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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR urges local govts, private sector to revive Samal's capiz shell industry

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JUNE 23, 2021



Windowpane oyster shells found in Samal, Bataan, are used as material for home décor.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is urging local government units (LGUs) and the private sector to invest in the Manila Bay-Bataan Coastal Strategy project.

DENR Undersecretary Analiza R. Teh said in a statement that such investment will create jobs and bring to life key biodiversity areas.

A key result should be the restoration and sustainability of the windowpane oyster (capiz) industry in Samal, Bataan, Teh said.

“Bagac and Morong (Bataan) abound with numerous fish species. And the locally known capiz or windowpane oyster shells used to be abundant in Manila Bay. It still can be found along the coast of Samal,” said Teh during a workshop of the Manila Bay-Bataan Coastal Strategy project.

The windowpane oyster shell industry in Samal, Bataan was once a flourishing industry. However, it declined due to the dwindling supply of the oyster shell caused by illegal and destructive fishing.

Given the increased investment of LGUs all over Manila and Bataan in the coastal areas' restoration, the investment for Manila Bay-Bataan's restoration will result not only in natural resources preservation but also yield economic benefits for residents, said Teh.

“The Mandanas ruling will increase internal revenue allotment [IRA] of LGUs by 56 percent. So there's an opportunity for us to engage the LGUs to invest more in natural resources protection. We can convince LGUs to undertake co-management of Protected Areas with the community,” said Teh.

“Sustainable land management in Bataan promises long-term benefits to the ecosystem and the economy.”

Teh said the private sector should be persuaded to also invest in the project.

“There is also an opportunity for us to rally the private sector to invest. Let's see how we can provide incentives to them so they can participate actively not only as part of CSR [corporate social responsibility] but investment on natural resources protection,” she said.

Teh noted that on top of livelihood benefits, fisheries production, and tourism, these natural resources automatically become the Filipino people's health protection.



“Natural resources are our ‘vaccine’ to any health crisis. We need to show how we can contribute to our economic recovery and help solve the pandemic,” she said.

The Manila Bay-Bataan Coastal Strategy project is a comprehensive 5-year project financed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

It covers three phases: cleanup and water quality improvement; rehabilitation and resettlement; and education and sustainment.

The Global Environment Facility has allotted \$2.7 million for the project, while the government will provide a budget of \$15.5 million.

The project will train provincial government people in sustainable land management.

“Interventions include the identification and uptake of biodiversity-friendly agriculture and sustainable fisheries. [These activities should] reduce pressure on the biodiversity and ecosystems especially in uplands and address soil erosion and excessive sedimentation downstream in the riparian areas and coastal zones,” according to a project briefer.

The project will be co-implemented by DENR’s-Biodiversity Management Bureau and the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Soils and Water Management.

Image courtesy of Pinterest



DENR Region 8 renews call for PH Deer protection

By Roel Amazona June 23, 2021, 1:07 pm



RESCUED. The two Philippine Deer rescued by a tribe in upland Kagbana village in Burauen, Leyte last May. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional office on Wednesday (June 23, 2021) renewed its call to residents in remote communities of Eastern Visayas to actively take part in protecting endangered animals. *(DENR photo)*

TACLOBAN CITY - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional office on Wednesday renewed its call to residents in remote communities of Eastern Visayas to actively take part in protecting endangered animals.

The DENR reiterated its call following the rescue of two Philippine Deer locally known as "bugso" by members of the Mamanwa tribe in the upland Kagbana village in Burauen, Leyte last May.

The two deers were rescued after they fell in a trapping pit used by locals to catch animals for food.

Since the wild animals sustained wounds, village officials kept them first until this week when they were fit for travel to the DENR Regional Wildlife Rescue Center in Palo, Leyte.

The deers were turned over on Tuesday to the rescue center by Michael De Luis, village chief of Lanawan, a neighboring community of Kagbana.

The official said they have been conducting an awareness drive for people to be mindful of the laws that protect wildlife.

"When the Mamanwas came to me, they were briefed about the sanctions for killing and inflicting harm to a deer since they are classified as endangered," De Luis said in an interview on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Palo Community Environment and Natural Resource Office chief Crisostomo Badeo, Jr., lauded the efforts of the locals in protecting the region's wildlife species.

"The presence of the Philippine Deer in our forests is an indication that we still have an ecologically balanced ecosystem. This calls for more intensified protection efforts from all of us. If you are in a possession of any wildlife species and if you see any wildlife species in danger, please contact the DENR office nearest you," Badeo added.

The Philippine Deer is classified endangered under DENR Administrative Order 2019-9.

Possession, killing, and inflicting harm are punishable by Republic act 9147, An Act Providing for Conservation and Protection of Wildlife Resources and their Habitats.

In the region, the thick forests of Samar and Leyte provinces are the deer's natural habitat. *(PNA)*

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1144630>



TINGNAN: 2 nasagip na Philippine deer sa Leyte

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 23 2021 04:44 PM



Naibigay na sa pangangalaga ng Community Environment and Natural Resources Office sa Palo, Leyte ang dalawang Philippine Deer, isang buwan matapos masagip sa bayan ng MacArthur sa nasabi ding probinsiya. *Larawan mula sa DENR Eastern Visayas*

Dalawang nasagip na Philippine Deer ang naibigay na sa pangangalaga ng Community Environment and Natural Resources Office sa Palo, Leyte.

Ang mga usa ay naiturnover ng Kapitan ng Barangay Lanawan sa MacArthur, Leyte na si Michael De Luis.

Ayon kay De Luis, ang mga usa na kilala rin sa local name nitong “bugsok” ay nasagip ng Tribong Mamanwa sa isang "awang" o trapping pit na ginagamit ng mga residente sa bukid para makahuli ng hayop para sa kanilang pagkain.

Sabi ni De Luis, ang pagkakasagip sa mga usa ay bunga na rin ng kanilang regular na ginagawang information and environmental awareness campaign para malaman ng mga residente ang mga batas na nagprotekta sa wildlife.

Napag-alamang noon pang Mayo nasagip ang dalawang usa pero dahil nagkasugat ang mga ito mula sa pagkakabitag, inalagaan muna ito ng kapitan ng barangay saka ibinigay sa kustodiya ng Regional Wildlife Rescue Center sa bayan ng Palo nang gumaling na ang mga sugat.

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), aalagaan muna nila ang dalawang Philippine Deer at ibabalik din sa kagubatan kung maging malusog na ang mga ito.

Paalala ng DENR sa publiko na ang Philippine Deer ay kabilang sa mga endangered na mga hayop. Batay sa Republic Act 9147, ipinagbabawal ang pagpatay, pananakit, pangongolekta, pagbebenta at pagbiyahe ng anumang wildlife species na itinuturing na endangered at nanganganib na maubos.

- Ulat ni Sharon Evite

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/23/21/tingnan-2-nasagip-na-philippine-deer-sa-leyte?fbclid=IwAR3bXM_QAP-BzFflRra3_rNIhes93SUHyDh8DM4E-ViW3uDYTGO5nhYuEfk



Villar pursues initiatives to avert reclamation near buffer zone of Las Piñas Paranaque Wetland Park

BYBMPLUS JUNE 23, 2021



Sen. Cynthia Villar (Photo from her Facebook page)

ACKNOWLEDGING the significance of biodiversity conservation, Senator Cynthia Villar, who has been at the forefront of protecting the Las Pinas- Paranaque Wetland Park (LPPWP), yesterday enjoined more advocates, especially the youth, to join her in this endeavor.

In her keynote address on webinar during the 3rd Anniversary of LPPWP as a Protected Area, Villar expressed hope to sustain the momentum of what “we have been doing to protect LPPWP all these years. ”

LPPWP, formerly known as Las Piñas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA), has been included on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance in May 2013. It was declared a protected area by virtue of the enactment of RA No. 11038 or the Expanded NIPAS Act of 2018.

“While LPPWP is indeed a showcase of biodiversity conservation in Metro Manila, we envision it to be the premiere learning environment for urban wetlands in the Philippines,” stressed Villar, chairperson of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources.

According to the senator, a staunch environmentalist, they are exerting all efforts to make LPPWP a model of sustainable eco-tourism at its best, “while ensuring that its natural ecological attributes are not compromised.”

“I have been involved in the conservation of the wetland park for two decades now. I was taken in by its simple but scenic natural attributes and its functionality. It is the lone natural wetland park in the entire Metro Manila and its lush mangrove cover has been giving the residents of my city protection against flooding, high tides and storm surges,” noted the Nacionalista Party senator.

But since the wetland park is in the metropolis where development projects abound, Villar said it faced its biggest threat– the planned reclamation by Alltech Contractors sometime in 2010.

To ward off the reclamation, Villar, along with 315,849 residents, filed a Petition for Writ of Kalikasan with the Supreme Court in 2012, insisting it would prejudice residents of Las Pinas, Paranaque and Bacoor, among other reasons.



Although the SC has not issued its final decision in the case, Villar said she believes that Alltech's reclamation project was mooted. She said the late DENR Sec. Gina Lopez in 2017 cancelled the ECC for the reclamation project. On June 22, 2018, the then LPPCHEA was declared a legislated protected area.

Despite protected area status, Villar conceded the threat of reclamation is far from over. She cited a number of proposed reclamation projects in Cavite, Parañaque City and in other cities in Metro Manila near the wetland park.

Due to this, Villar said she is actively pursuing the establishment of substantial area of buffer zones on the waters of Manila Bay that will provide ample protection to the wetland park.

The ENIPAS law provides for the establishment of buffer zones surrounding the protected areas, when necessary, for the purpose of providing extra layer of protection to the protected area. Buffer zone refers to identified areas outside the boundaries of designated protected areas that need special development control in order to avoid or minimize harm to the protected area.

At present, she said the DENR – ERDB (Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau), under the direction of DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, is conducting its research on the matter which she has been monitoring. "I want to ensure that no reclamation projects should be pursued if it will only threaten the survival of LPPWP. The wetland park, its protection and its functionality should not be compromised because its existence is intended to benefit the present and future generations," she emphasized



Another 1M trees eyed to be planted this year

By Ben Cal June 23, 2021, 5:35 pm



MANILA – Elated over the success of growing four million new trees in the past four years, stakeholders of the Annual Million Trees Challenge (AMTC) have pledged to plant another one million trees this year to meet the target of planting five million trees.

