

24 JULY 2022, SUNDAY



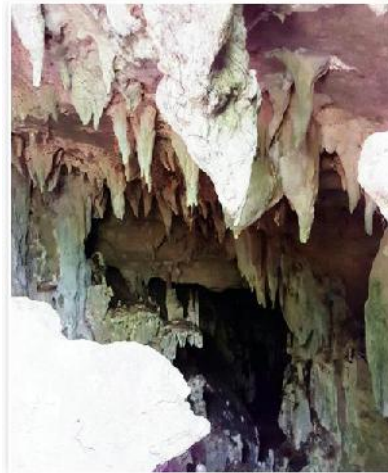
NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



4 Caves in Luzon Reclassifies for Proper Management Conservation

by  Village Connect about 20 hours ago



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has approved the reclassification of four caves in the provinces of Abra, Quezon, and Albay for proper management and conservation.

The DENR, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), Regional and Provincial offices, reclassified from Class I to Class II the Ganway Cave in Brgy. Malamsit, Penarrubia town and the Quitinday Cave in Brgy. Quitinday, Jovellar town, both in the province of Albay.

Sung Wan Cave in Brgy. Lawigue, Tayabas City, Quezon province was also reclassified from Class I to Class II.

Meanwhile, Palale Cave in Brgy. Ibaba Palale in Tayabas City was moved from Class II to I.

DENR refers to Class I caves as those with delicate and fragile geological formations, threatened species, and archeological and paleontological values.

Caves under this category may only be used for "mapping, photography, educational, and scientific purposes" due to their natural values and hazardous conditions. These are closed for ecotourism activities.

Meanwhile, Class II caves contain areas or portions with hazardous conditions and sensitive geological, archeological, cultural, historical, and biological values or high-quality ecosystems.

Caves under Class II can be used for guided educational tours and visits led by experienced cavers.





DENR OIC Secretary Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. said the classification of the caves is pursuant to the DENR Administrative Order No. 2003-29 or the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9072 or the National Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act of 2001 to assess the value of the cave and ascertain its appropriate use.

Under the law, the DENR is tasked to plan, develop, and implement a national program for the management, protection, and conservation of caves and cave resources.

"Finding the middle ground where the critical importance of caves to the country's biodiversity and the critical role they have to the nation's socio-cultural heritage meet demonstrates the distinct mandate of the DENR to secure the sustainability of the country's rich natural resources and their benefits to our people," Adobo said.

With nature-based ecotourism as a critical sector to the country's tourism industry, Adobo pointed out the pandemic "has highlighted the crucial role the DENR plays " in setting the standards on the development of country's natural resources, like water bodies and caves, according to their beneficial uses.

"These initiatives set a road to more resilient and regenerative nature-based tourism practices that illustrate their natural resilience and, as a result, enable the public to enjoy these natural assets in perpetuity," Adobo added.

Before their reclassification, the caves have been assessed for safety and supply of oxygen, high endemism and presence of threats and hazards, safety of its areas as potential ecotourism sites, and absence of hazardous conditions.

DENR-BMB OIC-Director Natividad Y. Bernardino said that concerned DENR field offices have conducted a re-assessment prior to the reclassification through their cave assessment teams to evaluate changes in the cave and cave resources.

"Caves harbor unique fauna, some of which can be sources of raw materials for food, while others such as bats contribute to pollination that provide food for people and other animals," Bernardino said.

She reminded the public to follow the protocols for safe caving.

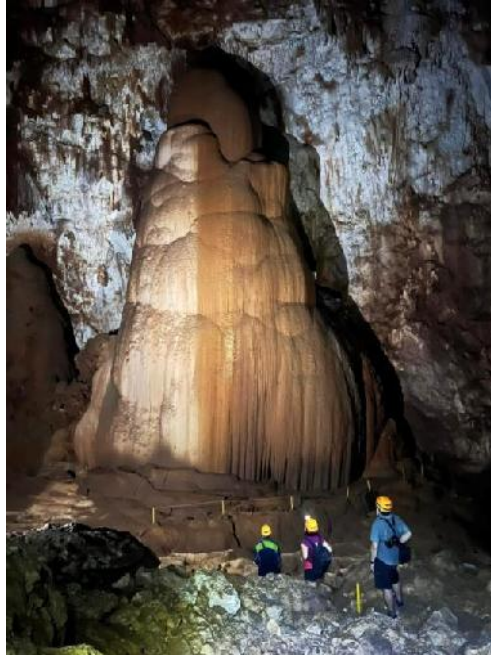
"Visit tourism centers and ask for Department of Tourism-accredited cave guides who will help in navigating caves safely," Bernardino said. *"Wear proper caving attire and follow proper cave decorum to minimize the impact of ecotourism on caves, as well as ensure visitor safety."*

Samar hosts PH's largest cave system – spanning 7 kilometers

July 24, 2022

THE [Philippines](#) has over 3,100 known caves. Featuring 12 chambers over its seven-kilometer span, the Langun-Gobingob Cave in Samar is the king of them all.

Discovered by Italian [Guido Rossi](#) in 1987, it was opened to the public in 1990.



Inside the Langun-Gobingob Cave is possibly one of the largest flowstones on the planet, easily as tall as a small skyscraper. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In celebration of the Year of the Protected Areas (YOPA), people must be convinced to conserve the country's 246 protected areas, as well as encourage them to visit the sites themselves.

[Samar Island](#), overshadowed by more popular places like Palawan and Boracay, is not usually considered a top tourist destination, owing to its long history as a hotbed for insurgencies and a punching bag for typhoons. Though the Philippines' third largest island exudes rugged beauty, its real value as an ecotourism destination lies beneath the earth.

"Samar is unique because it is a karst landscape made primarily of limestone. Millions of years of weathering has created numerous caves and sinkholes on the island. Caves are special ecosystems which harbor highly-evolved fauna, most of which have adapted to darkness," Anson Tagtag, head of the Caves, Wetlands and Other Ecosystems Division of the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) (DENR), said.

The constant dripping of water for instance leaves minute traces of minerals like calcite. Over time these traces pile up to form hanging stalactites and their inverted kin, stalagmites.

The Langun-Gobingob Cave is part of the Samar Island [Natural Park](#) (SINP), one of YOPA's six highlighted parks. The others are the [Bongsanglay Natural Park](#) in Masbate, [Apo Reef Natural Park](#) in Occidental [Mindoro](#), Balinsasayao Twin Lakes Natural Park in Negros Oriental, Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary in Davao Oriental and Mt. Timpoong Hibok-Hibok Natural Monument in Camiguin.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/24/public-square/samar-hosts-phs-largest-cave-system-spanning-7-kilometers/1851968>



DENR Welcomes Philspada Lady Warriors

Saturday, July 23, 2022 Journal Online



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (**DENR**) Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. (9th from left, 2nd row) welcomes members of the Philippine National Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team under the Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled (PHILSPADA) during their courtesy call at the DENR Central office on July 20, 2022 in celebration of the 44th National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week. Adobo called for public support for the Lady Warriors as they brace for the 11th ASEAN Para Games in Solo, Indonesia from July 30 to August 6, 2022. **DENR** employee Cathreen Gem Tanyag of the Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service (SCIS) (4th from left, front row) is a proud member of the national team. Also in photo are: Assistant Secretary for Human Resources, Strategic Communication and Sectoral Initiatives Hiro V. Masuda (7th from left, 2nd row), SCIS Director Khalil S. Bayam, Stakeholders Management and Conflict Resolution Division Chief Julie G. Iban, Climate Change Service Director and Gender and Development Office concurrent Director Elenida Dr. Basug (from left to right, 2nd row, respectively).

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/denr-welcomes-philspada-lady-warriors/>



CEMEX's Solid Cement receives Waste-to-Energy award from DENR-EMB

BYBMPPLUS JULY 22, 2022



CEMEX's Solid Cement receives Waste-to-Energy award from DENR-EMB

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) recently conferred on Solid Cement Corporation the Award in Exemplary Operations in Small Scale Waste-to-Energy Operations.

Solid Cement, a subsidiary of CEMEX Philippines, has received the award for two consecutive years. “This award validates how sustainability is embedded in our operations, and we will continue with our efforts to recover energy from waste and pursue clean energy as part of our goal to become a net-zero CO₂ company by 2050,” Santiago Ortiz, Solid Cement Plant Director said.

CEMEX has more than 25 years of international experience in waste management through co-processing, with nearly 95% all its cement plants around the world equipped with specialized facilities operated by highly trained engineers.

In the Philippines, Solid Cement has been using alternative fuels in accordance with both global and local standards. The company's facilities are ISO-certified and adheres to the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

To date, CEMEX has partnered with more than 20 local government units (LGUs) and private companies for waste management. Many partners have already acknowledged the value that CEMEX offers in terms of diverting their residual wastes which will otherwise go to municipal landfills or water systems.

This initiative is in line with CEMEX's Future in Action agenda, a global strategy which focuses on reducing CO₂ emissions by 35% by 2025 and around 40% by 2030. The ultimate goal of CEMEX is to become a net-zero CO₂ company by 2050.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/07/22/cemexs-solid-cement-receives-waste-to-energy-award-from-denr-emb/>



LGUs push passage of policy on national single-use plastic

BY BUSINESSMIRROR JULY 24, 2022



[Pixabay/Rita E/UNEP.org](https://pixabay.com/ritae/UNEP.org)

Areas must develop tailored approaches to phasing out single-use products based on local contexts.

Local government units (LGUs), through ordinances, are pushing for a national law that will comprehensively and effectively address single-use plastics, advocates said during a recent joint webcast by Cebu Technological University and The Climate Reality Project Philippines.

“As of 2019, 489 cities and municipalities, or about 30 percent of [LGUs] in the country, have some form of policy to regulate the use of plastics, particularly plastic bags,” said Ian Soqueño, Anti Single-Use Plastics lead of Climate Reality Philippines. The webcast was the second episode of Klima Ug Kalikupan, a news release said.

Citing data from the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), Soqueño said the local ordinances have different scopes, different definitions of single-use plastics and different sanctions.

He also noted that all regions in the country, except in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, have LGUs regulating plastics.

Pending bills, existing laws

Soqueño noted that two bills were filed in the 17th Congress that sought to address the concern on single-use plastics.

House Bill 9147, or the proposed Single-Use Plastic Products Regulation Act, was already approved on third reading at the House of Representatives. It was a consolidation of about 40 bills that aims to phase out and eventually totally ban the use of single-use plastics in the country.

It also mandated companies or plastic producers to create programs and measures that will manage plastic waste.

However, it did not flourish in the Senate.

