office director, in a statement.

"It's a necessary intervention that will preserve the country's biodiversity, oceans,

and landscapes," Edgar said.

Natural resource managers and researchers from the DENR, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, National Economic and Development Authority, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, and six public universities learned various methods for measuring the value of benefits derived from the environment, such as food, water and fuel, soil conservation, and coastal protection.

"This [capability will help in] updating the country's asset accounts, or the value of resources found in Philippine forests, coral reefs, and fisheries," the DENR said.

According to the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the Philippines is one of 17 megadiverse countries in the world, which account for 70 percent of the entire planet's species of flora and fauna.

The project is hoped to promote greater ecosystem stability and inclusive green growth.

Sibol has set up four sites in the following key protected areas in the Philippines, namely 1) Masinloc-Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape, a coastal area that supports thousands of fishers and coastal communities threatened by mining, overfishing, and population growth; 2) Puerto Princesa Subleranean River National Park and Cleopatra's Needle Forest Reserve, which are forest areas of the ecologically important Palawan province and significant habitats for biodiversity; 3) Mantalingahan Protected Landscape, a forest area that is home to abundant biodiversity and more than 12,000 indigenous people threatened by logging and mining pressures; and 4) Siargao Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape, a marine protected area surrounded by the country's largest contiguous mangrove area and is threatened by over-fishing and the exploitation of other natural resources.

Jonathan L. Mayuga



Over 100 sacks of garbage collected from Bulacan river

By **FREDDIE C. VELEZ**

Over 100 sacks of garbage were collected by Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) employees during a river

clean-up drive in Barangays Sto. Cristo and Rosario in Paombong, Bulacan on Friday.

Lawyer Julius Victor C. Degala, who led the clean-up operation, said the activity

was done in observance of the National Earth Day.

After the river clean-up drive in the said villages, BENRO employees proceeded to the Paombong Eco Park in Barangay San Isidro II where they planted over a hundred seedlings of guava and calamondin, as well as mangrove palms.



Editorial

Magiging maburak na naman ang Boracay

MARAMING turista ang nagtungo sa Boracay noong Seinana Santa. Lumampas sa itinakdang kapasidad na 19,000. Sa report ng Malay Tourism Office sa Department of Tourism, 21,252 ang humisita sa Boracay noong Huwebes Santo at 22,519 noong Biyernes Santo.

Dahil sa paglampas sa kapasidad, binalaan ni Tourism Sec. Berna Romulo Puyat ang local government ng Malay, Aklan. Ayon kay Romulo Puyat, ang DILG na ang mag-iisyu ng warning sa Malay LGU.

Isa sa pinangangambahan ngayon ay ang pagtaas muli ng COVID-19 cases dahil sa pagdagsa ng mga turista sa island resort. Bagama't pawang mga bakunado ang pinapasok sa Boracay, naghahalid ng pangamba ang sobrang tao. Nagbabala ang World Health Organization (WHO) kamakailan na posibleng sa katapusin ng Mayo



ay magkakaroon ng surge dahil sa pagdagsa ng mga tao sa probinsiya noong Mahal na Araw at idagdag pa ang kampanya ng mga kandidato para sa May 9 elections. Paalala ng WHO, ipatupad ang health protocols.

Bukod sa posibleng pagkalat ng virus, ang pagkasira rin naman ng Boracay ay isa rin sa pinangangambahan. Kung hindi mapipigil ang dagsa ng tao roon, muling babalik ang maraming Boracay na tinawag noon ni President Duterte na "cesspool". Ipinasara ng presidente ang Boracay noong 2018 sa loob ng anim na buwan.

Maraming establisimento sa Boracay ang lumabag sa environmental laws. Sa 562 establisimento na ininspeksyon ng DENR, 161 ang lumalahag. Ang mga ito ay walang water waste treatment facility kaya ang dumi ng tao ay direktang iniluluwa sa dagat. Lahat nang klase ng dumi mula sa resort ay itinatapon sa dagat. Pati ang mga basura sa paligid ng resort ay nagkalat din kaya sinampahan na ang mga establisimento nang paglahag sa Clean Water Act at Clean Air Act.

Ngayon dahil sa hindi na namang mapigilan na pagdagsa ng tao, asahan na tatawagin na namang "cesspool" ang Boracay. Paggaliwanagin ang LGU ng Malay kung bakit hindi ipinasusunod ang tamang kapasidad.