This was disclosed by Metropolitan Waterwork Sewerage System (MWSS) chairman and acting administrator Reynaldo V. Velasco in an e-mail to the Philippine News Agency (PNA), as the country observes Philippine Environment Month.

The observance of Philippine Environment Month every June of the year is pursuant to Proclamation No. 237 signed by President Corazon C. Aquino on April 4, 1988. It aims to heighten environmental awareness among Filipinos and generate greater participation in environmental protection. With the month-long observance, it is hoped that the campaign for public awareness on the impact of environmental problems and their impact on everyday lives would be intensified.

AMTC launched the tree planting project in 2017.

Velasco has expressed satisfaction with this noble project, saying the AMTC is on the right track to help improve the environment, particularly on denuded areas of watersheds.

About 9,509.375 hectares of watersheds involving Angat, Ipo, Kaliwa, La Mesa, Laguna Lake, Umiray, and Upper Marikina, including Manila Bay have been reforested based on the audit report by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“One of the remarkable accomplishments of AMTC is increasing the forest cover of Ipo Watershed from 43 percent in 2017 to 81 percent in 2020,” Velasco said, adding that “sustainable nurturing of sapling trees planted take three years to maintain and sustain”.

For this year, the following AMTC partner stakeholders have pledged to plant more than one million trees namely: MWSS (140,000); MWSS-RO (23,000); Manila Water (70,000); Maynilad (20,000); Bulacan Bulk Water (20,000); DENR 3 (43,000); DENR 4A-PENRO Rizal (350,000); LLDA (100,000); Camp Nakar LGU (50,000); ALKFI-BL (40,000); WWF Philippines (60,000); Boy Scout of the Philippines (50,000); Bambuhay- Anak ni Inang Daigdig (60,000); JCI Senate Philippines (2,000); and, Rotary International District 3780 (5,000).

The AMTC is a five-year watershed rehabilitation program of MWSS to restore the health of seven critical watersheds that are crucial in supplying water to Metro Manila and neighboring provinces. It also supports the National Greening Program of the government under DENR.

In its 2020 report, the AMTC stated that a total of 4,021,626 seedlings were planted from 2017-2020 in the Ipo-Angat Dams area (2,265,483), La Mesa (777,505), Laguna de Bay (222,096), Kaliwa-Umiray (60,473), Upper Marikina watershed (552,165), and Manila Bay (143,904).

For three consecutive years since its launch in February 2017, AMTC targets were surpassed, according to the report.



In 2017, the number of seedlings planted totaled 1,337,800. This was followed by 1,027,467 in 2018; and 1,022,917 in 2019. However, the number declined in 2020 because of the pandemic that prompted several program partners to postpone tree-planting activities. Only 633,442 trees were planted in 2020. Nevertheless, the cumulative number surpassed the four million target in four years.

Through the AMTC, a total of 9,509.375 hectares from 2017 to 2020 were reforested. At the Ipo-Angat watershed, reforested area was 5,035.19 hectares; La Mesa, 1,723.39; Laguna de Bay, 347.83; Kaliwa–Umiray, 150.84; Upper Marikina, 1,928.99; and Manila Bay, 323.135.

Meanwhile, to ensure the continuity of the AMTC and expand its coverage throughout the country, stakeholders have organized the Million Trees Foundation, Inc. (MTFI), now the official NGO partner organization of MWSS and DENR. MTFI will actively help in the implementation of AMTC collaborating with individuals, groups, government and other private organizations here and overseas to address watershed management concerns.

Among the initial institutional partners of MTFI include San Miguel Corporation President and CEO Ramon S. Ang, Manila Water President and CEO Enrique K. Razon, Maynilad President Ramoncito S. Fernandez and Prime Infra.

Last May 25, 2021, MTFI has forged a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the JCI Senate Philippines (JCISP) and the Philippine Jaycee Senate Foundation (PJSF) in support of AMTC's watershed rehabilitation and enhancement initiatives. The MOU was signed by MFTI President and Executive Director Melandrew T. Velasco, JCISP President Gregorio A. Lipa, and PJSF Chairman Nelson S. Tan with MWSS Chairman and Administrator Velasco, Maynilad AVP for Government Relations and MTFI Director Annette de Ocampo and JCI Sen. Lian Seelin of Greenlink serving as witnesses.

Among the provisions of the five-year MOU stipulates that JCISP and PJSF shall plant at least 2,000 appropriate indigenous tree species annually in areas that will be determined by DENR, MWSS and MTFI. Care and maintenance of the planted seedlings/saplings will be the responsibility of the JCISP and PJSF.

The JCISP and PJSF are involved in a 24/7 borderless, pro-environment initiatives and programs to help mitigate global warming and the effects of climate change through their flagship project "Greenlink" chaired by JCI Sen. Lia Seelin.

MFTI will also launch soon its website to increase awareness of the need for environmental protection through reforestation. The website will enable stakeholders to choose among several MFTI programs to support thereby contribute to the noble task of protecting and developing the environment.

Another ongoing project of MFTI and AMTC is a five-hectare nursery inside the La Mesa Watershed owned by MWSS. With an MTFI nursery under its administration and supervision, optimum growing conditions are provided to germinated seeds of tree species identified by MFTI and AMTC to be transplanted in denuded areas. (PNA)



Dam experts draft strategic plan on dam safety

Marje Pelayo • June 23, 2021



MANILA, Philippines — The National Dam Safety Committee is working on a systematic process of releasing water in dams across the country.

Such planning will prevent damage to lives and properties brought about by immense flooding due to releasing of water from these massive structures.

“Ang ginagawa natin ngayon ay masigurado na mas maaga, mas prepared ang communities para sa paghahanda at pagtugon doon sa kahit anong emergency na maaaring maganap in case na merong malakas na pag-ulan, mapuno ang dam at kailanganing magpalabas ng tubig,” said Mark Timbal, Spokesperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

Currently, a strategic plan is being drafted which includes a protocol on the releasing of water in dams.

This will also strengthen information drives to prepare local government units and communities that will be affected prior to the water releasing.

“Kapag sinabi ng dam na nasa ganitong lebel na yung patubig natin so maiintindihan na ng lahat ng stakeholders na: “Ok. Ibig sabihin nya eto na yung susunod na mangyayari. Ito na yung susunod na gagawin natin,” Timbal said.

The official revealed that plans are underway for the crafting of the National Dam Safety Act which would be submitted to Congress.

Part of the plan is the maintenance and prevention of cracks and damages in the structure of dams or in case they do, the government would be able to respond immediately.

The National Dam Safety Committee was created in February this year for the purpose of preventing a repeat of the Cagayan-Isabela flood last year.

Timbal said the committee will be headed by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR), the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Affiliate agencies in the projects include the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD), and the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Regional Dam Safety Committees were also established, being first-hand witnesses of the situations in dams.

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/dam-experts-draft-strategic-plan-on-dam-safety/>



Local groups join the ocular visit with the Brooke's Point Local Government and the Palawan Environmentally Critical Area (ECAN) Board to the INC Mining site, Barangay Maasin, Brooke's Point, Palawan, in April 2021.

Green Livelihoods Alliance, Handout

Green, IP groups call for reversal of suspension order vs anti-mining mayor in Palawan

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - June 23, 2021 - 6:16pm

MANILA, Philippines — Groups of indigenous peoples and environmental advocates called on the Office of the Ombudsman to reverse its “unjustified” order suspending the anti-mining mayor of Brooke's Point in Palawan.

The Ombudsman found Mayor Mary Jean Feliciano guilty of [“oppression or grave abuse of authority”](#) over her orders to demolish mining-related structures of the Iplan Nickel Corporation (INC) in 2017. She was ordered suspended for one year without pay for taking “undue advantage of her official position.”

But Palawan-based groups, who launched a petition seeking to reverse the decision, said Feliciano's move to protect the environment from large-scale and destructive mining operations is not wrong.

“We are one with the advocacy of our good mayor in protecting the environment because our lands will be the impact area of the mining operations. We will suffer from the bad consequences brought by mining in our town,” Rowena Combang, spokesperson of women's group Mga Kalebonan et Barong-Barong, Iplan, Calasaguen, Aribungos, Mambalot, Maasin (MKE-BICAMM), told **Philstar.com** in Filipino.

In a separate statement, indigenous groups Pineuntungan Et KePelewanan (PEKP) BICAMM and Kabatangan Ancestral Domain ng Sampung Barangay (KAD10) said that “if she (Feliciano) gets suspended, it is as if their right to give their sacred votes for her in the past three terms is ignored.”

Threat to communities, watershed

If the mining operations of INC continue, the access of residents to “clean water and air” will be affected, Combang said. Mining activities will also pose a threat to wildlife and to the livelihood of communities dependent on agriculture.

“All of the bountiful gifts of the environment, from God will be destroyed by large-scale mining such as Iplan Nickel,” she said.



According to Green Livelihoods Alliance, large-scale mining in Brooke's Point, a municipality near the southern tip of Palawan, continues to threaten the watersheds in the area, and the indigenous and local communities within the Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Landscape.

In 2017, around 25,000 trees were cut by the mining firm as part of its clearing operations.

That same year, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development canceled the Strategic Environmental Program Clearance granted to INC, and a Palawan court issued a Temporary Environmental Protection Order calling on the company to cease mining activities and rehabilitate the forest it had destroyed.

In 2018, the firm's Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) with the government expired. An MPSA gives contractors the right to mine within a contract area.

The environment department withdrew the cancellation of INC's MPSA last year, which extended the agreement until 2025 and restored the firm's Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC), the Green Livelihoods Alliance said.

The Ombudsman cited in its decision the resolution of the DENR reconsidering the cancellation of the ECC.

'Alarming' decision

The decision dated Feb. 19, 2021 comes after President Rodrigo Duterte lifted in April a nine-year moratorium on new mining agreements to allow investments and boost government revenues.

Environmental activist group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment said the suspension order undermines the authority of local governments to push back against destructive mining projects.

"This alarming Ombudsman decision gives further precedent for illegal mining operations by big business to run roughshod over our environment and operate with impunity," said Leon Dulce, Kalikasan PNE national coordinator.

Environmental lawyer Grizelda Mayo-Anda described the order as "troubling and can have a chilling effect on environmental defenders."