“[The Senate] wanted the extended producer-responsibility scheme,” making the House create a bill that would “complement the Senate bill,” Soqueño said, pertaining to Senate Bill 2425 and House Bill 10696, or the Extender Producers Responsibility Act.

The consolidated bill that solely focused on extended producer responsibility schemes has been approved by both houses of Congress, but may lapse into law after no action was made by President Duterte.



Soqueño also lamented the failure of concerned agencies to fully implement Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

“Had we implemented this law right, we wouldn’t have this much of a problem on plastics,” he said.

He explained that the law mandates the NSWMC to formulate and update a list of Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products (NEAPs) and determine a phase-out period for the products.

While the law has been in effect since 2000, it was only last year that the NSWMC released a list of NEAPs.

“It’s not even a promulgated list. It’s a draft list ... that was not yet approved by the agencies that advise the Commission.... Twenty-two years since the law was enacted, the draft list includes only two items—plastic soft drink straws and coffee stirrers,” he lamented.

Banning single-use plastics is not anti-poor

Soqueño pointed out that there are ways to shift to more sustainable systems without leaving low-income families behind, the Climate Reality news release said.

“A lot has been said about the advocacy against single-use plastics being anti-poor and that it will not help Filipinos who could only afford products in sachets.... Even before sachets, we have working systems on these kinds of products, such as refilling systems,” he explained.

He shared how multinational companies are circumventing the definition of single-use plastics. They do not consider sachets as single-use plastics because they are composed of other materials other than plastics.

“This is why bills were designed to include an eventual phase-out of single-use plastics instead of an outright ban. This way, we can promote the development of eco-friendly products and develop alternative systems and approaches, such as refilling systems and zero-waste sari-sari stores,” he said.

He added that the government should find ways to address gaps, including those who will lose their jobs because of the ban of single-use plastics.

Roxanne Doron, founder and executive director of Bisdak Pride, supported Soqueño’s position.

“It [sachet system] is destructive. Our old system of tingi-tingi used to be sustainable but this has been destroyed by multinational firms. I have traced the history of this profit-centered drive from companies that has resulted in this waste problem,” Doron said.

Waste management in Cebu

Doron noted that a conference in April aimed at finding solutions to Cebu’s 30-year garbage problem.

“In the conference, the city government expressed that they will embark on a people-driven solid-waste management. It is commendable because the leadership should guide the people on solid waste management. If your leadership is good, people will follow. Since Mayor Michael Rama is about to start his mandate, I hope that there is follow-through,” he said.

Doron noted that Cebu City already has ordinances in place to address the plastic problem. These include the ban on plastic shopping bags on Wednesdays and Saturdays and the prohibition of foam food containers and single-use plastics in all public events in the city.



“The bigger question is why is it that there is still waste around the city? The problem here lies in the supply because if you cut the supply there will be less supply. We have ordinances on waste disposal but we do not have restrictions on waste production,” Doron said.

The Cebu City Council enacted an ordinance last year totally banning all single-use plastic materials in all business establishments. However, the ordinance still needs the signature of the local chief executive.

Image credits: [Pixabay/Rita E/UNEP.org](https://pixabay.com/it/ritae/UNEP.org)



Oceana lauds local protection calls for Panaon Island

By Sarwell Meniano July 23, 2022, 11:59 am



UNDERWATER GEM. A coral in Panaon Island in Southern Leyte. The environmental group Oceana has welcomed the call of local governments in Panaon Island to designate through legislation their marine habitat and sanctuaries as one of the Philippines' protected areas. *(Photo courtesy of Oceana)*

TACLOBAN CITY - Environmental group Oceana has welcomed the call of local governments in Panaon Island of Southern Leyte to designate through legislation their marine habitat and sanctuaries as one of the country's protected areas.

In a statement on Friday, Oceana said mayors of the towns of Liloan, Pintuyan, San Francisco, and San Ricardo recently filed separate resolutions pledging their support for the efforts to include Panaon Island in the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS).

The Island's underwater is home to coral reefs included in the priority regions for conservation, reefs with the potential to withstand the impacts of climate change and repopulate neighboring reefs, according to the group.

"These resolutions from the municipalities of Panaon Island are testament of the island communities' clamor to save the precious marine resources that they depend on for livelihood and food. While it is true that the waters surrounding the island are home to incredibly rich marine resources, without ample protection these remain vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and other environmental challenges," said Oceana Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos.

According to the resolutions from Liloan and Pintuyan, "designating Panaon Island as a protected area will not only ensure the perpetual existence of the marine organisms by promoting managed access and regulated utilization of the resources, but also further enhance cooperation among national government, local government and concerned private organizations."

The ENIPAS Act of 2018 amended the NIPAS Act of 1992 with enhancements to state policies and legislation for all protected areas and provisions for accountability of those mandated to protect the environment.

According to Oceana, the corals surrounding Panaon Island are strong contenders for national-level protections.

Oceana is an international advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the world's oceans. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1179592>

Managing Local Plastic Pollution, Tools and Lessons from the ASEANO Project

by  Village Connect about 12 hours ago



Lined with beautiful, swaying trees, the Imus River gives life to a community in Cavite. Millions of Asian villages are situated along similar rivers and streams

The ASEAN-Norwegian Cooperation Project on Local Capacity Building for Reducing Plastic Pollution in the ASEAN Region (ASEANO Project) is a regional capacity building project. The pilot site in the Philippines was the Imus River Basin in Cavite, which is one of the major tributaries of Manila Bay.

Funded by the Government of Norway, Project ASEANO is led by the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) Indonesia in close collaboration with the PEMSEA Resource Facility and ASEAN Secretariat under the purview of the endorsing ASEAN sectoral body, the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME).



The Imus River Watershed is one of six river systems located in the Philippine province of Cavite, south of Manila

The main goal of the ASEANO project is to build capacity to tackle plastic pollution from key sources in the ASEAN region through improved knowledge on sources, releases, transport, plus the ultimate fate of plastic pollution. The project promotes the development of sound and sustainable measures to reduce the impacts of plastic pollution and their implications on socioeconomic development and the environment. It focuses on the local level, with the Philippines' Imus River and Indonesia's Citarum River as its two Southeast Asian project sites.

The results of the project will be synthesized into knowledge products (LGU toolkit, policy best practices handbook, monitoring tools and technologies for plastics management, etc.) that can be used as a reference by local governments across the ASEAN region with similar priority management concerns.

Please have fun with our interactive map to understand the challenges and solutions needed to clean up Asia's rivers.

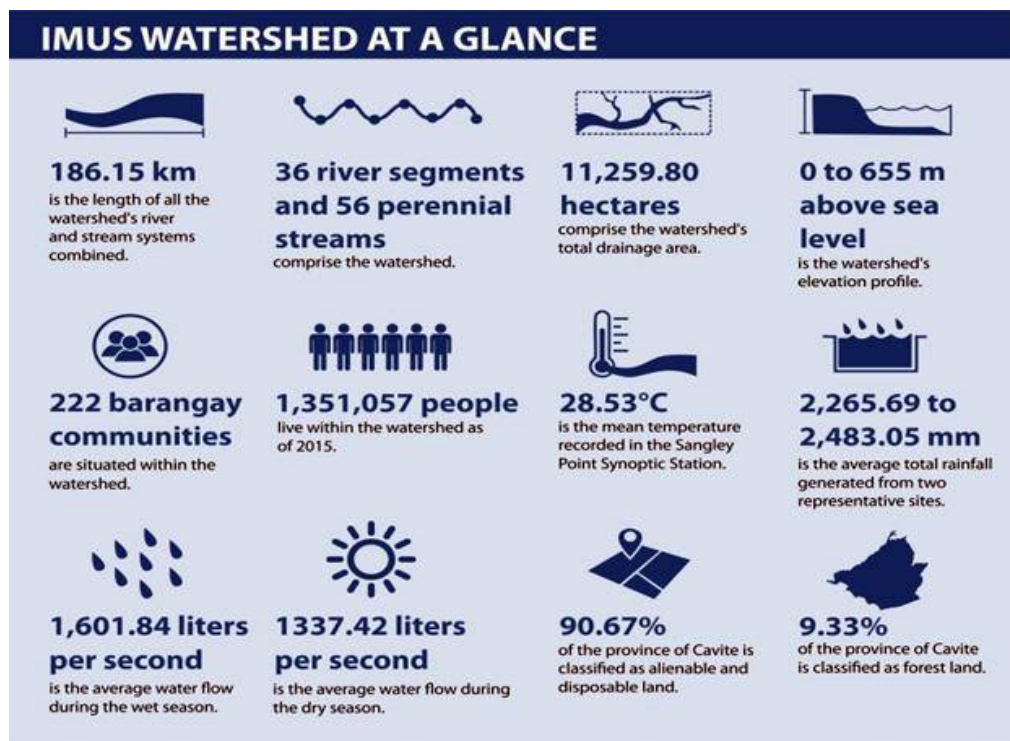
Parts of the Imus River in Cavite are still in relatively good condition, with ample vegetation and aquatic life. Shown is a lush upland riverscape in Silang, where fish and small crabs still abound.

It flows into Manila Bay, a known pollution hotspot. Rivers like it often act as major pathways to transport waste, particularly non-biodegradable plastics. Most of the land-based waste which enters rivers inevitably end up in the ocean.

The watershed is comprised of 36 main river segments and 56 perennial or permanent streams with a total length of 186.15 kilometers. Its total drainage area spans 11,259.80 hectares. A total of 222 barangay communities are fully or partially situated within the boundaries of the watershed, which as of 2015 hosted at least 1,351,057 people.

Its elevation ranges from zero to 655 meters above sea level, dividing it into three sub-watersheds, each with its own unique characteristics.

The river system begins in the cooler upland area covering parts of Silang, Amadeo and Tagaytay. A central hilly area covers parts of Imus, Bacoor and the majority of communities in Dasmariñas and Silang. Near the humid coastline are lowland portions covering parts of Kawit, Imus and Bacoor.



Normal mean temperatures ranged from 26.20°C to 28.53°C, while average total annual rainfall ranged from 2,265.69 mm to 2,483.05 mm. The average water flow during wet season was 1,601.84 liters per second, while the average water flow during dry season was 1,337.42 liters per second. 90.67% of Cavite, the province hosting the Imus River, is classified as alienable and disposable land, divided into production land (55.24%) and built-up areas (44.76%).

For more detailed and technical information, please check out [MAPS](#) and [PUBLICATIONS](#).