Hindi lamang pagdami ng COVID ang pinangangambahan ngayon sa pagdagsa ng mga turista kundi ang dumi na liwan sa Boracay. Sara sumunod ang Malay LGU sa mga alituntunin upang maiwasan ang pagkasira ng Boracay. Huwag hayaang maging maburak muli.



Fishers rally against black sand mining

APARRI, Cagayan: Some 1,700 fisherfolk from a dozen *barangay* in this town marched on Friday to protest against black sand mining operations which they claim are taking place in the guise of river dredging.

Diana Moraleda, San Pedro Telmo Parish coordinator, said it was the first time that a protest of this "magnitude" was organized in the town with fisherfolk and other groups, joining from neighboring towns of Gattaran, Ballesteros, Buguey, Gonzaga and Santa Ana.

At the prayer rally in San Pedro Telmo Parish Church, Moraleda said fisherfolk shared the ill effects of the alleged mining operations on their livelihood and the environment.

Mayor Bryan Dale Chan, who is running for reelection, and former mayor Dr. Ismael Tumaru also joined the protest rally held in conjunction with the Earth Day celebration on Friday.

During the rally, the fishers alleged that the river dredging activity produced sound, light and chemicals that have polluted and gravely disturbed the ecosystem.

They said the dredging activity also messed with the reproductive patterns of aquatic resources and decimated the fish and shrimp population, including that of the *aramang* or spider shrimp, which is endemic in the area.

They claim that the dwindling catch

has considerably slashed the income of 11,000 fisherfolk in the area.

Moraleda noted that before the river dredging operations started in the first quarter of 2021, a fisherman can catch up to 200 kilos of fish overnight off the coast of Aparri. But these days, they say they are lucky if they can take home 3 kilos of fish.

The fishermen said that from December 2021 to April 2022, each of them would earn from P300 to P1,000 for three days of work, a far cry from their P3,000 to P7,000 earnings before the dredging activities.

In the early part of 2021, residents here noticed the return of dredging sea crafts and huge sea carriers by the Chinese firm Riverfront Construction Inc. (RCI), visibly operating in the Cagayan River, the Aparri Delta and the West Philippine Sea.

The provincial government of Cagayan led by Gov. Manuel Mamba, however, explained that the presence of large ships is due to the ongoing large-scale dredging project to rehabilitate the heavily silted Cagayan River, causing massive flooding, especially during heavy downpour brought about by typhoons.

Mamba also told the people of Cagayan that the dredging project is necessary to reopen the Aparri port and the establishment of an international seaport.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO



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Climate change spotlighted on Int'l Day for Monuments

One in three natural sites and one in six cultural heritage sites are currently threatened by climate change, the UN cultural agency, UNESCO, warned during the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

In addition to providing interesting places to visit and learn about the past, these sites are also climate change observatories that gather and share info on climate practices.

As climate change is one of the defining issues of our time, and among the greatest threats facing cultural and natural UNESCO World Heritage monuments and sites, this year's theme is "Heritage and Climate."

In recent months and years, the world has witnessed cultural and natural heritage sites threatened by wildfires, floods, storms and mass bleaching events.

Marine sites are equally under pressure, with two-thirds of these vital carbon stores – home to 15 percent of global blue carbon assets – currently experiencing high risks of degradation.

UNESCO's report, "World Heritage forests: Carbon sinks under pressure," reveals that a staggering 60 percent of World Heritage forests are threatened by climate change related events.

Marine sites are equally under pressure, with two-thirds of these vital carbon stores – home to 15 percent of global blue carbon assets – currently experiencing high risks of degradation, according to the "UNESCO Marine World Heritage: Custodians of the globe's blue carbon assets" study.

And if no action is taken, coral may disappear at natural heritage sites by the end of this century.

In response to these undeniable impacts on World Heritage monuments and sites, UNESCO is working to support countries in strengthening their capacities to prepare for and recover from climate-change related effects and disasters.

At the same time, it is also committed to harnessing the potential of culture for climate action, which still remains largely untapped.



Coral reefs' survival hangs

The world's best-known coral reefs could be extinct by the end of the century unless we do more to make them resilient to our warming oceans.

That's the stark message from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which is behind an emergency bid to protect these natural marine wonders, 29 of which are on the agency's protected World Heritage list.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change data also confirmed that states must reduce carbon emissions drastically to meet the targets under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Most coral reefs face many other pressures, from pollution to overfishing and habitat destruction.