"If a local official can be suspended for representing the voice of her/his constituents in the fight against a destructive and extractive project, ordinary folks who are fighting mining can be harassed," she said.

The Philippines was the second most dangerous nation for environmental and land activists in 2019, according to watchdog Global Witness. More than half of the reported deaths in the country were related to agribusiness, while 16 were linked to mining. — **with report from BusinessWorld/Revin Mikhael Ochave**



Palawan groups slam order suspending antimining mayor

By: [Jhesset O. Enano](#) - Reporter / [@JhessetEnanoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:52 AM June 23, 2021



DEMOLITION LEADER In this photo taken on Feb. 22, 2018, Mayor Mary Jean Feliciano of Brooke's Point, Palawan, speaks with officials of Ipilan Nickel Corp. before leading the demolition of the mining company's gate, fences, guardhouses and offices, an act that the Ombudsman declared three years later as an abuse of power. —

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — Environmental advocates and groups representing indigenous peoples (IPs) on Tuesday assailed a recent order by the Office of the Ombudsman suspending the mayor of Brooke's Point town in Palawan province over her decision to stop the operations of a nickel mining company in the municipality.

They have launched a signature drive in Brooke's Point calling on the Ombudsman to reverse its "unjustified" suspension order on Mayor Mary Jean Feliciano, who they said only stood up to the mining company in defense of her constituents' interests.

"It's as if we were stripped of our rights in this situation, where the chief executive that we voted for and put in power was suspended just because we stopped a mining company from entering, establishing and operating in our land," the petition read in Filipino.

'Grave abuse'

The Ombudsman ordered Feliciano suspended for a year without pay after finding her guilty of "oppression or grave abuse of authority" for stopping the operations of Ipilan Nickel Corp. (INC) in 2018 and demolishing its field offices and facilities.

INC is a subsidiary of Global Ferronickel Holdings, the country's second-largest nickel producer.

The Ombudsman issued the order on Feb. 19, 2021, three years after Feliciano led the residents and antimining advocates in demolishing INC's gate, fences, guardhouses and office buildings, made mostly of light materials. The document was obtained by the Inquirer last week. She argued then that she was only exercising the "police power" of her office spelled out in the Local Government Code.

Cancel ECC

But the Ombudsman ruled that the mayor, who is now on her third and final term in office, had acted without authority, given that the cancellation of the company's environmental compliance certificate (ECC) had "yet to attain finality."

In December 2020, Feliciano appealed to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to cancel the ECC with finality, saying the town's water system, which supplies water to six barangays, is located within INC's mining site.



The battle began in 2016, when Feliciano was elected into office on a strong antimining platform.

That same year, the DENR granted INC a yearlong special tree-cutting permit as part of a mineral production sharing agreement, allowing it to cut over 13,000 trees and earth-ball 14,000 more.

The following year, then Environment Secretary Gina Lopez revoked its ECC following a nationwide mining audit. INC filed a motion for reconsideration.

Feliciano then issued a closure order, a cease-and-desist order and a demolition order against the company, which she said were all ignored by the nickel company.

That same year, a Palawan court also issued a temporary environmental protection order, compelling INC to stop its mining activities and begin rehabilitating the forest areas it had cleared.

'Chilling effect'

Feliciano, when reached by the Inquirer last week, said she would "wear the decision with pride" even as she vowed to contest it either by moving for a reconsideration or bringing the case to a higher court.

Lawyer Grizelda Mayo-Anda, executive director of Puerto Princesa-based Environmental Legal Assistance Center, said Feliciano's suspension could have a chilling effect on environmental defenders.

"If a local official can be suspended for representing the voice of her/his constituents in the fight against a destructive and extractive project, ordinary folk who are fighting mining can be harassed," she said in a statement.

'Last ecological frontier'

Conflict and corruption watchdog Global Witness had said the Philippines had become the deadliest country for land and environmental defenders in Asia. These threats loom large especially for Palawan, the country's "last ecological frontier."

IP groups protesting Feliciano's suspension said she only stood up for the rights of the residents, including the tribes who live in Brooke's Point, an agricultural town near the southern tip of mainland Palawan.

"Our ancestral land would be the first impact area if the mining operations continue here in Brooke's Point," Mga Kalebonan et BICAMM, a Pala'wan women's group, said in a statement. "If she's suspended, it would be as if they are setting aside our right to vote for her in the past three terms," said indigenous Pala'wan groups, Pineuntungan Et KePelewanan BICAMM and the Kabatangan Ancestral Domain. INQ



Antimining groups want suspension order vs Palawan mayor reversed

By [Frederick M. Nasiad](#) June 24, 2021

Environmental groups in Palawan voice their concern on the suspension of Mayor Maryjean Feliciano and the resumption of mining operations in Brooke's Point.

The Ombudsman, in a consolidated decision dated Feb. 19, 2021, issued a one-year suspension order on Feliciano after being found guilty of "oppression or grave abuse of authority" on her actions to demolish the mining-related structures of Iplan Nickel Corp. (INC) within the watershed in 2017.

The Green Livelihoods Alliance (GLA) denounced the suspension order and launched a campaign for the Ombudsman to reverse its decision.

"The suspension order [for Mayor Feliciano] is troubling and can have a chilling effect on environmental defenders. If a local official can be suspended for representing the voice of her/his constituents in the fight against a destructive and extractive project, ordinary folk who are fighting mining can be harassed," said lawyer Grizelda Mayo-Anda, of the Environmental Legal Assistance Center, a GLA consortium member.

Anda said the 25,000 trees cut by INC, the country's second-largest nickel producer, in its clearing operations in 2017 have more ecological value compared to the INC structures which were ordered demolished by the mayor.

The GLA also slammed the restoration of INC's Environmental Compliance Certificate.

Palawan women's group Mga Kalebonan et BICAMM joined the campaign supporting Feliciano.

"Kami ang unang impact area kapag natuloy ang pagmimina dito po sa bayan ng Brooke's Point dahil lupaing ninuno namin ang miminahin. Unang maapektuhan ang mga kababaihan, pati mga sakahan sa ibaba ng miminahing lugar. Noon pa man ipinaglalaman ng aming mayor, hanggang sa ngayon, para sa kabutihan ng buong Brooke's Point. Ang kanyang iniisip ay hindi ang pansariling kapakanan, kundi mas lalo't higit sa mga katutubo," the group said in a statement.

Indigenous Palawan groups, Pineuntungan Et KePelewanan BICAMM, and Kabatanganan Ancestral Domain ng Sampung Barangay, also expressed support to the mayor.

In a statement, the INC said the company conducted its operations in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.



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VERA FILES FACT CHECK: Posts MISLEAD with 2018 ‘before Duterte’ photo of Manila Bay

AUTHOR VERA FILES DATE JUNE 23, 2021

In an attempt to show how the Manila Bay looks now compared with its condition before President Rodrigo Duterte took office, one netizen and Facebook page used a photo of a spotless white sand beach and an image of the bay's garbage-filled shore. The comparison is misleading.

The ‘before’ photo, carried by the June 17 posts of *Duterte Social Media Supporter* and one other netizen, was published originally by local media network UNTV in August 2018, or two years into Duterte's term.



According to the accompanying article, the image was captured after “the onslaught of monsoon rains” which caused the accumulation of garbage along the Baywalk.





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MISLEADING: These photos showing a waste-crammed Manila Baywalk were taken 550 meters away from the dolomite beach's location

One of the two photos from a September 2014 tweet of ABS-CBN News Channel which were carried by Duterte Social Media Supporter's misleading FB post

Photo of the **approximate location** where the photo above was taken, as shown in Google Street View

This part of the bay is approximately **550 meters away** from the dolomite beach

MISLEADING: These photos showing a waste-crammed Manila Baywalk were taken 550 meters away from the dolomite beach's location

The part of the Baywalk where the photos used in Duterte Social Media Supporter's post were taken is **550 meters or over half a kilometer away** from the Manila Bay dolomite beach.



The misleading posts came just a day after Cimatu led the ceremonial [planting of coconut palms](#) along Roxas Boulevard as part of the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the Manila Bay area. He said 60 coconut palms will be planted along the shore to complement the on-going beach nourishment project.

Two days prior, Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the DENR is “[fast-tracking everything](#)” and is targeting to reopen the bay’s dolomite beach to the public in July.

Social media tool CrowdTangle shows *Duterte Social Media Supporter’s* misleading post already received over 7,900 engagements from FB users. It could have reached almost 1.8 million netizens, with traffic coming largely from the page itself, the *Republic Defenders*, and public group *PHILIPPINE FEDERAL MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL*.

The netizen’s copy of the post, on the other hand, already got 1,000 reactions, 115 comments, and 1,400 shares from social media users.

(Editor's Note: VERA Files has partnered with Facebook to fight the spread of disinformation. Find out more about this [partnership](#) and our [methodology](#).)



Please mind the marine wildlife, DOT reminds coastal tourists on World Environment Month

Published June 22, 2021, 3:03 PM

by [Alexandria Dennise San Juan](#)

In line with the celebration of World Environment Month, the Department of Tourism (DOT) has reminded travelers to be responsible when interacting with marine wildlife to ensure their protection and sustainability.



Anilao, Batangas (Photo courtesy of Robert Yin / Department of Tourism)

“Observing marine wildlife in its natural habitat is incredibly fulfilling and quite an experience you cannot forget. However, irresponsible interaction with marine wildlife can cause severe long-term damage to them and their environment,” Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said on Tuesday, June 22.

According to Puyat, respecting the ocean and its inhabitants must be the “top priority” of every tourist who wants to connect with marine wildlife.

“Learning how to properly engage with these species is a small but crucial step in protecting and sustaining our marine biodiversity,” she added.

To ensure sustainable interaction with marine wildlife, especially now with the popularity of coastal destinations among local tourists, Puyat said the DOT will conduct a series of awareness-focused seminars among tourism stakeholders this year.



Apo Island in Negros Oriental (Photo courtesy of Tommy Schultz / Department of Tourism)

The DOT, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Agriculture (DA), and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) issued last year a joint memorandum circular (JMC) on the “Rules and Regulations Governing the Conduct of Marine Wildlife Tourism Interaction in the Philippines.”

This was to ensure that tourism interactions do not adversely affect marine wildlife behavior and population, particularly large marine vertebrates, such as dugong, cetaceans (dolphins, whales, and porpoises), whale sharks, other sharks, manta rays, and marine turtles.