Source: <https://www.villageconnect.com.ph/managing-local-plastic-pollution-tools-and-lessons-from-the-aseano-project/10115>



Malabon LGU conducts city-wide cleanup drive

Published July 23, 2022, 2:33 PM

by [Aaron Homer Dioquino](#)

The local government of Malabon City conducted Saturday, July 23, a cleanup drive in the city's 21 barangays as part of its campaign against dengue.

Mayor Jeannie Sandoval led the "Malabon City Wide Clean-up Drive," along with the City Health Department, City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), other local government offices, national government agencies, non-government organizations, barangay officials and residents. The activity started at around 7 a.m. until 10 a.m.

According to the local government, the city listed a total of 650 dengue cases as of July 19.

The city-wide cleanup drive was held along the streets and waterways in all the barangays, focusing on four areas with the most dengue cases – Barangays San Agustin, Tonsuya, Catmon, and Bayan-bayan.

"Tunay pong nakakabahala na ang pagtaas ng kaso ng dengue sa loob man o labas ng ating siyudad. Huwag na po nating hintayin na dapuan pa ang ating pamilya. Prevention is key to fight dengue. Ang kaligtasan mula sa sakit na dengue ay nag-uumpisasa ating mga tahanan (The increase in dengue cases within or outside our city is really alarming. Let's not wait for our family to get infected. Prevention is key to fight dengue. Safety from the dengue disease begins in our homes)," Sandoval said in a video posted on Facebook on Saturday.

The mayor added that the activity is in support to the Department of Health's (DOH) enhanced 4S campaign – search and destroy mosquito breeding sites, self-protection measures (daily use of mosquito repellent, wearing of long pants, and others), seek early consultation, support fogging/spraying only on hotspot areas where increase in cases were registered for two consecutive weeks- to prevent an impending outbreak of the disease.

"Bukod sa enhanced 4S, ang Malabon LGU ay mangunguna din sa pagpapatupad ng mga proyekto at aktibidad upang siguruhing malusog at ligtas ang lahat. Asahan po ninyo ang masigasig na pagtatrabaho ng ating mga tanggapan para tulungan ang bawat isa (Aside from the enhanced 4S, the Malabon LGU will also lead the implementation of projects and activities to ensure everyone is healthy and safe. Please expect our offices to work diligently to help each other," she said.

"Inaasahan ko po ang inyong isang daang porsyentong pagsunod sa mga patakaran, paglahok, aktibidad, at pagsuporta sa mga kampanya ng ating lokal at pambansang pamahalaan upang ating masugpo and dengue sa ating siyudad at magpatuloy ang ating ligtas at masaganang buhay (I look forward to your one hundred percent compliance with the policies, participation, activity, and support to the campaigns of the local and national government so that we can suppress dengue in our city and continue our safe and prosperous lives)," she added.

The local government said that it conducts regular cleanup drives, larvi-trapping, misting, and fogging, as well as seminars and lectures to boost its anti-dengue campaign.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/07/23/malabon-lgu-conducts-city-wide-cleanup-drive/>



Tagalog News: Malawakang tree planting activity, inorganisa ng Romblon prov'l gov't

Published on: July 22, 2022

By Paul Jaysent Fos



Nagsagawa noong Hulyo 22, ng malawakang tree planting activity ang Pamahalaang Panlalawigan ng Romblon bilang pagobserba sa Provincial Arbor Day. (Larawan mula kay Jose Rizal Reyes)

ODIONGAN, Romblon (PIA) -- Nagsagawa nitong Hulyo 22 ng malawakang tree planting activity ang Pamahalaang Panlalawigan ng Romblon bilang pagobserba sa Provincial Arbor Day.

Ayon sa Pamahalaang Panlalawigan, nagkaroon ng tree planting sa iba't ibang munisipyo sa lalawigan kabilang na ang mga nasa isla ng Sibuyan.

Sa bayan ng Odiongan, sa Provincial Tree Park sa Brgy. Rizal ginanap ang kanilang aktibidad, kung saan dinaluhan ito ng iba't ibang departamento ng Provincial Government.

"Pakatandaan natin na iisa lang ang ating mundo kaya pangalagaan natin ito habang may panahon," ito ang naging pahayag ni Engr. Roger Fodra sa ginanap na maikling programa sa Barangay Rizal.

Naantala ng isang linggo ang pag-obserba sa Provincial Arbor Day ngayong taon dahil sa mga pagsasanay na dinaluhan ng mga bagong halal na alkalde at opisyal sa probinsya. (PJF/PIA Mimaropa)



Tabuk lauded for landfill operations

By [Dexter A. See](#)

July 24, 2022



The city government of Tabuk segregates its garbage and makes a composting site near the landfill operations in this undated file photo from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TABUK CITY, Kalinga: The Cordillera office of the [Environmental Management Bureau](#) (EMB-CAR) recognized the local government through the City Environment and [Natural Resources Office](#) (Cenro) for its Outstanding Sanitary Landfill Operation that paved the way for the effective and efficient implementation of solid [waste management](#) programs under the pertinent provisions of [Republic Act](#) (RA) 9003 or the "[Ecological Solid Waste Management Act](#) of 2000."

The plaque of recognition, together with a P50,000 cash award, was handed over to Tabuk City Cenro officials during simple rites held at the [Paragon Hotel](#) in [Baguio City](#) on July 21.

The cash reward will be allocated by the local government to sustain the implementation of appropriate programs, projects and activities for the enhancement of solid waste management and environmental protection efforts.

The EMB-CAR recognized the local government for its best practices in the operation of materials recovery facilities, composting, as well as shredding, recycling and the creation of crafts from the waste materials recovered.

EMB-CAR personnel had been frequenting the city to inspect the local government's compliance with the indicators and standards in the operation of the sanitary landfill that paved the way for the recognition of the Cenro headed by [Sally Lammawin](#) and assisted by [Georgina Padilla](#).

Tabuk's sanitary landfill, which is located in a 6.5-hectare area in Barangay Dilag, started operation in 2017 and can handle 12 metric tons of residual waste per day.

The landfill facilities include cells for residual waste, leachate collection or pond, a gas vent system, a materials recovery facility for recyclable waste, and a septic vault for household hazardous waste.

Tabuk is the first local government in the Cordillera to operationalize its engineered sanitary landfill under the provisions of RA 9003 and got an environmental compliance certificate.

Mayor Darwin Estrañero commended the Cenro officers and personnel for the sustained improvements and innovation in the operation of the sanitary landfill and the implementation of effective and efficient solid waste management in the city.



The mayor rallied the residents to further enhance their practice of proper solid waste management by reducing, reusing, and recycling their wastes and for them to segregate at the source to lessen the volume of residual wastes being dumped in the facility that could also help in prolonging the lifespan of the landfill.

Under the provisions of RA 9003, all local governments are mandated to close the operation of their respective open dumpsites and establish their own engineered sanitary landfill or controlled dump facilities for the preservation and protection of the environment and the health of the residents.

Meralco among world's most environmentally responsible firms

[Richmond Mercurio](#) - The Philippine Star July 24, 2022 | 12:00am



“As we forge ahead, we are committed to accelerating our sustainability transformation while meeting the needs of our recovering nation,” Meralco president and CEO Ray Espinosa said.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) has committed to continue advancing its drive towards sustainability after being recognized as one of the most socially and environmentally responsible companies globally.

“As we forge ahead, we are committed to accelerating our sustainability transformation while meeting the needs of our recovering nation,” Meralco president and CEO Ray Espinosa said.

In continuing to advance the company's drive towards sustainability, Espinosa said Meralco would not only intensify efforts to keep the lights on for its customers and communities, but would also heighten initiatives to protect and preserve the planet.

Meralco's key sustainability initiatives include sourcing 1,500 megawatts (MW) of its power requirements from clean energy in the next five years while building 1,500 MW of renewable energy capacity through 2027.

It also includes electrifying 25 percent of its vehicle fleet by 2030, planting and nurturing five million trees by 2025 to help protect and preserve Philippine forests and watersheds, and achieving 40 percent women representation in its workforce by the end of this decade.

Meralco recently became the second power company in the Philippines to be recognized by UK-based global sustainability index provider FTSE Russel for outstanding sustainability performance.

Meralco has been included in the FTSE4Good Index Series, specifically in the FTSE4Good Emerging Index and in the FTSE4Good ASEAN 5 Index.

The FTSE4Good Index Series is a set of global sustainability indices that measure the performance of companies in key environmental, social, and governance (ESG) areas such as climate change, labor standards, and anti-corruption.

It was designed to help market participants assess sustainable investment products, to research environmentally and socially sustainable firms, and to provide a transparent and evolving global ESG standard against which businesses could benchmark their performance.

Meralco garnered an ESG rating of 3.2 in FTSE Russell's latest assessment, topping the Philippines' and the global energy sector's averages.



A company in an emerging market must achieve an overall ESG rating of 2.9 or higher to be included in the FTSE4Good Index.

“We are very honored and grateful for this distinctive recognition of our sustainability strategy and initiatives. This confirms that we are indeed progressing in the right direction,” Meralco first vice president and chief sustainability officer Raymond Ravelo said.



By Malaya Business Insight

-July 22, 2022





World Bank: Southeast Asia needs stronger rules on plastic value chain

[Louella Desiderio](#) - The Philippine Star July 24, 2022 | 12:00am



In a World Bank blog post, Axel van Trotsenburg who serves as managing director of operations at the World Bank, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) secretary general Lim Jock Hoi said the region has become a hot spot for plastic pollution amid the region's rapid urbanization, rising middle class and lack of infrastructure for waste management.

AFP / Eric Baradat

MANILA, Philippines — Southeast Asian countries need to come up with stronger regulatory frameworks and innovative methods in the plastic value chain in order to reduce plastic waste, according to the World Bank.

In a World Bank blog post, Axel van Trotsenburg who serves as managing director of operations at the World Bank, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) secretary general Lim Jock Hoi said the region has become a hot spot for plastic pollution amid the region's rapid urbanization, rising middle class and lack of infrastructure for waste management.

According to the experts, half of the top 10 countries that contribute plastic leakage to rivers and seas are located in Southeast Asia.

In Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, World Bank studies found that over 75 percent of material value of recyclable plastic worth \$6 billion is lost every year when single-use plastic is thrown out instead of being recovered and reused.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, consumption of masks, sanitizer bottles, online delivery packaging and other single-use items increased, exacerbating the problem of plastic waste.

As plastics are produced mainly from fossil fuels, the experts said the growing demand for such also intensifies the climate crisis.

"If no action is taken, greenhouse gas emissions from the production, recycling and incineration of plastics could account for 19 percent of the total allowable emissions under the Paris Agreement, which seeks to limit warming by 2040 to 1.5 Celsius degrees. Reducing plastics thus has a critical climate co-benefit," the experts said.