UNESCO's plan, along with partners, is to reduce these threats and to strengthen the sustainable management of fragile marine reefs by supporting local communities.

In all, the agency's plan aims to work

with 19 World Heritage-listed reefs that are found in developing countries, with financing from the Global Fund for Coral Reefs.

The development builds on the success of UNESCO's Resilient Reefs Initiative, which was launched in 2018.

For the past four years, researchers have worked on four World Heritage reef pilot sites in Australia, Belize, New Caledonia and Palau.

The initiative demonstrated that local pressures can be reduced by empowering local communities and helping them to adapt their income and livelihoods to our changing climate.

"Global warming means that local reef conservation practices are no longer enough to protect the world's most important reef ecosystems. But a healthy, resilient reef can regenerate after a bleaching incident and survive," Fanny Douvère, head of UNESCO's Marine Program, explained.

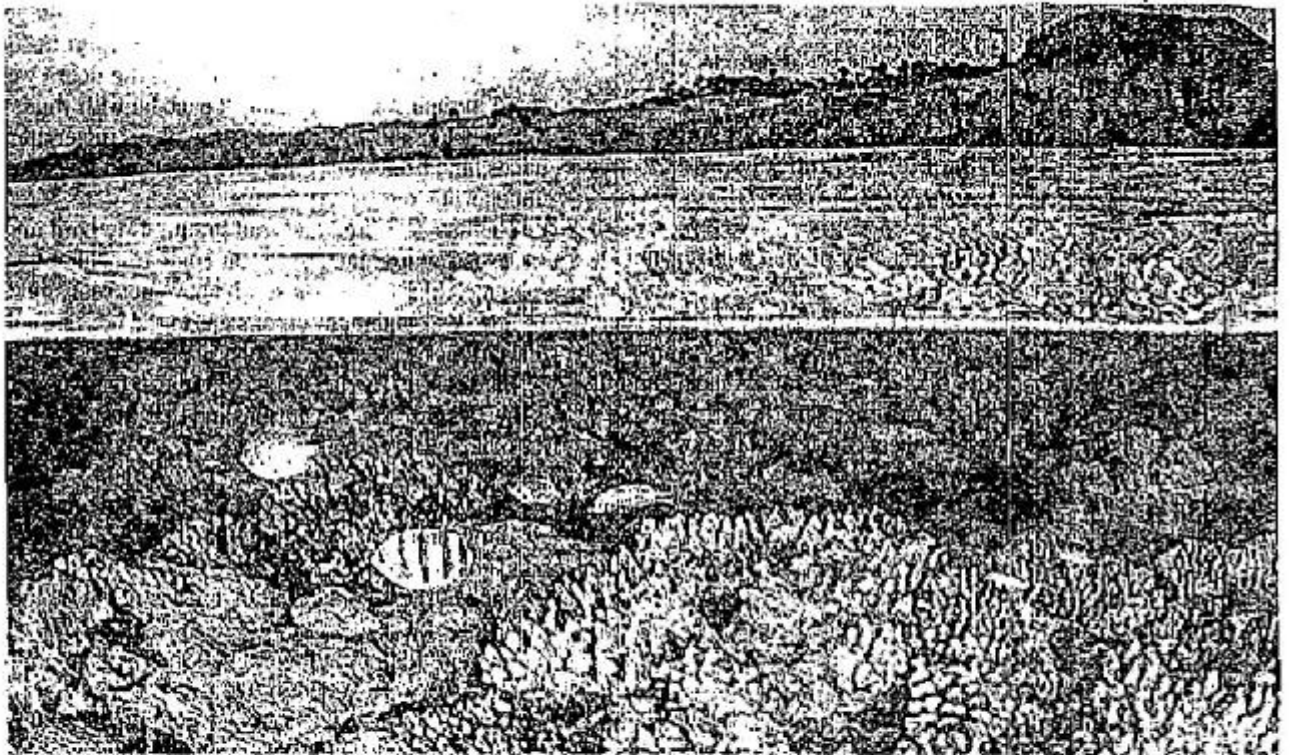


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CORAL reefs harbor the highest biodiversity of any ecosystem globally.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN

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DOH names 13 areas logging increase in COVID-19 cases

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 23, 2022 3:08:00 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 23) – The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday identified 13 areas in the country where a rise in new COVID-19 cases has been observed.