Under the guidelines, concerned agencies were directed to establish zones in marine tourist destinations such as No Approach Zones, Interaction Zones, and Waiting Zones; and to enforce specific regulations per type of marine activity, among others.

Other plans of the JMC also include identifying, accrediting, and recognizing marine wildlife tourism sites in the country that are dedicated and compliant with the regulations.



MBCFI supports completion of tamaraw conservation center

By Jed Macapagal - June 24, 2021



The Mindoro Biodiversity and Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) said the completion of a biodiversity conservation center being built in Puerto Galera will help save the population of critically endangered tamaraws in Mindoro.

The group said the one-storey building measuring 600 square meters that started construction in September last year will also help in promoting the biodiversity of Mindoro as it will feature facilities such as a museum, research laboratory, library, amphitheater, heritage hall, view deck, audio-visual room, conference and training rooms, among others.

The center will also have an ecolodge, camping area, greenhouse area and nature trail to promote tourism.

The MBFCI said 40 percent of the first phase of the project was already accomplished as of April 2021 but would require more funding support to be completed.

“We are inviting the public to partner with us in completing the conservation center by donating to our foundation... Public participation and support will not just ensure the wonderful continuity of Mindoro’s biodiversity and its resources; it will also open the eyes of the people to the natural treasures in our own country,” said Grace Diamante, MBCFI executive director, in a statement.

First documented in 1888, the tamaraw is a wild cattle species that is regarded as the largest endemic land mammal in the Philippines but its population is currently estimated to be only less than 500 left in Mounts Iglit-Baco Natural Park.

The MBFCI said at present, the most critical factor that continues to threaten their survival is the deterioration of their habitat due to infrastructure development, illegal logging, and deforestation.



SMC, Bantay Dagat team up to protect the seas

By [The Manila Times](#) June 24, 2021

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) has partnered with "Bantay Dagat" (Sea Guardian) in Calatagan, Batangas as part of its corporate-wide initiative to promote healthy seas and ensure sustainable livelihood for small fishing communities, especially in areas where it operates.

SMC donated patrol boats to the Calatagan community task force that enlists fisherfolk in coastal villages to help enforce coastal and fisheries laws - particularly against the use of illegal fishing methods and illegal equipment.

A boat each was also given to the Municipality of Calatagan and the Philippine Air Force based in Batangas to boost patrolling in the area.

SMC also made a larger donation of 19 motorized boats for local fisherfolk groups, to be used primarily for their livelihood.

"With our humble contribution to the local Bantay Dagat task force, we hope to provide them additional tools to help curb illegal fishing and other activities destructive to marine ecosystems in this area," SMC president Ramon S. Ang said.

"Our goal is to help preserve and protect marine resources, so that local fisherfolk can sustain and even improve their livelihoods for the long-term. The sea is their primary source of food and income. We want to help where we can make the biggest difference - in this case, empowering locals to better protect the seas and their livelihoods - and bring tangible, sustainable benefits in communities where we operate," he added.

Last February, the Provincial Government of Batangas honored the Calatagan Bantay Dagat as the best sea guardian group in the Bravo (Batangas Recognition Awards for Verde Passage Outstanding Marine Protected Areas and Bantay Dagat) Awards. Bravo recognizes local government units in the administration of marine protected areas and Bantay Dagat groups in the protection of municipal waters.

Just beyond the Batangas coastline lies Verde Island Passage, a strait between Luzon and Mindoro known around the world as among the richest in terms of marine biodiversity.

"Malaking bagay po para sa amin ang pagkakabigay ng mga bangka. Malaking tulong po sa aming operations, malaking tulong rin para sa maliliit na mangingisda," said Vivencio de Guzman, a member of the Bantay Dagat in Calatagan, Batangas.

Some 57 fisherfolk will co-own the boats and benefit from the donation. The fisherfolk, who have never owned fishing boats, are mostly from towns of Calatagan and Balayan.

Ang underscored the importance of balancing livelihood and the need to preserve marine resources for fisherfolk.

"While providing them new homes has been our foremost priority, we also learned many of the Balayan and Calatagan fisherfolk never owned fishing boats. This has made both community patrolling and livelihood very difficult for them. Fortunately, we were able to source these boats from local communities. We formed the fisherfolk into groups to share ownership and upkeep of these boats," said Ang.

Aside from helping, Ang said SMC teaches fisherfolk other ways of generating income.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/06/24/news/regions/smc-bantay-dagat-team-up-to-protect-the-seas/1804345>



Modern world's scourge: single use plastics

[BIZLINKS](#) - [Rey Gamboa](#) (The Philippine Star) - June 24, 2021 - 12:00am

Corporate titans San Miguel Corp. (SMC) and International Container Terminals Services Inc. (ICTSI) were among the first to respond to a report published more than two weeks ago about Pasig River's pollution and its effect on the world's oceans.

SMC announced a kitty of P2 billion to be spent over the next five years to clean up and rehabilitate the 27-kilometer Pasig River, while ICTSI pledged \$1 million for a financially sustainable Pasig River waste-recycling project.

But will these really work long-term? Because, in the end, it is not the Pasig River or the other 18 other rivers in the Philippines singled out to be among the top 50 worst polluters of oceans that are to blame; it's the people and companies wantonly dumping toxic and plastic wastes into our waterways.

The initiatives of SMC and ICTSI are most appreciated, but they don't really address the root of the problem. For decades, people and companies continue to throw trash, refuse, and toxic effluents into our river systems unfettered by regulations and poor policing.

Sure, Pasig River no longer emits that repulsive odor that commuters crossing any of its bridges half a century ago would remember. In fact, Pasig River now flows, and even if it still has that murky gray color, is no longer black and gooey as stagnant-dead rivers are.

But Pasig River is not in the pink of health, to be sure. And more and more of our rivers in many parts of the archipelago where urbanization and commercialization are gaining ground face the same fates as the Pasig River.

'Disposable' lifestyle

Plastic wastes are one of the biggest – if not the biggest – culprits. For many Filipinos, consumer products in single-use sachets and disposable containers have become an indispensable part of their lives: coffee mixes, shampoo and conditioners, PET bottles, food takeaways in styrofoam, plastic packaging, and more.

Despite campaigns by environment activists and a flurry of local government ordinances, Filipinos continue the “disposable” lifestyle with gusto, but without taking on the corresponding responsibility to observe the recycle-reuse tenets (never mind the third R, which is to reduce).

Biodegradable plastics? Remember when the use of plastics to wrap and carry goods in wet markets and groceries were being discouraged? Well, it's still around, although plastic packaging manufacturers have branded their wares as biodegradable.

Most professed biodegradable plastics do not disintegrate or dissolve after a few days, much like you would expect of fruit peels or discarded vegetable cuttings. Many of the biodegradable plastics (which need to be differentiated from those fake biodegradables) take months to disappear when left in water or on the ground, while others actually need to go through high heat and moisture in industrial composters to melt away.

Single-use plastics have become modern society's affliction, and have become the single biggest source of manmade pollutants in seas and oceans next to fashion clothing (including footwear and bags) and small, disposable electronic gadgets.



As a rule, countries that have more people spew higher amounts of plastic debris. In a 2018 study, India, China, and Indonesia topped the list of countries held accountable for plastic wastes found in oceans. Rich countries like the US and UK generate the most plastic waste per person, although they largely manage to keep them away from rivers and seas.

Developed economies deal with most plastic waste in a more systematic manner, thus significantly curbing its direct dumping in waterways. Still, not everything goes direct to incinerators or composters, and not all of their fine citizens will practice responsible waste disposal.

Reinventing RRR

The reduce-reuse-recycle (RRR) movement, believed to have started as early as the 1970s, is being stymied by the exponential rise in the production of plastics, even those “biodegradable” ones. It is time to rethink of a much more effective approach to win the war.

Companies and governments have an equal responsibility in mitigating this plastics scourge. A recent study by Minderoo Foundation has ferreted out just 20 companies responsible for producing 55 percent of the world’s single-use plastics which are carried by rivers and streams to end up in oceans.

Environment advocates are finding it more difficult to educate an increasing number of people (who can live in far-flung barrios) and dissuade them from using and responsibly disposing plastics. It may be easier to go after companies that produce the pollutants.

The Minderoo research traces plastic production to the very root. It singled out petrol company ExxonMobil, chemical manufacture Dow, and petroleum and chemical company Sinopec in the top three that single-handedly account for 16 percent of global single-use plastic waste.

The international campaign for a sustainable plastic economy is now even being threatened by the reported expansion of virgin polymer production in the next five years, which would result in a 30 percent increase in the manufacture of single-use plastics.

Governments must find unity in dealing with the plastics problem, even if this means wielding its punitive powers to hold companies accountable for producing or using plastics. Taxation is just one tool; mandating companies to allocate a percentage of their operating costs comparable to the amount of plastics they use or produce for waste disposal programs may be a better way.

The plastic waste problem is not going away soon, and may take a turn for worse unless radical solutions are implemented. Already, plastic pollution that has broken down to microplastic particles that have been found in the placenta of unborn babies and could negatively be bad for human health.

Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa and follow us on www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa.

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at reydgamboa@yahoo.com. For a compilation of previous articles, visit www.BizlinksPhilippines.net.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/06/24/2107608/modern-worlds-scourge-single-use-plastics>



Exploring Philippines seas today, for the generations of tomorrow

Published June 24, 2021, 12:12 AM

by [US Embassy in the Philippines Charge d'Affaires John Law](#)



US Embassy in the Philippines
Chargé d'Affaires John Law

In March 2021, a leading Philippine oceanographer and an American explorer, together, reached the deepest point of the Philippine trench – a historic voyage to one of the least-explored places on Earth. By partnering on marine issues, whether on marine sustainability or maritime domain awareness, we protect and explore the world's interconnected waters, including the Philippine seas.

This June, we celebrate not only World Oceans Month, but also the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Philippines. Our cooperation on maritime issues stands out for its incredible promise. Since the launch of the Peace Corps and USAID in the Philippines 60 years ago, Americans and Filipinos have been working together to protect Philippine marine spaces and marine species. In the years to come, we must redouble our efforts to protect the richness of Philippine seas.