Both the industry and governments, they added, are aware of the problem and of what needs to be done to reduce the annual plastic leakage into the ocean by about 80 percent below the projected levels by 2040.



“But to be able to do its part, Southeast Asia needs stronger regulatory frameworks, more innovative business models and a wider array of funding mechanisms,” they said.

As countries in the region have shared rivers and coastlines as well as markets for plastic products and waste, they said collaboration would be needed.

There are calls within ASEAN to regionally harmonize standards for recycled plastics, as well as technical requirements for plastic packaging and labeling.

This, as initiatives aimed at coming up with plastic-smart designs to help minimize waste and make it easier to reuse or recycle are sometimes prevented by the confusing and varying regulations, standards, certifications and labeling in the different countries.

Apart from harmonization of standards, the experts said there should be efforts to raise consumers’ awareness on the issue to enable them to make conscious and sustainable choices when making purchases.

In order to design products to help minimize waste, they also said innovation will be needed throughout the plastic value chain. This involves using new alternative materials, sustainable packaging, innovative technologies and new types of financing.

Last month, the World Bank approved a \$20 million grant to support ASEAN’s actions to address the problem including strengthening and harmonizing policies that govern the production and use of plastics across the region.

“Although it has become a hot spot for mismanaged plastic waste, the region is resolving to turn the tide,” the experts said.

Monarch butterfly joins global endangered species list

By EMMA FARGE, GLORIA DICKIE, Reuters

Published July 22, 2022 10:56am



Monarch butterflies are seen in a puddle at El Rosario sanctuary for monarch butterflies in the western state of Michoacan, near Ocampo, Mexico February 3, 2020. REUTERS/Alan Ortega/File Photo

The migratory monarch butterfly, which has for millennia turned North American woodlands into kaleidoscopes of colour in one of nature's most spectacular mass migrations, is threatened with extinction, international conservationists said on Wednesday.

Every autumn, migratory monarchs fly thousands of miles (km) from breeding grounds in the eastern United States and Canada to spend the winter closely huddled in trees in Mexico and California.

Numbering in the millions in the 1990s, the butterfly's population has since shrunk by more than 85%, scientists estimate.

On Wednesday it was placed in the endangered category of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.

"What's happening to monarchs is like a death by a thousand cuts," said Karen Oberhauser, director of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum.

Logging has destroyed much of the insects' winter grounds, agricultural pesticides have decimated the milkweed plants that their larvae feed on, and extreme temperatures due to climate change are triggering them to begin migrating too early, before the remaining milkweed is available.

In all, the IUCN says, more than 41,000 species are now at risk of going extinct in what scientists are calling the planet's sixth mass extinction event - and the first caused by humans.

Today's Red List update highlights the fragility of nature's wonders," said IUCN director general Bruno Oberle.

Glimmers of Hope

Joining the migratory monarch on Wednesday's list were all remaining species of sturgeon— large prehistoric fish found in Eurasia and North America — following centuries of overfishing for their meat and caviar.

Of the 26 sturgeon species, 17 are now considered critically endangered, the IUCN said.

"There's something to be said about humanity, when a species that's outlived the dinosaurs is pushed to the brink of extinction by humans," said Beate Striebel-Greiter, leader of the global sturgeon initiative at World Wildlife Fund.



The Red List update did provide glimmers of hope.

Tiger numbers increased 40% since the last assessment in 2015, due to improvements in monitoring, with as many as 5,578 in the wild. However, some big cat biologists have taken issue with how numbers are counted, saying such growth is misleading. — **Reuters**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/839016/monarch-butterfly-joins-global-endangered-species-list/story/?fbclid=IwAR3CgQqD-MKOAA00pFCe4Gk2sx7FaU3gcX8HUqKBRZKmV014wT0DdnOw450>



PAGASA: Flood warning system must be prioritized

[Romina Cabrera](#) - The Philippine Star July 24, 2022 | 12:00am



Photo shows a pedestrian crossing a flooded Taft Avenue in Manila following continuous rains.

Krizjohn Rosales, file

MANILA, Philippines — Modernizing the country's flood forecasting and warning system should be a priority of government as the state weather bureau pointed out that floods continue to be one of the country's biggest hazards.

Administrator Vicente Manalo of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said there are still plenty of improvements needed to fully equip the country's flood forecasting and monitoring system to protect the public.

Manalo stressed the need to "continue what has yet to be completed," particularly programs to improve the flood forecasting and warning mechanism. "We see that this is what gives us a big problem – flooding," he said in Filipino.

Manalo said that flood forecasting is a key aspect in aiding disaster risk reduction efforts in the country, which sees at least 20 typhoons coming into its area of responsibility per year.

"There's a need to prepare for this hazard by way of installing equipment and improving communication," he said.

He cited as an example Tropical Cyclone Odette, which was the strongest typhoon to hit the country in 2021. Its deadly onslaught across Southern Luzon and the Visayas adversely affected three million families and resulted in the deaths of 405 people.

There were at least 98 areas in six regions that experienced flashfloods, destroying or damaging P29.7 billion in infrastructure and P17.7 billion in agriculture. While there are 18 major river basins in the country, PAGASA only has a total of 10 rain gauges or X-band radars operational.

These radars monitor rainfall, which is crucial to forecasting floods and warning the public about the hazard, so each river basin must have at least two of this equipment.

Each radar costs about P50 million, said Manalo. "Establishing our flood forecasting and warning (system) should have been completed. Improvements are ongoing, but they're not yet finished. If we have modern equipment, we should apply them," he said.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/07/24/2197581/pagasa-flood-warning-system-must-be-prioritized>

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DENR

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR cheers for PH nat'l wheelchair basketball team in ASEAN para games

By Joel dela Torre

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) family will serve as "cheerleaders" for the Philippine national women's wheelchair basketball team in the upcoming 11th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Para Games in Solo, Indonesia.

Environment Undersecretary Ernesto Adobo Jr. called on the public to join them in supporting the "basketball-in-wheelchair" team which will start its campaign from July 30 to August 6.

The Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled (PHILSPADA) Lady Warriors paid a courtesy call on Adobo Jr. at the DENR Central Office on July 20 at the culmination of the 44th National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week.

"We are proud of the hard work that our national athletes put in their trainings and games to represent our country on the international stage, especially that of our

PHILSPADA athletes. Hopefully, more people will watch and support them in their competitions," he said.

A DENR employee, Cathreen Gem Tayag is a member of the team.

According to Lady warriors head coach Vernon Perea, Tayag is one of the first athletes to be part of the Philippine women's wheelchair team which was formed in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

"The DENR is more than happy to support the Lady Warriors as one of its members, Cathreen Gem Tayag, is an employee of the DENR-Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service," Adobo said.

He said that the DENR, through its Persons with Disability (PWD) Desk, has been actively supporting PWD groups to assure the inclusion of its differently abled personnel in activities in and out of the agency.

National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week is observed every third week of July each year, pursuant to Proclamation No. 1870 issued on June 22, 1979.



Take up Marawi rehab, Mindanao development in SONA, PBBM urged

By Jester Manalastas

"PLEASE include Marawi rehabilitation and Mindanao development in your State of the Nation Address (SONA)."

This was the appeal of Basilan Representative Mujiv Hataman to President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos jr. who is set to deliver his first SONA on Monday.

Hataman said he is hopeful that Marcos will mention in his SONA some directives and policies for the continuation rehabilitation of Marawi as well as

the development of the entire Mindanao.

"Umaasa tayo na mababanggit ng Pangulo ang mga taga-Marawi at ang buong Mindanao sa kanyang talumpati sa Lunes. Dahil bukod sa sakuna at pandemya, madaming kailangang tutukan sa Mindanao lalo na sa usapin sa pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan at mga hakbangin tungo sa kaunlaran," he said.

Hataman is hoping as well that the current administration implement and fund the Marawi Siege Compensation Act and ease the pain of a people that have been unable to

return to their homes for the fifth straight year now.

"Ang sinapit ng Marawi at ang patuloy na paghihirap ng mga mamamayan nito ay kumakatawansang isang malalim na suliranin sa Mindanao. Hangad natin ang pag-ahon ng mga tao sa Marawi, kasabay ng pag-ahon ng buong Mindanao kapayapaan at mulas kahirapan," Hataman, former governor of the now-defunct ARMM, said.

"Kaya nananawagan ako kay Pangulong Marcos na sana ay matutukan ang Marawi at ang progreso ng Mindanao, at inatasan ang kapayapaan na

napakatagal nating ipinaglalan. Hinog na sa pag-unlad ang Mindanao dahil sa kapayapaang nakamit natin nitong mga nakaraang taon," he added.

Hataman is one of the principal authors of Republic Act 11696 or the Marawi Siege Compensation Act of 2022 that provides compensation for properties destroyed during the 2017 Siege of Marawi.

As of May 24, 2022, there are still over 85,000 displaced persons from Marawi, more than 23,700 of these are still staying in various transitory sites

while the rest have been staying with families all over the country, according to data from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

He also said the poverty incidence of 36.2 percent in the whole of Mindanao exceeds that of the Philippines (21.6 percent), Luzon (13.1 percent) and Visayas (28.2 percent), according to the Asian Development Bank.

The Basilan lawmaker also said he wanted to hear the President's economic plans, as well as his priorities in the national budget.

"Sana ay marinig natin ang kanyang mga plano kung paano palalaksin ang agriculture at fisheries sector, pati na rin ang plano niya tungkol sa ating food security," Hataman explained.



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Tales from my travels:

From Basilan to the Spratlys

I was overprotected—when I wanted to taste the halal chicken just outside the DENR office,

an attendant escorted me

and held my hand as if I were a little boy as we crossed the street

By **Amadis Ma. Guerrero**
@Inq_Lifestyle

Too bad my traveling days are over, not necessarily because of age but for one reason or another.

In my heyday, as a friend put it, I was able to travel the length and breadth of the archipelago.

The destinations visited from the early 1990s to the first decade of the 21st century included the Caramoan Peninsula before it became famous; Sarangani province in the southernmost eastern tip of the country facing the Pacific Ocean; the Agusan Marsh; Basilan province, Abu Sayyaf turf; Marawi, "Islamic City by the Lake"; and Pag-asa Island, Kalayaan, in the disputed West Philippine Sea.

Caramoan, on the eastern seaboard of Camarines Sur, facing Catanduanes and the Pacific Ocean, was (and presumably still is) a wonder to behold; I thought it was the most captivating sight in the Bicol region (exempting majestic Mt. Mayon, of course).