In a media briefing, Health Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje listed these areas as Marinduque, Davao City, Butuan City, Surigao del Sur, Ilocos Norte, Kalinga, Batanes, Quirino, Catanduanes, Olongapo City, Tarlac City, Angeles City, and Eastern Samar.

She said the increase in infections is currently not significant, but stressed close monitoring should still be done.

According to the health official, they have not yet seen a common factor among these localities which may have led to the growth in cases.

However, among the possible reasons they are looking at are the influx of tourists and of people going home to their provinces, as well as the conduct of more election campaign activities.

Earlier, the DOH warned the country may see another spike in cases in the middle of May if adherence to minimum public health standards wanes.

Citing the [projections](#) of disease surveillance tool FASSSTER, the department said active cases may reach 332,000 by then, should there be a 30% decline in compliance with health protocols, such as proper wearing of face masks and social distancing.

Based on DOH data, active coronavirus cases in the country stood at 15,782 as of April 22. This is out of 3.68 million people infected since the start of the pandemic.

Some 3.608 million have already recovered, while at least 60,118 died, it also said.

Source: <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/4/23/DOH-13-areas-COVID-19-cases-increase.html>



Sa pagsisimula ng rollout bukas supply sa 2nd booster vaccines, sapat – NVOC

[Ludy Bermudo](#) - Pang-masa April 24, 2022 | 12:00am



Medical workers prepare Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 coronavirus vaccines during an inoculation drive at a school gym in Taguig City, suburban Manila on December 6, 2021.

AFP / Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — Tiniyak kahapon ng National Vaccination Operations Center (NVOC) na may sapat na supply ng bakuna ang pamahalaan para sa gagawing rollout ng second booster shots bukas, Abril 25.

“Sapat ang supply ng bakuna kontra COVID-19 para sa pagbibigay ng second booster shot sa mga immunocompromised,” ani NVOC chairperson at Health Usec Dr. Myrna Cabotaje sa panayam ng DZBB TV.

“Sapat ang mga bakuna para sa primary doses, 1st and 2nd booster shot,” dagdag ni Cabotaje.

Nitong Biyernes, inaprubahan ni Health Sec. Francisco Duque III ang pagbibigay ng second COVID-19 booster shots para sa immunocompromised persons, batay sa rekomendasyon ng Health Technology Assessment Council.

Samantala, inamin kahapon ng Department of Health na hindi naging matagumpay ang ginawang house-to-house na bakunahan laban sa COVID-19 dahil kaunti lang ang nagpabakuna.

“Sa mga high-yield areas, maganda iyong house-to-house pero doon sa mga ibang areas, medyo napatid at na-frustrate iyong ating mga health care workers kasi kahit nag-house-to-house, marami pa rin ang ayaw magpabakuna,” pahayag ni Cabotaje. - Malou Escudero

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/police-metro/2022/04/24/2176418/sa-pagsisimula-ng-rollout-bukas-supply-sa-2nd-booster-vaccines-sapat-nvoc>



13K immunocompromised individuals to get 2nd booster shots

April 23, 2022



Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine vial. (Photo courtesy of Anadolu via PNA)

By Lade Jean Kabagani | Philippine News Agency

MANILA – The National Vaccination Operations Center (NVOC) is eyeing the administration of second booster shots to some 7,000 up to 13,000 immunocompromised adults on the first day of the nationwide rollout on Monday, April 25, Department of Health (DOH) Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje said Saturday, April 23.

Cabotaje, also the NVOC chairperson, said there are about 600,000 fully vaccinated immunocompromised adults who already have first booster shots or the third dose.

The initial phase for the second booster shot rollout will cover eligible adults with comorbidities in an immunocompromised state such as cancer patients and those taking immunosuppressive drugs, people living with Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome/Human Immunodeficiency Virus, organ transplant recipients, those undergoing chronic dialysis, and bedridden patients or with poor prognosis.

They must have received the first booster shot at least three months ago.

Eligible vaccinees should coordinate with their local government units or health facilities for appointments.

Cabotaje noted a significant decline in the country's vaccination coverage.

“During October to November, we had around 1 to 1.5 million a day. Now we only have around 200,000 a day on the average. So we can say about 250,000 until the end of April,” she said.

Cabotaje reported some 67.4 million Filipinos are now fully vaccinated, and they are aiming to increase the number to up to 69 million. **(PNA) – gb**

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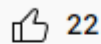
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