When Dr. Onda and Victor Vescovo reached the Emden Deep, even there, they discovered ocean plastics. Plastic debris in our oceans is a global problem that costs the world as much as \$2.5 trillion annually. Earlier this month, during a marine-focused “Oceans of Opportunities” conference, the US Center for Strategic and International Studies and University of Philippines International Maritime Law of the Sea characterized the Philippines’ marine environmental situation as “stark.” They noted that the country and its neighbors are “literally choking on plastic debris,” 750,000 metric tons of which leach into the sea from the Philippines every year.

However, in the face of this challenge, one expert claimed US-Philippine marine cooperation is one of the “most productive endeavors we have seen historically.” Together, we are improving waste management and developing innovations in packaging and recycling to keep debris out of the ocean, while raising community awareness to change handling of plastic waste. Our work to make Philippine waters plastic-free will revive coral reefs, strengthen fish populations, clean up the beaches, support tourism, and reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing costs the Philippines an estimated P63 billion a year and endangers the marine species that produce food and income for millions of Filipinos. We’ve partnered with the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and local government units throughout the Philippines to help stop these destructive practices. Through USAID Fish Right, we’re also working to ensure safe, legal fishing practices are not only sustainable but profitable for Filipino fisherfolk.



Because waters are all connected, we are committed to increasing regional and multilateral cooperation on marine issues. Through regional projects like USAID Oceans, events like the Leaders' Summit on Climate, and organizations like the Young Southeast Asian Leadership Initiative (YSEALI), we are bringing international partners together to take action to improve the management and sustainability of our shared resources.

This past April, a team of Filipino and American explorers jointly discovered a sunken Navy destroyer, the USS Johnston, lost during the Battle of Samar on October 25, 1944, as Americans and Filipinos fought to liberate the Philippines during World War II. The shipwreck, the deepest of its kind at 21,000 feet underwater, presents a unique opportunity to learn more about marine habitat and history. This amazing discovery, more than 75 years after the USS Johnston was thought lost for good, highlights the need for more research and visibility into our waters. Ocean and reef health help us measure changes in key environmental indicators and can affect conditions in coastal waters hundreds of miles away. The more data we can gather on fish populations, the accurate the baseline we have from which to measure climate change effects and implement policies to best protect our maritime riches for future generations.

To jumpstart this critical work, our leading youth exchange program YSEALI, piloted a Marine Accelerator Program this year to train 62 emerging leaders of 33 marine conservation projects from across Southeast Asia. These projects will enable emerging conservation leaders to improve regional cooperation and address maritime and inland waterway issues, such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, river or marine ecosystem degradation, and marine debris.

While conservation efforts are critical, preserving marine species requires protecting marine spaces. This August marks the 70th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), which underpins our security alliance. The security benefits of MDT enable cooperation to improve maritime domain awareness and deter nations from committing environmental crimes. Using tools like the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite and satellite imagery, the United States and the Philippines are working together to stop environmental damage before it happens.

With much at stake — sovereignty, food security, and livelihoods — we must continue to do our utmost to protect the world's waters.



Exploring Philippine seas today, for the generations of tomorrow

[DIPLOMATIC POUCH](#) - [John Law](#) (The Philippine Star) - June 24, 2021 - 12:00am

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With much at stake – sovereignty, food security and livelihoods – we must continue to do our utmost to protect the world's waters.

* * *

John Law is Chargé d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Manila.



This file photo taken on November 27, 2019 shows a view of the glacier at Chiriguano Bay in South Shetland Islands, Antarctica. Hunger, drought and disease will afflict tens of millions more people within decades, according to a draft UN assessment that lays bare the dire human health consequences of a warming planet.

AFP/Johan Ordonez

Crushing climate impacts to hit sooner than feared — draft UN report

[Marlowe Hood](#) (Agence France-Presse) - June 23, 2021 - 10:10am

PARIS, France — Climate change will fundamentally reshape life on Earth in the coming decades, even if humans can tame planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions, according to a landmark draft report from the UN's climate science advisors obtained by AFP.

Species extinction, more widespread disease, unliveable heat, ecosystem collapse, cities menaced by rising seas—these and other devastating climate impacts are accelerating and bound to become painfully obvious before a child born today turns 30.

The choices societies make now will determine whether our species thrives or simply survives as the 21st century unfolds, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says in a draft report seen exclusively by AFP.

But dangerous thresholds are closer than once thought, and dire consequences stemming from decades of unbridled carbon pollution are unavoidable in the short term.

"The worst is yet to come, affecting our children's and grandchildren's lives much more than our own," the report says.

By far the most comprehensive catalogue ever assembled of how climate change is upending our world, the report reads like a 4,000-page indictment of humanity's stewardship of the planet.

But the document, designed to influence critical policy decisions, is not scheduled for release until February 2022—too late for crunch UN summits this year on climate, biodiversity and food systems, some scientists say.

Allies into enemies

The draft report comes at a time of global "eco-awakening" and serves as a reality check against a slew of ill-defined net-zero promises by governments and corporations worldwide.

The challenges it highlights are systemic, woven into the very fabric of daily life.

They are also deeply unfair: those least responsible for global warming will suffer disproportionately, the report makes clear.

And it shows that even as we spew record amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, we are undermining the capacity of forests and oceans to absorb them, turning our greatest natural allies in the fight against warming into enemies.

It warns that previous major climate shocks dramatically altered the environment and wiped out most species, raising the question of whether humanity is sowing the seeds of its own demise.



"Life on Earth can recover from a drastic climate shift by evolving into new species and creating new ecosystems," it says.

"Humans cannot."

'Irreversible consequences'

There are at least four main takeaways in the draft report, which has gone through a major revision and is unlikely to change before its release.

The first is that with 1.1 degrees Celsius of warming clocked so far, the climate is already changing.

A decade ago, scientists believed that limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius above mid-19th century levels would be enough to safeguard our future.

That goal is enshrined in the 2015 Paris Agreement, adopted by nearly 200 nations who vowed to collectively cap warming at "well below" two degrees Celsius -- and 1.5 degrees if possible.

On current trends, we're heading for three degrees Celsius at best.

Earlier models predicted we were not likely to see Earth-altering climate change before 2100.

But the UN draft report says that prolonged warming even beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius could produce "progressively serious, centuries' long and, in some cases, irreversible consequences".

Last month, the World Meteorological Organization projected a 40 percent chance that Earth will cross the 1.5-degree threshold for at least one year by 2026.

For some plants and animals, it could be too late.

"Even at 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, conditions will change beyond many organisms' ability to adapt," the report notes.

Coral reefs—ecosystems on which half a billion people depend—are one example.

Indigenous populations in the Arctic face cultural extinction as the environment upon which their livelihoods and history are built melts beneath their snow shoes.

A warming world has also increased the length of fire seasons, doubled potential burnable areas, and contributed to food systems losses.

Get ready

The world must face up to this reality and prepare for the onslaught—a second major takeaway of the report.

"Current levels of adaptation will be inadequate to respond to future climate risks," it cautions.

Mid-century projections—even under an optimistic scenario of two degrees Celsius of warming—make this an understatement.

Tens of millions more people are likely to face chronic hunger by 2050, and 130 million more could experience extreme poverty within a decade if inequality is allowed to deepen.

In 2050, coastal cities on the "frontline" of the climate crisis will see hundreds of millions of people at risk from floods and increasingly frequent storm surges made more deadly by rising seas.

Some 350 million more people living in urban areas will be exposed to water scarcity from severe droughts at 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming—410 million at two degrees Celsius.

That extra half-a-degree will also mean 420 million more people exposed to extreme and potentially lethal heatwaves.



"Adaptation costs for Africa are projected to increase by tens of billions of dollars per year with warming greater than two degrees," the report cautions.

Point of no return

Thirdly, the report outlines the danger of compound and cascading impacts, along with point-of-no-return thresholds in the climate system known as tipping points, which scientists have barely begun to measure and understand.

A dozen temperature trip wires have now been identified in the climate system for irreversible and potentially catastrophic change.

Recent research has shown that warming of two degrees Celsius could push the melting of ice sheets atop Greenland and the West Antarctic—with enough frozen water to lift oceans 13 metres (43 feet)—past a point of no return.

Other tipping points could see the Amazon basin morph from tropical forest to savannah, and billions of tons of carbon leech from Siberia's permafrost, fuelling further warming.

In the more immediate future, some regions—eastern Brazil, Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean, central China—and coastlines almost everywhere could be battered by multiple climate calamities at once: drought, heatwaves, cyclones, wildfires, flooding.

But global warming impacts are also amplified by all the other ways that humanity has shattered Earth's equilibrium.

These include "losses of habitat and resilience, over-exploitation, water extraction, pollution, invasive non-native species and dispersal of pests and diseases," the report says.

There is no easy solution to such a tangle of problems, said Nicholas Stern, former chief economist at the World Bank and author of the landmark Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change.

"The world is confronting a complex set of interwoven challenges," said Stern, who did not contribute to the IPCC report.

"Unless you tackle them together, you are not going to do very well on any of them."

'Transformational change'

There is very little good news in the report, but the IPCC stresses that much can be done to avoid worst-case scenarios and prepare for impacts that can no longer be averted, the final takeaway.

Conservation and restoration of so-called blue carbon ecosystems—kelp and mangrove forests, for example—enhance carbon stocks and protect against storm surges, as well as providing wildlife habitats, coastal livelihoods and food security.

Transitioning to more plant-based diets could also reduce food-related emissions as much as 70 percent by 2050.

But simply swapping a gas guzzler for a Tesla or planting billions of trees to offset business-as-usual isn't going to cut it, the report warns.

"We need transformational change operating on processes and behaviors at all levels: individual, communities, business, institutions and governments," it says.

"We must redefine our way of life and consumption."

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/science-and-environment/2021/06/23/2107534/crushing-climate-impacts-hit-sooner-feared-draft-un-report>



Climate impacts to hit sooner – UN report

June 24, 2021

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Mid-century projections - even under an optimistic scenario of 2 degrees Celsius of warming - make this an understatement.

Tens of millions more people are likely to face chronic hunger by 2050 and 130 million more could experience extreme poverty within a decade if inequality is allowed to deepen.

In 2050, coastal cities on the "frontline" of the climate crisis will see hundreds of millions of people at risk from floods and increasingly frequent storm surges made more deadly by rising seas.

Some 350 million more people living in urban areas will be exposed to water scarcity from severe droughts at 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming - 410 million at 2 degrees Celsius.