At the time, there was some difficulty in reaching the area, with its islands (70!) and black marble sea cliffs. The roads from Naga City were bad; only a 4X4 truck could negotiate these. So visitors could only go up to Sabang Beach, where a boat awaits them.

Sturdy beachboys emerged to carry the passengers to the boat, so they wouldn't get wet. The women were daintily placed on the right shoulder of the youth, while his left hand held that of the woman. The men were simply hoisted around the shoulders of the beachboy, their legs wrapped around the head of the fellow.

I almost fell over backwards.

There followed a short trip by jeepney to the town proper (you could see Mt. Mayon in the distance), and finally a tricycle ride to the entry point, Gota Beach. And you are rewarded by the sight of a panorama of islands and islets, flora, beach coves, black marble and limestone, mountain peaks with varied contours, caves, mangroves and rock formations.

Dark marsh

The Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (110,000 hectares) in Agusan del Norte is a forbidding place. A pump boat ride through the marsh is quite an experience for a first-timer, like something out of a Joseph Conrad novel (think "Heart of Darkness").

The muddy waters are normally just six feet deep during summer, a Manobo *lumad* told me, but rise to 20 ft or more during the wet months, and sometimes overflow on the banks. You are surrounded by varied species of trees, mangroves and foliage in wild profusion.

Migrant Visayan and Manobo communities live in cottages on stilts along the banks; the Manobo children screamed with delight when I waved at them from the boat. Traders visit the area and partake of *pasalubong* (take-home food) from the Ma-



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nobos, such as smoked *dalag* (mudfish).

"The NPAs collect taxes so they can buy prepaid cellphone cards," claimed a Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) operations chief. The marsh contributes to the diversity of the area, provides livelihood for *lumad* and migrants and serves as habitat for endangered species and feeding grounds for native migratory birds.

Marawi before the fall

I have been to Marawi three times, well before the battle which brought the city to its knees.

The first time was in 1976, four years after pitched battles between government forces and Maranao Muslims protesting martial law.

After four years, the military presence was still evident, and tension was in the air. One of our hosts was the Rev. Lloyd Van Vactor, then president of Dansalan College. An American, Van Vactor was respected by both Muslims and Christians, and there was general dismay when he was kidnapped. But he was later released.

Twenty-eight years later, in 1998, I returned to Marawi, a city of over 70 mosques then. Places to visit where the King Faisal Mosque and Center for Islamic Studies, the Mindanao State University (MSU) and its scenic campus, Aga Khan Museum, Marawi (formerly Ayala) Resort Hotel and Lake Lanao. And the military was still there! The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was active in the area. And the checkpoints proclaimed the good news: "The Marines have landed in Lanao. You can now sleep in peace."

I hoped they did not mean rest in peace.

The third sortie to Marawi was courtesy of friend Frank G. Rivera, the playwright-director, who had taught at MSU for many years, founded the Sining

Kambayoka, a dynamic theater organization, and now was being honored by this group he had guided and nurtured. It was a double event, for MSU was celebrating National Heritage Month. We were welcomed by Frank's friend, Police Col. Romeo "Bogs" Magsalos (now a general), then vice president of MSU.

The MSU was a Muslim university headed by two Christians. After our visit, the daughter of the president was kidnapped. "My little princess," the educator wailed. Mercifully, the child was later released un-

harm.

Once troubled Basilan

In the Muslim majority province of Basilan, accessible by boat from Zamboanga City, you can hear the chimes of the Catholic cathedral and the call to prayer of the *ulama*, sometimes coming one after the other in peaceful refrain, their melodious sounds wafting through the air.

Basilan, with a capital town named Isabela, is the traditional home of the Yakans, often described as a peace-loving ethnic

That was two decades ago. One hopes that the Basileños, like the people of Sulu, now have an active nightlife and that they are developing the many tourist spots which will generate jobs and boost the local economy.

Another wonderland is Sarangani (bustling General Santos City cuts the province cleanly into eastern and western sectors), with its Sarangani Bay, a superb natural harbor with hundreds of marine species, long coastline, beaches in the coastal town of Glan and a communal forest. My hosts took me to the hilltop Safi Ranch, with its sweeping view of the bay, and the mountains of Sarangani and Davao del Sur in the background.

As a bonus, come sunset,

group skilled in arts and crafts. The province also has its share of Tausugs, Chavacano-speaking Zamboanguenos, Cebuanos, Samals and Tagalogs.

Then came the separatist MILF, and the even more hostile Abu Sayyaf. There were reports of bombings, kidnappings and shootouts. Strangers were not encouraged to venture out alone, even to the busy downtown areas in Isabela.

I was protected. Overprotected, in fact. When I wanted to taste the *halal* chicken just outside the DENR office, an attendant escorted me and held my hand as if I were a little boy as we crossed the street, although I was old enough to be his father.

DENR foresters took me around the areas outside town which were considered safe. The then-provincial tourism officer, a woman, identified the scenic spots in the province: White Beach in Malamawi Island; Sumagdang Beach (Isabela); Palm Beach, Tumakid Beach, Balagtasan Waterfalls, Bulingan Falls and Maloong Falls (all in Lamitan); Atong-Atong Beach and Kumalarang Falls (Lantawan); Salakot Hills and Gaunan Island. And for the Christian devotees, Calvario Peak outside Isabela town proper.

you will see a long line of cattle herds obediently going back to their pens.

The disputed Spratlys

The high point of my years of traveling around the archipelago for ecotourism purposes was a 2003 visit to Pag-asa Island, Kalayaan town, in the powder keg that is the Spratlys cluster, specifically in what we now call the West Philippine Sea. This was made possible by my friend Bob Navarro, who is, in turn, a friend of Lt. Col (now vice admiral) Alberto "Abet" Carlos, then logistics officer of the AFP's Western Command in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

From Puerto Princesa, we flew to Pag-asa for a flight which takes more than two hours depending on the head and tail winds. Carlos himself, a be-medaled pilot, was at the helm. "Please do not discuss military matters with the island commander but focus on ecotourism," he cautioned me.



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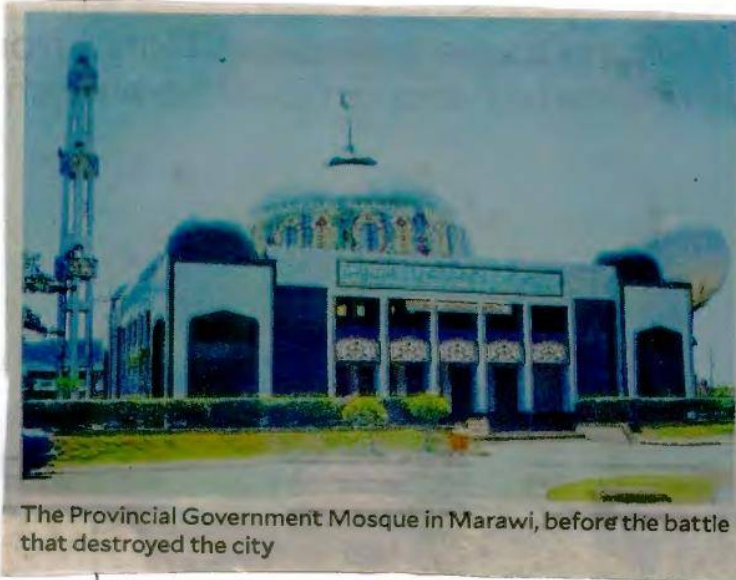
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Children frolic along Lake Lanao in Marawi City



The Provincial Government Mosque in Marawi, before the battle that destroyed the city



Pilots and visitors pose with Pag-asa officials upon landing on the island in the disputed West Philippine Sea. Second from left is Lt. Col (new vice admiral) Alberto Carlos. The author is third from left. Photo was taken in 2003.



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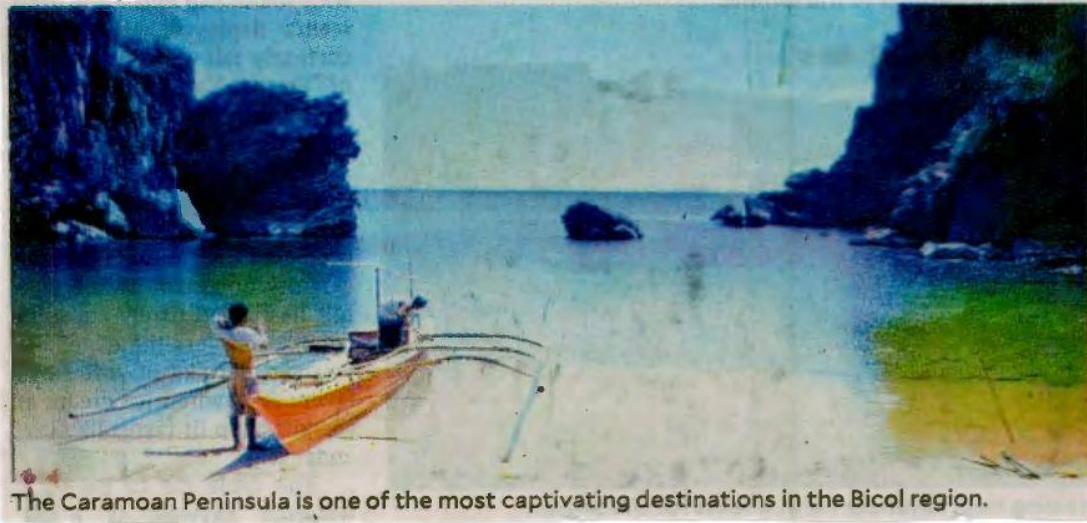
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The Caramoan Peninsula is one of the most captivating destinations in the Bicol region.



Wide expanse of beach and unidentified plant species on Pag-asa Island, Kalayaan, in the disputed West Philippine Sea —PHOTOS BY AMADIS MA. GUERRERO

There were nine Philippine-inhabited islands when we were there, Pag-asa being the most developed. It had an airstrip with a 1.3 kilometer runway, watchtower, a naval station and a thriving community of military personnel and civilian settlers. Also, a municipal hall, clinic, a Philippine National Police building, a Commission on Elections branch, and a local government unit—the mayor and high councilors—as Kalayaan is classified as a town.

Pag-asa is a small island; we toured it leisurely for 30 minutes. I gazed agape at the pristine, dazzlingly white-sand beaches, coves, clear waters and an abundance of trees and wild plant species indigenous to the area, which the island residents could not identify.

There were already intrusions by Chinese fishermen then, and they resorted to dynamite fishing and used compressors to illegally gather corals. There was a kind of free-for-all then among the claimant nations, ownership by occupation. Once Philippine marines landed on one island, called it Pugad, played basketball and left. When they returned, they found a much bigger Vietnamese force.

Pugad had to be written off as a Philippine island. The Vietnamese, after all, then and now, were our friends. You can imagine if the occupiers had been Chinese. A warning would have been hurled at the Pinoy: "Get out. You are in the territory of the People's Republic of China blah-blah-blah ..."

The travels which followed were sort of anticlimactic, and I soon returned to writing about Philippine arts and letters.

Looking back, however, I realized that I had visited practically all the provinces of the country except for three: Batanes (too often written about), Sulu (not safe then) and Tawi-Tawi (said to be enchanting but no one invited me there). Not a bad score. —CONTRIBUTED

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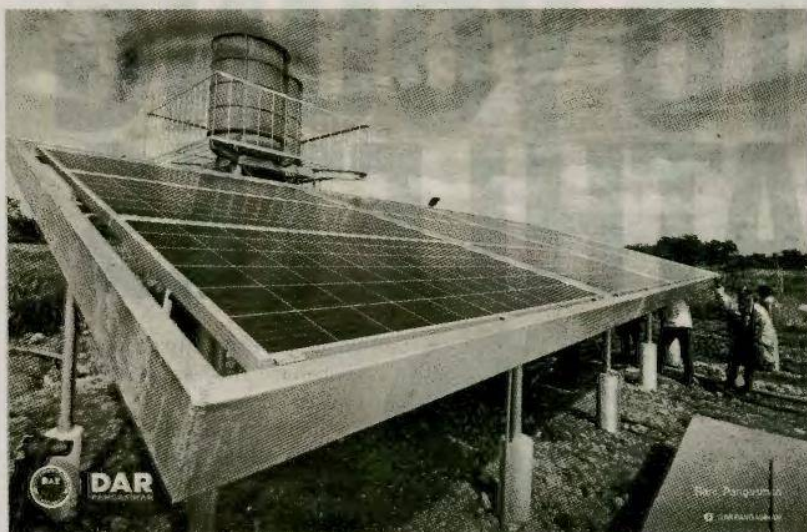


Solar power makes farms green

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

THE Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) that is mandated to implement the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and provide small farmers with various support services to help fight hunger and poverty in rural areas, announced on July 20 the turn-over of a P10-million solar-powered communal irrigation systems to a farmer-irrigators in Quezon Province.

The project, which is being implemented by DAR with the National Irrigation Administration, will benefit 53 farmer-members of an irrigation association and irrigate 35 hectares.



A SOLAR-POWERED irrigation project in Pangasinan province.

DAR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND MEDIA RELATIONS SERVICE PHOTOS

Climate-change action

THE DAR deployed even smaller solar-powered irrigation projects to various parts of the country over the past five years. It aims to empower farming communities in remote villages in various parts of the country, through solar energy.

The Solar Power Irrigation System (SPIS) Project is one of the responses of the DAR in operationalizing the Climate Change Act of 2009.

Ricky P. Sunga, SPIS project head, said the irrigation systems have been installed in agrarian reform communities, particularly in sites devoted to cash crops with no irrigation.

The SPIS Project involves the use of an irrigation system powered by solar energy using open water sources, such as lakes, rivers, streams, and even creeks.

"This is very effective, especially in areas with no irrigation or even electricity," Sunga told the BUSINESSMIRROR partly in Filipino in a telephone interview on July 12.

No electricity cost

AMONG the project's advantages include the non-use of fuel or electricity, easy installation in remote areas, use of renewable energy, and suitability for remote watershed and rain-fed areas.

More importantly, he said, it is free.

"Because it is solar powered, they don't have to spend money for diesel, especially now that the price of diesel is going up," he added.

The initial implementation of the project was in partnership with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM) through a memorandum of agreement and with initial funding of P10 million.

Under the partnership, DA-BSWM adopted the SPIS technology, while DAR's role was in the identification of project sites and beneficiaries.

The project was implemented in 15 pilot sites with funding of P1 million per site.

Due to the relatively good performance of the pilot implementation of

the project, the SPIS was integrated into the enhanced implementation of the DAR's Agrarian Reform Connectivity and Enterprise Support Services Program and its successor program, the Climate Resilient and Farm Productivity Support Program.



TITLE: SOLAR POWER MAKES PUMPS GREENER

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Environment-friendly

ACCORDING to Sunga, the project is environment-friendly and promotes sustainable farming.

He said many farmers are happy with it because they are able to use renewable energy to grow and harvest vegetables without using diesel.

For Leon Dulce, national coordinator of the Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment, said the use of solar power to irrigate remote farming villages is a welcome initiative.

"Using solar power for irrigation mechanization and rural electrification, in general, helps address the country's 40 percent irrigation coverage gap without further contributing to carbon emissions and air pollution," he said when asked to comment on the matter.

He added that decentralizing irrigation also weans the system off from intensive centralized sources, such as mega-dams.

"This, however, requires careful regulations around particular solar irrigation projects far from surface water sources to prevent over-extraction from groundwater sources," he warned.

Better than diesel

NEVERTHELESS, using renewable energy is a lot better than oil-based fuel.

"Diesel-based irrigation pumps pose threats of air pollution, toxins and other harmful impacts to biodiversity that can be found in the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems," he said.

Farming is a major driver of biodiversity loss. The conversion of otherwise natural habitats of plant and animal wildlife for the purpose of food production results in massive habitat destruction that causes

the extinction of many plant and animal species.

Farms are always associated with animals. Besides farm animals like carabao, cattle, horses, goats and dogs, farms also provide food and shelter to wildlife like birds, snakes, lizards, rats, fish, snails, small crabs, tangka, bees and butterflies.

Agricultural biodiversity

ACCORDING to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); biodiversity is the basis of agriculture.

"It has enabled farming systems to evolve ever since agriculture was first developed some 10,000 years ago. Biodiversity is the origin of all species of crops and domesticated livestock and the variety within them," CBD said on its web site.

"It is also the foundation of ecosystem services essential to sustainable agriculture and human well-being. Today's crop and livestock biodiversity are the results of thousands of years of human intervention," it added.

Strongly interrelated

FURTHER, the CBD said that biodiversity and agriculture are strongly interrelated because while biodiversity is critical for agriculture, agriculture can also contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

"Indeed, sustainable agriculture both promotes and is enhanced by biodiversity. Maintenance of biodiversity is essential for the sustainable production of food and other agricultural products and the benefits these provide to humanity, including food security, nutrition, and livelihoods," it said.

Hence, the CBD Conference of Parties has recognized "the special nature of agricultural biodiversity, its distinctive features, and problems needing distinctive solutions"

Essentially, it states that agricultural biodiversity is essential to satisfy basic human needs for food and livelihood security.

Valuable ecosystem services

THERESA MUNDITA S. LIM, executive director of the Asean Centre for Biodiversity, told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an interview via Messenger on July 20 that indeed agrobiodiversity embodies the link between the biodiversity of natural ecosystems and those components which are human-managed.

"Food and livelihood are among the valuable ecosystem services provided by thriving biodiversity, but as resources become finite, we must ensure to use and manage them sustainably," said Lim, an international biodiversity expert.

She said: "The first step to transitioning to a more sustainable and healthy food system is to start moving toward biodiversity—or nature neutral, or even a biodiversity- or nature-positive agricultural practices."

Less emission, the better

"ONE that has much potential to contribute to this transition are these solar-powered irrigation systems. Solar-powered irrigation contributes to cleaner air and reduces carbon emission, thus, it will help support a healthier environment for all species [including bees] to survive," Lim added.

Moreover, Lim, a former director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said solar-powered irrigation systems leave a smaller carbon footprint on natural ecosystems, compared to large irrigation dams.

"The inclusion of small rainwater catchments reduces over-extraction of water from natural freshwater ecosystems that help in preventing the wetland from permanently drying up. These are wetlands which tend to decrease in level during the summer season, but still need to maintain moisture or small amounts of water to support a variety of important organisms that grow and seek shelter in muddy soil," she said.

According to Lim, freshwater ecosystems also support native fisheries, some of which migrate to and from the large rivers to the sea to complete their life cycles.

"Small-scale solar-powered irrigation systems will not have as enormous an impact because it is not expected to redirect as much the natural waterways to adversely affect the normal life cycle or movement of critical aquatic species," she explained.

According to Lim, inland water biodiversity provides a variety of healthy protein sources for communities and, for some indigenous peoples, may be linked to their tradition and culture.

"Irrigation systems, in the end, maybe more efficient, economical, and sustainable," she said.



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MONICA INONOG (from left), John Paul Magana and Kuhkan Maas lead a team of forest rangers tasked with protecting critical areas plagued by illegal activities inside the Masungi Geopark Project and the Upper Marikina Watershed. PHOTO FROM MASUNGI GEORESERVE FOUNDATION

Masungi rangers win IUCN's 2022 International Ranger Awards

THE Rangers of the Masungi Georeserve Foundation won in the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) 2022 International Ranger Awards of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The Masungi team was awarded among the 12 winners from four continents worldwide during a hybrid ceremony at the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress in Kigali, Rwanda, a news release announced.

Masungi rangers—represented by Kuhkan Maas, John Paul Magana, and Monica Inonog of the Bayog Ranger Station—were lauded for their exceptional resilience in the face of serious risks in performing their duties.

The Bayog Ranger Station is located at one of the most vulnerable areas for encroachment inside the Masungi Geopark Project, the site of the foundation's forest restoration initiative, and the Upper Marikina Watershed.

"We are inspired that the international community recognizes our efforts and sacrifice. We hope this recognition will raise awareness of the plight of environment defenders in Masungi and the Philippines," Inonog said.

"We ask the new [Environment] Secretary Ma. Antonia 'Toni' Yulo-Loyzaga to help protect us from continuing danger and finally remove the destructive quarry interests and illegal structures in the watershed," she added.

"We also ask the police and the local government to support us in defeating organized crimes inside the Masungi landscape and the surrounding watershed, the health of which is critical to the disaster resilience of many communities and cities," she pointed out.

The team at the Bayog Ranger Station and rangers stationed nearby have faced non-stop violence, threats and harassment from environmental offenders and organized criminals in the past few years.

On July 24, 2021, at around 9 p.m., Maas and his companion were shot in the head and neck while resting inside the Bayog Ranger Station after their daily patrol.

On February 18, 2022, persons associated with swimming pool resorts and compounds that have been built inside the watershed ganged up and mauled Masungi rangers, including Magana and Inonog.

The rangers not only face physical harassment but also legal harassment, which aims to exhaust resources and discourage them from continuing their work, including patrolling, reporting, and mitigating threats, planting and maintaining project areas, and educating visitors.