That extra half-a-degree will also mean 420 million more people exposed to extreme and potentially lethal heatwaves.

"Adaptation costs for Africa are projected to increase by tens of billions of dollars per year with warming greater than 2 degrees," the report cautions.

Point of no return

Thirdly, the report outlines the danger of compound and cascading impacts, along with point-of-no-return thresholds in the climate system known as tipping points, which scientists have barely begun to measure and understand.

A dozen temperature trip wires have now been identified in the climate system for irreversible and potentially catastrophic change.

Recent research has shown that warming of 2 degrees Celsius could push the melting of ice sheets atop Greenland and the West Antarctic - with enough frozen water to lift oceans 13 meters (43 feet) - past a point of no return.

Other tipping points could see the Amazon basin morph from tropical forest to savannah and billions of tons of carbon leech from Siberia's permafrost, fueling further warming.

In the more immediate future, some regions - eastern Brazil, Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean, central China - and coastlines almost everywhere could be battered by multiple climate calamities at once: drought, heatwaves, cyclones, wildfires and floods.



But global warming impacts are also amplified by all the other ways that humanity has shattered Earth's equilibrium.

These include "losses of habitat and resilience, overexploitation, water extraction, pollution, invasive nonnative species and dispersal of pests and diseases," the report said. AFP



Hunger, drought, disease: UN climate report reveals dire health threats

Patrick Galey, Agence France-Presse

Posted at Jun 23 2021 12:50 PM | Updated as of Jun 23 2021 12:54 PM



An aerial view shows Elizabeth Lake, that has been dried up for several years, as the region experiences extreme heat and drought conditions, in Elizabeth Lake, an unincorporated community in Los Angeles County, California, U.S., June 18, 2021. Picture taken with a drone, June 18, 2021. *Aude Guerrucci, Reuters*

PARIS - Hunger, drought and disease will afflict tens of millions more people within decades, according to a draft UN assessment that lays bare the dire human health consequences of a warming planet.

After a pandemic year that saw the world turned on its head, a forthcoming report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), seen exclusively by AFP, offers a distressing vision of the decades to come: malnutrition, water insecurity, pestilence.

Policy choices made now, like promoting plant-based diets, can limit these health consequences— but many are simply unavoidable in the short term, the report says.

It warns of the cascading impacts that simultaneous crop failures, falling nutritional value of basic foods, and soaring inflation are likely to have on the world's most vulnerable people.

Depending on how well humans get a handle on carbon emissions and rising temperatures, a child born today could be confronted with multiple climate-related health threats before turning 30, the report shows.

The IPCC's 4,000-page draft report, scheduled for release next year, offers the most comprehensive rundown to date of the impacts of climate change on our planet and our species.

It predicts that up to 80 million more people than today will be at risk of hunger by 2050.

It projects disruptions to the water cycle that will see rain-fed staple crops decline across sub-Saharan Africa. Up to 40 percent of rice-producing regions in India could become less suitable for farming the grain.

Global maize production has already declined four percent since 1981 due to climate change, and human-induced warming in West Africa has reduced millet and sorghum yields by up to 20 and 15 percent respectively, it shows.

The frequency of sudden food production losses has already increased steadily over the past 50 years.

"The basis for our health is sustained by three pillars: the food we eat, access to water, and shelter," Maria Neira, director of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health at the World Health Organization, told AFP.



"These pillars are totally vulnerable and about to collapse."

EMERGING HOTSPOTS

Even as rising temperatures affect the availability of key crops, nutritional value is declining, according to the report.

The protein content of rice, wheat, barley and potatoes, for example, is expected to fall by between six and 14 percent, putting close to 150 million more people at risk of protein deficiency.

Essential micronutrients— already lacking in many diets in poorer nations— are also set to decline as temperatures rise.

Extreme weather events made more frequent by rising temperatures will see "multi-breadbasket failures" hitting food production ever more regularly, the report predicts.

As climate change reduces yields, and demand for biofuel crops and CO₂-absorbing forests grows, food prices are projected to rise as much as a third at 2050, bringing an additional 183 million people in low-income households to the edge of chronic hunger.

Across Asia and Africa, 10 million more children than now will suffer from malnutrition and stunting by mid-century, saddling a new generation with life-long health problems -- despite greater socioeconomic development.

As with most climate impacts, the effects on human health will not be felt equally: the draft suggests that 80 percent of the population at risk of hunger live in Africa and Southeast Asia.

"There are hotspots emerging," Elizabeth Robinson, professor of environmental economics at the University of Reading, told AFP.

"If you overlay where people are already hungry with where crops are going to be most harmed by climate you see that it's the same places that are already suffering from high malnutrition."

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/06/23/21/hunger-drought-disease-un-climate-report-reveals-dire-health-threats?fbclid=IwAR3Kh5EWzcItUyUc5QjIED9-S15c5UrsKqy0tQoDNNU0Sjp_tIgmjr3sbKs

As seas rise, coastal communities face hard choices over 'managed retreat'

Laurie Goering and Elijah Clarke, Thomson Reuters Foundation

Posted at Jun 23 2021 02:20 PM



Children look at homes on stilts that line the river in Navotas, Manila, April 30, 2018. As rivers become filled with sediment, the water levels in Manila's river keep rising, dredging activities are not able to keep up so the city government is building dikes along the residential communities that live near the Navotas river to keep the water from spilling onto land. *Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News*

LONDON - With climate change expected to drive a meter or more of sea level rise this century, planning now for "managed retreat" from places facing inundation could help at-risk communities preserve what they value most, researchers and city officials said Tuesday.

Whether families opt for floating homes or new ones inland, coming moves also present opportunities to address historical inequities and ensure that protecting communities - rather than just cutting economic losses - is a top priority, they said.

"Too often adaptation is trying to keep the world the way it is when we should be trying to make it better," argued A.R. Siders, a University of Delaware assistant professor and managed retreat specialist.

With people everywhere reluctant to leave their homes and communities, even raising the prospect of managed retreat "is incredibly difficult", Siders told an online event organized by The Earth Institute and Columbia Climate School.

But if it is not talked about now and prepared for, "then we will limit the futures we can build," she said.

Rising seas, driven by melting of the world's glaciers and polar ice and by the expansion of warming oceans, threaten low-lying communities from the Pacific islands to U.S. cities like New York and Miami.

Efforts to protect them have long relied on building engineering defenses, such as seawalls, or reinforcing natural barriers, from replanting mangroves to widening beaches.

But seawalls, for instance, can cut off communities from the ocean access and views they value or rely on for an income - and as sea levels rise they may fail or prove too costly and impractical to continue expanding, analysts say.

Instead, many communities will need to move to safer places - or rethink how they stay in place, such as by adopting floating homes or turning flooded roads into canals and relying on boats for travel, Siders, a lawyer and social scientist, noted in an article in the journal *Science* this month.

'NOT A WELCOME WORD'

But few communities are ready to talk seriously about the threats yet, noted Nichole Hefty, deputy resilience officer for Miami-Dade County in flood-threatened southern Florida.



"The word 'retreat' is not a welcome word," she said. In her county, "we're not thinking of retreat in terms of leaving but really more in making changes in how we live," she added.

That means, for instance, figuring out how to help the more than 100,000 homeowners in the area whose septic tanks - which process waste - are likely to fail by 2040 as groundwater levels rise, she said.

The county is also experimenting with buying out at-risk property owners, though a pioneering program covers only 10 properties, she said.

In New York City, about 400,000 people live in flood hazard areas, a problem "we're going to need every tool in the toolbox" to solve, said Eric Wilson, deputy director for land use and buildings in the Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency.

Globally, some early efforts at managed retreat are underway.

The Pacific island nation of Fiji has identified more than 40 coastal communities threatened by worsening cyclones and storm surges that need to be moved inland, and about six have been relocated so far.

An indigenous community living on southern Louisiana's disappearing Isle de Jean Charles also has used a pioneering \$48-million grant from the U.S. government to buy land and begin relocating all of its members.

That move is "not a lotto, it is not a celebration. It is a response to the changes to the environment," Chris Brunet, a member of the community, told the online event.

ECONOMIES OR PEOPLE?

Jacqueline Patterson, senior director of the NAACP environmental and climate justice program, urged people who may need to move to ask hard questions, including who pays, who benefits and who gets to make key decisions.

She pointed to an Army Corps of Engineers formula used to prioritize levy improvements in Louisiana, based on the potential economic impact not on how it will affect families.

"That prioritization of dollars is literally at the sacrifice of people who need protection most," she said, noting "these are the kind of dynamics we have all too often around how decisions are made".

But Wilson, of New York City, said some signs of change are emerging.

He said the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had requested information from his city on whether compensating families for lost homes based on their "fair market value" was perpetuating inequities by giving the rich more help.

Siders said communities being asked to consider leaving their homes should be able to make key decisions about not just whether to go but what they want to protect or even improve if they do, from access to affordable housing to community culture.

"It's about choice - choosing what we preserve, choosing what we let change and (choosing) what we actively change," she said.

She warned the decisions would be tough, and governments and other organizations trying to help communities may struggle to provide good advice.

"How do we help people make decisions when every single decision has harms and benefits?" she asked.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/06/23/21/as-seas-rise-coastal-communities-face-hard-choices-over-managed-retreat?fbclid=IwAR3Be_w5wG-9ug1muxhu7-IBvv7eCX8wOmMbXXOW0mb1o8RA0dNKcDCFIR4



The crime of 'ecocide' now has a definition—but what will it mean for polluters?

David Meyer

Wed, June 23, 2021, 9:32 PM · 4 min read



The gravest large-scale crimes in the world include genocide, crimes of aggression—invasions, military occupations, and so on—war crimes, and crimes against humanity. These can all be prosecuted at the International Criminal Court. But what about crimes against the environment?

That's a question that came a lot closer to an answer on Tuesday when a team of top lawyers published a definition of "ecocide" that they hope will get traction among the countries that support the International Criminal Court (ICC).

If their definition, formulated after half a year of deliberations, does become the fifth international crime, it could have big implications for major polluters: Corporate bosses may find themselves being dragged before the ICC tribunal in the Dutch city of The Hague.

"This is a historic moment," [said](#) Jojo Mehta, the cofounder and chair of the Stop Ecocide Foundation, a Dutch-registered NGO that has spearheaded the push for ecocide prosecutions. "This expert panel came together in direct response to a growing political appetite for real answers to the climate and ecological crisis. The moment is right—the world is waking up to the danger we are facing if we continue along our current trajectory."