"Because of the lack of enforcement, negligence, or even connivance of certain officials, we are always put in the line of danger. Many times we feel alone. Instead of helping us, some of those in positions of authority are in effect helping incompatible interests like quarries and illegal structures prosper," Inonog lamented.

"We hope we will be given justice. However, until now those who have hurt us are not yet punished," Maas said in Filipino.

He explained that despite criminal complaints having been filed against suspects for various acts of violence, none of them have been penalized. While there are many large illegal structures in the protected area and reforestation project site, the structures have not been demolished and only two complaints are known to have been filed by the government against the proponents.

Maas added that conspicuous walled compounds, such as those allegedly owned by an active police general and a former environment officer, have been left untouched. Alarming, certain officials are even facilitating clearances for the unauthorized developments, encouraging more unwanted encroachments, disruption of vital waterways, and harassment of environment defenders.

According to the 2021 report of the Global Witness, the Philippines is the third among countries with the most killed environmental defenders in 2020, next to Colombia and Mexico, respectively.

The documented killings in the country have reached 29, which are mostly linked to defenders' opposition to mining, logging, and dam projects.

The IUCN-WCPA International Ranger Awards aim to recognize the amazing work of rangers globally and improve their abilities, raise awareness of the important role they play in caring for protected landscapes around the world, and spread their unique stories.

Nominees were screened based on the following criteria: exceptional personal commitment to a protected area; exceptional valor, fortitude, or resilience in the face of serious threats to a protected area; and exceptional actions and impacts to safeguard a protected area.

Established in 1948, the IUCN is currently the largest and most diversified environmental network with 1,400 member organizations and 15,000 experts. It strives to urge various societies to conserve nature and ensure the proper use of natural resources.



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TEMPERATURES of 40°C have been forecast in the UK for the first time.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UK MET OFFICE

Record UK temperatures linked to climate change



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The chances of seeing unprecedented temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius or more in the United Kingdom could be up to 10 times more likely in the current climate than under a "natural climate unaffected by human influence," the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) declared.

In a statement, the WMO noted that the UK's Met Office has, for the first time, issued a "Red Warning" for exceptional heat, and forecast temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius.

The current record high temperature in the UK is 38.7 degrees Celsius, which was reached just three years ago.

'Widespread impacts on people and infrastructure'

"Nights are also likely to be exceptionally warm, especially in urban areas," Met Office Chief Meteorologist Paul Gundersen said. "This is likely to lead to widespread impacts on people and infrastructure. Therefore, it is important people plan for the heat and consider changing their routines. This level of heat can have adverse health effects."

The heatwave is also acting as a lid, trapping atmospheric pollutants, including particulate matter, resulting in a degradation of air quality and adverse health effects, particularly to vulnerable people, Lorenzo Labrador, Scientific Officer at WMO's Global Atmosphere Watch Program, said.

"Likewise, the abundant sunshine, high concentrations of certain

atmospheric pollutants and stable atmosphere are conducive to episodes of ozone formation near the surface, which has detrimental effects on people and plants," he continued.

Dr. Nikos Christidis, climate attribution scientist at the Met Office, added that a recent study has found that the likelihood of extremely hot days in the UK has been increasing and will continue to do so during the course of the century.

News of the exceptional highs expected in the northern European country broke amid huge wildfires across the southwest of the continent.

"Climate change has already influenced the likelihood of temperature extremes in the UK," Dr. Christidis said. "The likelihood of exceeding 40 degrees Celsius anywhere in the UK in a given year has also been rapidly increasing, and, even with current pledges on emissions reductions, such extremes could be taking place every 15 years in the climate of 2100."

Extreme heat events do occur within natural climate variation due to changes in global weather patterns. However, the WMO points out that the

increase in the frequency, duration and intensity of these events over recent decades is clearly linked to the observed warming of the planet and can be attributed to human activity.

Wildfire havoc in southern Europe

News of the exceptional highs expected in the northern European country broke amid huge wildfires across the southwest of the continent, which have caused hundreds of deaths, and seen thousands of people evacuated from their homes.

In Portugal, temperatures have reached highs up to around 46 degrees Celsius, and red warnings are in effect for much of the country, as hot conditions increase the risk of

wildfires.

More than 13,000 hectares of land were on fire in the French Gironde region, and 15 of France's 96 departments were listed on red alert and 51 on orange alert, with residents of those areas urged to be vigilant. The heatwave in western France is expected to peak, with temperatures climbing above 40 degrees Celsius.

'Half of humanity in the danger zone'

In his video message to a high-level climate event in Germany, United Nations chief António Guterres warned that "half of humanity is in the danger zone," facing floods, drought, extreme storms and wildfires.



SOME Kuruwitu villagers load cement corals into a boat ready to go to set them up in a secluded area at sea.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN



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Kenya's Kuruwitu corals are back

A small, quiet village in Kenya has found a new purpose in the fishing industry through a successful marine coral conservation project, the first of its kind in the marine protected areas of the western side of the Indian Ocean.

Kenya's Kuruwitu Beach is tranquil. Sparkling sand beaches complement the clear blue water, and the familiar scent of sand and sea salt fill the air.

A decade ago, villagers noticed the dwindling stocks of fish and took it upon themselves to set up a conservation area with the help of like-minded partners.

Dickson Gereza is a marine conservationist and the program lead of the coral project, and he explains that pollution is the biggest enemy of the ocean: "People are being irresponsible," he says. "The ocean is a useful resource, but humans are trashing it. It is important to dispose of rubbish correctly to save the ocean."

First local coral conservation project

The community realized that overfishing, climate change and uncontrolled fish and coral collection by the aquarium trade needed to be addressed before the marine ecosystem was damaged beyond repair.

In 2005, residents of the area took the unprecedented step of setting aside a 30-hectare marine protected area (MPA). This was the first coral-based locally managed marine area (LMMA) in Kenya. Twelve years on, the area has made a remarkable recovery.

We all have a part to play to ensure that we benefit from the sea and leave it intact for future generations.

Katana Hinzano is a conservationist at the Oceans Alive Organization, where he takes part in the making of alternative coral blocks and nurseries using cement and sand. He reiterates the correlation between the sea and human life: "The sea is valuable to those who live near it. Fishermen and fish business owners rely on sea resources. We all have a part to play to ensure that we benefit from the sea and leave it intact for future generations."

With fishing prohibited within the LMMA, fish have grown in abundance, size and diversity. The area has become a breeding ground, leading to an increase in fish outside the zone. As such, fishermen see greater catches due to a spillover effect. At the same time, biodiversity has increased dramatically, making Kuruwitu a destination for ecotourism, creating jobs for guides, boat captains and rangers.



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Major nations lag in acting on climate-fighting goals

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON—For most of the major carbon-polluting nations, promising to fight climate change is a lot easier than actually doing it. In the United States, President Joe Biden has learned that the hard way.

Among the 10 biggest carbon emitters, only the European Union has enacted policies close to or consistent with international goals of limiting warming to just a few more tenths of a degree, according to scientists and experts who track climate action in countries.

But Europe, which is broiling through a record-smashing heat wave and hosting climate talks this week, also faces a short-term winter energy crunch, which could cause the continent to backtrack a tad and push other nations into longer, dirtier energy deals, experts said.

"Even if Europe meets all of its climate goals and the rest of us don't, we all lose," said Kate Larsen, head of international energy and climate for the research firm Rhodium Group. Emissions of heat-trapping gases don't stop at national borders, nor does the extreme weather that's being felt throughout the Northern Hemisphere.

"It's a grim outlook. There's no getting away from it, I'm afraid," said climate scientist Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics. His group joined with the New Climate Institute to create the Climate Action Tracker, which analyzes nations' climate targets and

policies compared to the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The tracker describes as "insufficient" the policies and actions of the world's top two carbon polluters, China and the US, as well as Japan, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. It calls Russia and South Korea's policies "highly insufficient," and Iran comes in as "critically insufficient." Hare says No. 3 emitter India "remains an enigma."

"We are losing ground against ambitious goals" such as keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) or 1.5 Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, said veteran international climate negotiator Nigel Purvis of Climate Advisers. The world has already warmed 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

Seven years ago, when almost all the nations of the world were preparing for what would become the Paris climate agreement, "it was all about ambition and setting ambitious targets," Larsen said. "Now we are transitioning into a new phase that's really about implementation... I don't think the international community knows how to do implementation."

Other nations and the United Na-



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FIGHTING GOALS

tions can pressure countries to set goals, but enacting laws and rules is a tougher sell. While Europe has been successful with "a long history of implementing and ratcheting up existing policies," Larsen said, that's not the case in the United States. The US is on path to cut emissions by 24 percent to 35 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, far shy of the nation's pledge to reduce emissions by 50 percent to 52 percent in that time, according to a new analysis by Rhodium Group.

Biden is running low on options, said Larsen, a report co-author. Congress—specifically key Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia—is balking on the president's climate-fighting legislation, and the Supreme Court curbed power plant regulations.

Congressional action "was a big window of opportunity that would have allowed us to be on track to our goal," Larsen said. A second window is available in "the suite of federal regulations that the Biden administration plans to release."

"These are the two big deciders of whether the US will meet its target, and one we have largely failed on. So in that sense, it is a big miss because these opportunities don't come along very often," she said.

"The US can get close" to reaching its goal, but it's not close yet, Larsen said. Whether that happens "depends on the next three to 18 months of what the administration does."

Other nations, particularly China, look at what the US is doing to fight climate change and are reluctant to ratchet up their efforts if America isn't doing much, Purvis and Hare said.

At the urging of activists and some Democrats, the Biden administration is considering declaring a national emergency because of climate change and using special powers to cut carbon pollution from power plants and vehicles.

Calling it an emergency is not enough; what matters is the actions that follow, Purvis said.

Biden could put a moratorium on federal lands and water. He could reinstate a ban on US oil exports. He could move up spending on wind and solar. But all are subject to a conservative Supreme Court.

"The big question is where can Biden go with executive orders and how convincing is that going to be to other leaders?" Hare said.

Elsewhere in the world, "the Russian energy crisis has definitely been a major setback," Hare said. It's a short-term problem for Europe, and it's even loosened some of their rules, but "their long-term policy framework is very robust, and this might help them double down on alternative energy," Larsen said.

But the panic over natural gas has other countries, specifically in Africa, jumping onto the bandwagon of liquefied natural gas, which still emits carbon. The pivot to LNG has added 15 percent to 20 percent to the amount that the world uses, Hare said.

While there is a risk Europe might add infrastructure for natural gas that will be hard to abandon, it looks like the Russian invasion of Ukraine strengthened Europe's resolve to reduce Russia's energy influence and get off fossil fuels, Purvis said.

There are other places where weaning the world off carbon looks more possible. A new report from the International Renewable Energy Agency found the cost of electricity last year from onshore wind fell by 15 percent, offshore wind by 13 percent and solar panels by 13 percent compared to 2020.

Meanwhile, electric vehicle sales in America are rising, and the time when they could hit "escape velocity" and really make a difference is on the horizon, Larsen said.



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Malabon launches clean-up drive vs dengue

Seminars and lectures are also held in different barangays in the city with the help of the Dengue Task Force and Dengue School Busters

BY CHERK BALAGTAS

The local government of Malabon City kicked off its "Wide Clean-Up Drive" on Saturday morning to prevent the spread of dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

Personnel from the City Health Department, City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), city government staff, barangay officials together with various National Government Agencies and non-government organizations conducted the clean-up drive led by Malabon City Mayor Jeannie Sandoval.

Data from city officials disclosed that dengue cases in the city had decreased and it logged 153 suspected cases of the disease from 1 to 19 July this year, which is less compared to the 248 cases recorded in the month of June.

Some of the measures being carried out in the city are the constant presence of regular clean up drives, larva-trapping, misting and fogging.

Seminars and lectures are also held in different barangays in the city with the help of the Dengue Task Force and Dengue School Busters.



TRANSITION SHELTERS (Photo courtesy of Baybay City Engineering Office)

Gov't builds 216 temporary shelters for Leyte landslide

TACLOBAN CITY — The government is building 216 units of temporary shelter for victims of recent landslides in Baybay City and Abuyog town in Leyte province, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) reported on Friday, July 22.

Of the 216 units, 144 units are in Baybay, while 72 units are in Abuyog, OCD 8 (Eastern Visayas) Assistant Director Rey Gozon said.

The 144 units in Baybay include the 40 units that were turned over to recipients last week and the 32 units that were recently completed. The remaining 72 units are up for construction under the second phase.

"Site preparation for Abuyog takes a little longer since the area is muddy. We hope to start the construction of (the) transition shelter by August," Gozon said in a press briefing.

He is upbeat about completing the project within the third quarter of 2022.

The shelter has concrete flooring, steel and Hardiflex walls, and corrugated sheet roofing. Each unit has water and power supply.

Families will stay in the shelter while waiting for the completion of permanent housing.

The Department of Public Works and

Highways handled the site inspection, preparation, and development of the site identified as safe by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

The Philippine Army has been tasked to deploy engineering battalion personnel to work on the construction while volunteers from the community are provided with food and cash by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government will make sure that the local government complies with the relocation program.

On April 10, at least 128 people died due to several landslide incidents in Baybay City.

Two days later, a village in Abuyog was buried by a landslide, killing at least 58 residents.

The MGB's regional office initially identified eight villages in Baybay City as danger zones after showing early signs of landslides.

It found the communities' susceptibility after a thorough assessment of the areas in response to reports from residents of visible tension cracks.

The result of the assessment has been relayed to local government units for the enforcement of "no dwelling zones." (PNA)

Agus-Pulangi plant rehab will help Marcos admin achieve two goals

By ELLSON A. QUISMORIO

Rehabilitating the old Agus-Pulangi hydropower plants in Mindanao will allow the Marcos administration to kill two birds with one stone, says Davao City 1st district Rep. Paolo Duterte.

According to Duterte, rehabilitating the decades-old facilities of the Agus-Pulangi power plants will jumpstart the country's process of transitioning to low-emission energy sources and will contribute to its commitment of helping the world overturn the devastating effects of climate change.

"If we want to be a global leader in climate action, we can start with rehabilitating the Agus-Pulangi power plants in Mindanao," he said.

Aside from this, the proposed rehabilitation will also "accelerate our shift to clean energy sources" by reducing Mindanao's reliance on coal, Duterte pointed out.

Duterte made these remarks in response to Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno's recent pronouncement before a high-level Group of Twenty

(G20) forum that the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will continue to pursue a "whole-of-nation" approach in mitigating climate risks.

The Philippines, Diokno said, is also committed to become a world leader in the fight against the climate crisis.

Duterte said the Agus-Pulangi rehabilitation project will also help fulfill President Marcos's goal of developing more renewable energy (RE) sources to meet the country's power generation requirements.

Under the government's National Renewable Energy Program (NREP) 2020-2040, the Department of Energy (DOE) is targeting to increase the share of RE sources in the power generation mix to at least 35 percent by 2030 and to more than 50 percent by 2040.

The Davao City lawmaker pointed out that prioritizing the rehabilitation of the Agus-Pulangi hydropower complex will also enable Mindanao to meet the ever-expanding energy requirements of its fast-growing economy.

"The infrastructure boom in Davao

City and other parts of Mindanao has led to the emergence of many growth centers in the island. This means a corresponding increase in the energy we need to power our residential, commercial and industrial developments," Duterte said.

Last week, the Center for Ecology, Energy and Development (CEED), an organization advocating the use of RE sources, called on the Marcos administration to start the rehabilitation of the Agus-Pulangi hydropower complex in order to reduce Mindanao's dependence on coal-fired power plants.

Composed of seven hydropower plants, the Agus-Pulangi complex has an installed capacity of 1,001 megawatts (MW), but only 600 to 700 MW is available because of the limitations of its old facilities.

The administration of former President Rodrigo Duterte had planned the rehabilitation project of the plants in two stages. The first phase, involving the rehabilitation of four plants, is expected to generate 417 MW.

The rest of the plants will comprise the second stage of the rehabilitation to generate an additional 512 MW. The project has been turned over to the Marcos administration.

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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Positivity rate ng COVID-19 sa Metro Manila, tumaas pa ng 16%

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



A policeman carrying an automatic rifle stands guard with a colleague along a popular market street in Manila on June 1, 2022, as security forces are on heightened alert in the capital following the twin bombings in Basilan island, near Jolo, a stronghold of Islamist militants.

AFP / Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — Iniulat kahapon ng OCTA Research Group na tumaas pa ng 16 porsyento ang daily positivity rate ng COVID-19 sa Metro Manila o National Capital Region (NCR)..

Sa ibinahaging datos ni OCTA Fellow Dr. Guido David sa kanyang Twitter account nitong Biyernes ng gabi, nabatid na mula sa 14 % nitong Hulyo 15, at 14.6% ng Hulyo 20, ay nasa 16% ang daily COVID-19 positivity rate sa rehiyon noong Hulyo 21, 2022.

Ang positivity rate ay tumutukoy sa porsiyento ng mga tao na nagpopositibo sa COVID-19 mula sa bilang ng mga indibidwal na naisailalim sa pagsusuri.

Samantala, ang one-week growth rate naman ng mga bagong COVID-19 cases ay bumaba sa 15% habang ang average daily attack rate (ADAR) ay nasa 6.43 per day per 100,000 na hanggang noong Hulyo 22.

Ang healthcare utilization rate (HCUR) naman sa NCR ay nasa 34% habang ang ICU occupancy rate ay nasa 26%.

“Both are still below 50%,” ani David.

Una nang iniulat ng Department of Health (DOH) na nakapagtala sila ng 3,389 bagong kaso ng COVID-19 noong Biyernes. - **Angie dela Cruz**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/police-metro/2022/07/24/2197625/positivity-rate-ng-covid-19-sa-metro-manila-tumaas-pa-ng-16>

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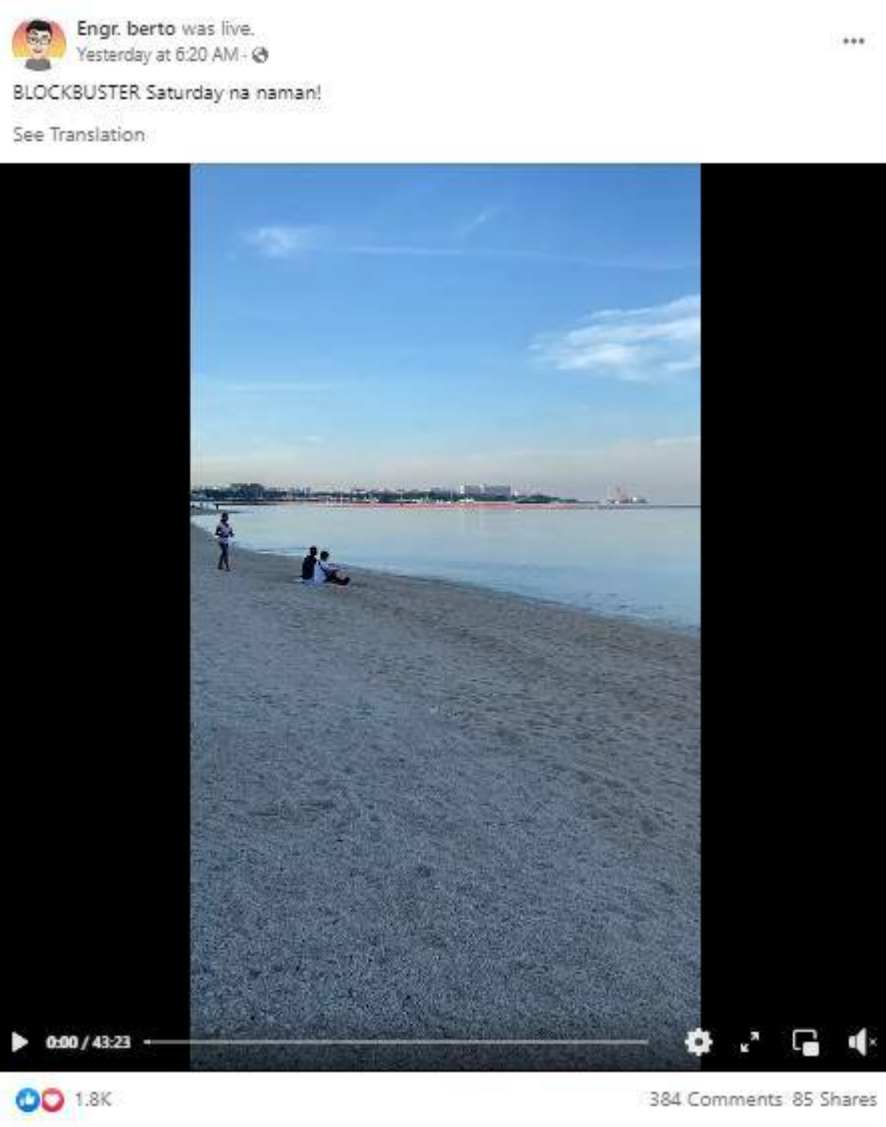
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maraming salamat po, keep safe everyone

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