"Acceptable to states"

Here's the core definition of ecocide that the legal experts [came up with](#): "Unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts."

They specify "wanton" as meaning "reckless disregard for damage which would be clearly excessive in relation to the social and economic benefits anticipated," and "severe" as meaning "damage which involves very serious adverse changes, disruption or harm to any element of the environment, including grave impacts on human life or natural, cultural or economic resources."

There's already a degree of compromise in the phrasing. For example, it doesn't explicitly mention climate change. Philippe Sands, a high-profile British-French international law professor who cochaired the panel, told *The Guardian* this was intended to make the definition more palatable to countries and corporations, by catching only "the most egregious acts" such as major oil spills and Amazon deforestation.



"The...definition is well pitched between what needs to be done concretely to protect ecosystems and what will be acceptable to states," said Mehta. "It's concise, it's based on strong legal precedents, and it will mesh well with existing laws. Governments will take it seriously, and it offers a workable legal tool corresponding to a real and pressing need in the world."

France, Canada, and the European Parliament's environment committee have all tentatively backed the idea of ecocide being recognized in international law, an idea that was first proposed in 1972 by then Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. Belgium explicitly [called for the move](#) in December, and Spain, Finland, Vanuatu, and the Maldives also support it.

The goal now is to get the new definition inserted into the Rome Statute, which underpins the ICC's work. Dior Fall Sow, a former United Nations prosecutor and the panel's other cochair, described the looming legwork as "a difficult but exhilarating adventure."

"It is urgent"

As part of that adventure, a member state of the ICC will need to formally propose that change, then a majority of member states would need to approve it. The process of debating and finalizing the definition would likely take several years.

As for what would happen once the ICC increases the list of international crimes to five, that's a mixed bag.

The court, which has largely spent its 19-year history focusing on African dictators and warlords, is supported by 123 countries. But there are some big names missing: The U.S. and Russia were signatories but pulled out, and countries such as China and India never signed up in the first place. So it would be extremely difficult to prosecute ecocide in those countries under the Rome Statute.

Nonetheless, ecocide's addition to the statute would still provide the first legal framework for dealing with it at an international level. And even if it doesn't get that far, the lawyers who came up with the definition hope countries will adopt it in their own law.

"I hope that the states will adopt this definition as their own," said Rodrigo Lledó, a Chilean-Spanish panelist. "It is urgent. Destroying the environment in a massive and irresponsible way must cease to be internationally legal."

Indeed, on Wednesday AFP reported on a leaked UN draft that warns of impending ecosystem collapse, deadly heatwaves, and spreading disease.

"The worst is yet to come, affecting our children's and grandchildren's lives much more than our own," the draft report, due for release next year, reportedly stated.

This story was originally featured on [Fortune.com](#)

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PH Covid-19 case trend shows signs of decline: DOH

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [June 23, 2021, 2:38 pm](#)



MANILA – The case trend of Covid-19 infections in the country shows signs of decline after noting a drop in daily reported cases for the past week, a health official reported Wednesday.

During an online media forum, DOH Epidemiology OIC-Director Alethea de Guzman said the average daily reported cases for the period June 16 to 22 decreased to 5,790 compared to that of June 9 to 15 at 6,678.

“Although these numbers are going down, it’s still far from our pre-spike levels of less than 2,000 cases per day nationally,” she added.

The country’s average daily reported cases peaked from April 9 to 15 at 10,845 infections, overwhelming hospitals and other healthcare facilities at the time.

De Guzman said the National Capital Region Plus areas that include the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal, continue to show a decline in cases but the downtrend is slowing down.

She noted that there is a “larger decline” in the average daily reported cases in the region at an average of 685 from June 16 to 22 compared to 825 cases from June 9 to 15.

“The goal now is to push it down even further so that we reach our pre-ECQ levels of less than 500, in fact, in January to February, there are 300 cases per day only,” she said.

The NCR Plus areas, she added, show a slow downward trend in cases, with the exception of Laguna which is displaying a plateau.

For June 22, the top five regions with the most number of new cases are Region 4-A (Calabarzon) with 684 infections; Region 8, 447; NCR, 403; Region 6, 316; and Region 12, 297.

Meantime, the five top areas with the most number of new cases are Laguna with 275 infections; Cavite, 256; Bohol, 159; Isabela, 116; Southern Leyte, 113; and South Cotabato, 113.

“We are now classifying four areas as high risk in terms of their case data and trend and these are Caraga, Regions 6, 11 and 12. All of them exhibited increase in reported cases in the past two weeks and their ADAR (average daily attack rate) already reached high risk,” de Guzman said.

Currently, five regions are classified as moderate risk – Regions 2, 8, 7, 1 and 5.

The NCR is now classified as low risk because it showed a 22 percent decrease in cases in the past two weeks and its ADAR is down to 5.7.

“At the moment, we don’t have any region which reached ‘high’ or ‘critical’ risk for their health care utilization but there are certain regions with ICU utilization rates at ‘high’ or ‘critical’ risk and these include Regions 6, 11, 12, 2 and 10,” de Guzman said.



There are 33 priority areas which the DOH flagged due to increase in cases and high to critical risk healthcare utilization rate and intensive care unit utilization rate.

They are La Union, Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya, Bataan, Albay, Sorsogon, Naga City, Iloilo City, Capiz, Guimaras, Bacolod City, Antique, Negros Oriental, Ormoc City, Tacloban City, Zamboanga del Norte, Cagayan de Oro City, Bukidnon, Davao de Oro, Davao City, Davao del Norte, South Cotabato, General Santos City, Lucena City, Quezon, Puerto Princesa City, Occidental Mindoro, Cotabato City, Butuan City, Surigao del Sur, and Surigao del Norte.

The nation's mortality data has improved with only 56 deaths per day logged from June 1 to 22 which is lower than the 121 deaths recorded in April and 107 deaths in May.

“Our mortality curve is not as rapid a decline as result for our case data but it is showing the continuous decrease of cases in NCR and Region 3 but the deaths are plateauing at Calabarzon and the deaths are really coming from regions outside these three major areas,” de Guzman said.

As for the cases with variants of concern (VOC), 14 regions have local cases positive for Alpha variant and 15 regions positive for Beta, most of them are in the NCR, she added.

About 13 percent of these cases with the Alpha and Beta variants were incoming international travelers.

“Sa ngayon, wala tayo nakikita pa na kaso locally na may Gamma o Delta variant pero ang ating pagpapaala sa ating mga LGU napakahalaga kung nakakita na tayo ng pagtaas ng kaso (Currently, we haven't seen local cases with Gamma or Delta variant but we remind our LGUs that if there's an increase in cases) we need to respond quickly, we shouldn't be waiting for our genome sequencing result. We respond as if we're treating there's already VOC in our area,” she said. **(PNA)**



Delta variant mas mapanganib, madaling kumalat - expert

By [Danilo Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - June 23, 2021 - 12:00am



Ayon kay Dr. Edsel Salvaña, isang 'infectious disease expert', isa sa adviser ng National Task Force on COVID-19, naiulat na mas nakakahawa ng apat na beses ang Delta variant na unang naiulat sa India kaysa sa orihinal na virus mula sa Wuhan, China at mas dobleng nakakahawa kumpara naman sa United Kingdom variant.

AFP/Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — Hindi pa talaga dapat tanggalin ang pagsusuot ng face shield dahil sa mas mapanganib na COVID-19 Delta variant na maaaring maihawa kahit na sa mga pagkakataong saglit lamang ang kontak sa isang carrier.

Ayon kay Dr. Edsel Salvaña, isang 'infectious disease expert', isa sa adviser ng National Task Force on COVID-19, naiulat na mas nakakahawa ng apat na beses ang Delta variant na unang naiulat sa India kaysa sa orihinal na virus mula sa Wuhan, China at mas dobleng nakakahawa kumpara naman sa United Kingdom variant.

“What’s scary for me is...what’s being reported by the Health Department in Australia is that it only takes fleeting contact with people who are infected for other people to get infected,” aniya.

Mas mabilis umano itong maipasa kahit saglit lamang ang interaksyon sa isang positibong tao kumpara sa ibang variants na kailangan ng 15 minuto bago maipasa.

Kapag nahawa, mas matindi umano ang tumatamang sakit sa isang pasyente kumpara sa ibang variants ng virus.

Sinabi niya na hindi ito panahon para isugal ng mga Pilipino ang kalusugan at ang mga narating sa laban sa COVID-19 sa hindi pagsusuot ng face shield.



2 vax doses 'strongly' protective vs. Delta variant: expert

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [June 23, 2021, 5:54 pm](#)

MANILA – A health expert on Wednesday said two doses of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccine are "strongly protective" against the highly transmissible Delta variant.

In an online media forum, Dr. Eva Maria Cutiongco-dela Paz, University of the Philippines Manila – National Institutes of Health Executive Director, said an individual who received the first dose of AstraZeneca or Pfizer is 33 percent less at risk of developing Covid-19 symptoms caused by the Delta variant.

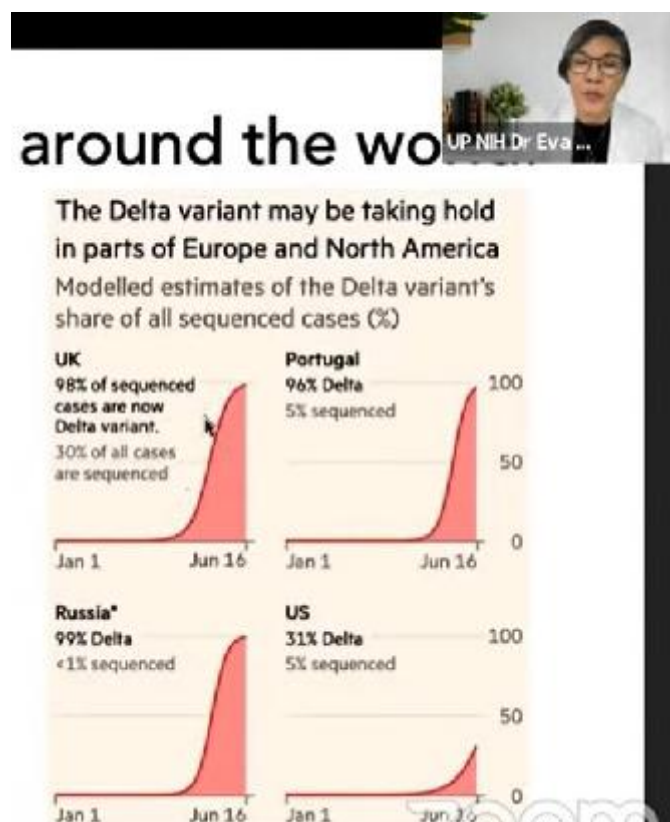
Dela Paz was citing data from the Public Health England study.

The same study showed that a second shot of AstraZeneca boosted defense against the Delta variant by 60 percent while a second dose of Pfizer provided 88 percent more protection.

Meanwhile, a Lancet study indicated people inoculated with Covid-19 jabs are less likely to be hospitalized due to the Delta variant compared to unvaccinated individuals.

“Samakatuwid, pareho po uulitin namin na importante pa rin pong magpabakuna dahil ‘yan pa rin po ang ating malaking pang-depensa kung ano man pong variant ay mayroon (We will say it again, it is important to be vaccinated because that is our biggest defense against any variant),” Dela Paz said.

Apart from receiving Covid-19 shots that are available now, Dela Paz said the spread of Delta variant or any variant of concern may be prevented with strict compliance to public health protocols such as wearing a mask and face shield, keeping at least one meter distance from others and proper washing of hands.



University of the Philippines Manila – National Institutes of Health Executive Director Dr. Eva Maria Cutiongco-Dela Paz notes 98 percent of sequenced cases in the United Kingdom are Delta variant while 96 percent of the sequenced samples in Portugal account for it.



The Delta variant which was first detected in India has spread to 85 countries.

Earlier, the World Health Organization described it as the fastest and fittest coronavirus strain yet – “picking off” the most vulnerable individuals especially in areas with low vaccination rates.

As of June 14, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 31 percent of the cases in the country are from the Delta variant.

“Ang original virus, ang isang tao makakahawa ng dalawa, ‘yung alpha makakahawa ng mga apat pero yung Delta ang isa makakahawa hanggang walo, so parang dumoble siya (With the original virus, a case can infect two persons, with the Alpha variant a case can infect four but with the Delta variant a case can infect up to eight people, so it doubled) from the Alpha variant,” dela Paz said.

She added that initial global studies showed the Delta variant may be manifesting different symptoms.

Reports from southeast China disclosed patients who are sick with the variant are deteriorating more quickly.

Meanwhile, health experts in the United Kingdom showed it has shown changing symptoms among participants of a symptom study who complained of headache as its number one symptom.

“And they also saw that more younger people are being infected who often mistake it for a bad cold, they’re more likely not to self-isolate, in the UK,” dela Paz said.

Compared with those infected with Alpha variant, patients with Delta variant in England and Scotland are twice more likely to need hospitalization.

Moreover, a study from Singapore noted people with Delta variant infection have a higher need for oxygen supply and intensive care unit admission and are more at risk of death.

“People with underlying conditions or comorbidities were at greater risk to be hospitalized,” dela Paz added.

Delta variant in PH

As of June 17, the Philippine Genome Center (PGC) reported a total of 17 cases with Delta variant.

The variant was first detected in the country on May 11 with 13 cases – all from returning Filipino travelers.

“Yang Gamma at Delta wala pa tayong nade-detect na community transmission sa ating bayan (We haven’t detected a community transmission of Gamma and Delta variant here),” dela Paz said.

Of 7,589 samples sequenced by the PGC, the Beta variant first seen in South Africa logged the most number of cases at 1,267 and it is followed by the Alpha variant first seen in the UK with 1,085 cases.

As for the variant of interest, the PGC said the Theta variant has 163 cases. **(PNA)**



EDITORIAL - Delta warning

(The Philippine Star) - June 24, 2021 - 12:00am

Despite ongoing vaccination campaigns, top health experts are warning that the world is far from being done with COVID-19. Not just because vaccination across countries is uneven and the supply is tight except in a handful of wealthy states, but also because of the spread of more contagious and seemingly deadlier mutations of the coronavirus.

In the Philippines, experts are calling for strict border controls to prevent another surge similar to the one from March to May that saw patients dying as they waited for critical care accommodation in hospitals. The summer surge forced a return to economically crippling lockdowns in Metro Manila and at least eight provinces. The lockdowns prompted economic analysts to downgrade their growth forecasts for the country.

With the virulent Delta variant first detected in India now in the Philippines, authorities must do more to improve pandemic response capabilities especially for testing, contact tracing and isolation – especially because COVID vaccines are still acutely limited in supply, despite all the rosy pronouncements from the government.

Countries leading in the COVID vaccination campaign such as Britain and Israel are seeing an increase in fresh cases, forcing a return to certain restrictions. Britain's prime minister has warned of a "rough winter ahead." Indonesia is grappling with a spike in infections this month, attributed to greater mobility during the Eid al-Fitr holiday as well as the possible spread of the Delta variant.

In the Philippines, the number of Delta variant cases has gone up to 17 after four Filipinos who returned from abroad tested positive for the mutant pathogen. Even before the country can sufficiently contain the mutation, India has issued a warning on an even more virulent Delta plus variant, with 21 cases detected in that country as of last Tuesday. There are reports that the new variant could circumvent the human immune system and unleash a third COVID wave in that country that has already lost over 390,000 lives to the coronavirus.

Last Friday, the World Health Organization's chief scientist said the Delta variant had become the globally dominant strain of COVID, with infections reported in 80 countries. The Delta plus, meanwhile, has been reported in nine other countries apart from India: China, Japan, Nepal, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Switzerland, the UK and the US. It could spread rapidly to more countries. The Philippines cannot afford to relax its guard.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2021/06/24/2107667/editorial-delta-warning>



SP Sotto seeks probe on efficacy of face shields

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Jun 23, 2021 9:11:46 PM



Senate President Vicente Sotto III filed a resolution on Wednesday seeking an investigation into the efficacy of face shields amid contradicting data. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 23) — Senate President Vicente Sotto III filed a resolution on Wednesday seeking an investigation into the efficacy of face shields amid contradicting data.

Senate Resolution 757 noted several studies questioning the efficacy of face shields against the spread of the coronavirus. It cited research by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which said face shields are not effective in protecting people from respiratory droplets. The American Journal of Infection Control also reported that surgical masks alone provide sufficient protection.

The Senate earlier asked the Department of Health to submit documents supporting the mandatory use of face shields during the pandemic, but the studies they cited were not conclusive. The DOH also said face shields are used in China, South Korea, Malta, the United Kingdom and in the US state of Oregon, but Sotto pointed out that they were not mandatory.

Earlier this week, there was confusion in the country as the national government [flip-flopped](#) on its face shield policy.

On Monday night, President Rodrigo Duterte announced he once again decided to require face shields both indoors and outdoors, less than a day after Malacañang said wearing the protective gear outside was no longer mandatory.

Sotto earlier said the [President wanted](#) the wearing of face shields only indoors — a statement confirmed by the Palace. This led to more discussions on whether or not the face shield rule should stay. For its part, the DOH recommended that face shields remain in use especially in public places and workspaces that require direct communication.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/6/23/Senate-probe-face-shield.html>



Global death toll bunsod ng COVID-19, higit 3.88 milyon na

By Angellic Jordan June 22, 2021 - 02:09 PM



Lagpas 3.88 milyon na ang bilang ng mga nasawing COVID-19 patient sa buong mundo.

Batay sa huling tala, umakyat na sa kabuuang 3,888,852 ang nasawi sa iba't ibang bansa bunsod ng nakakahawang sakit.

Nangunguna pa rin sa may pinakamaraming naitalang nasawi dahil sa COVID-19 ang Estados Unidos na may 617,463.

Sumunod na rito ang Brazil na may 502,817 na pumanaw bunsod ng pandemiya.

Nasa 389,302 naman ang death toll sa India habang 231,244 ang napaulat na nasawi sa Mexico.

Narito naman ang naitalang COVID-19 death toll sa iba pang bansa at teritoryo:

- Peru – 190,645
- Russia – 129,801
- United Kingdom – 127,981
- Italy – 127,291
- France – 110,778
- Colombia – 100,582
- Germany – 91,007

Samantala, lumabas din sa pinakahuling datos na umakyat na sa kabuuang 179,554,614 ang tinamaan ng nakakahawang sakit sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nasa 164,260,067 naman ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 pandemic sa buong mundo.

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/295068/global-death-toll-bunsod-ng-covid-19-higit-3-88-milyon-na>



TANGGAPIN NATIN ANG PASPASANG PAGBABAKUNA



June 23, 2021 @ 7:09 PM 12 hours ago

UMAASA ang pamahalaang Pilipinas na magsimulang daragsa ang sari-saring bakuna laban sa coronavirus disease-19 o COVID-19 mula sa iba't ibang bansa at vaccine maker sa darating na buwan, kasama na ang nasa 60 milyong bakuna na manggagaling sa Covax facility ng World Health Organization.

Dahil dito, inaasahang makaiipon tayo ng 113 milyong dose sa katapusan ng taon.

Kung walang darating na mga aberya, mababakunahan ang lahat ng mamamayang dapat mabakunahan ng dalawang beses o nasa 60-70 milyong katao, partikular ang mga nasa edad 19 pataas.

Pinag-uusapan pa at inihahanda na rin ang pagbabakuna sa ilang milyon ding kabataang na edad 18 pababa at sa katunayan, inihahanda na ang P25 bilyong badyet na pambili ng bakuna para rito.

PASPASAN NA

Paspasan na ang mga pagbabakuna sa mga lugar na may suplay, gaya ng ilang nasa Metro Manila gaya ng lungsod ni Yorme Isko na nagpairal muli ng “walk in” makaraang langawin ang patakarang “no QR code, no vaccine” at sumabay rito ang Pasay City ni Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano.

Sa Quezon City ni Mayor Joy Belmonte, may panggabi nang pagbabakuna at isa ang San Juan City ni Mayor Francis Zamora sa mga nagbakuna na sa mahihirap na wala sa prayoridad.

Isa sa mga naging katangian ng mga lungsod ng Metro Manila ang pagkakaroon at pagkokontribusyon ng badyet sa pagbili ng mga bakuna kaya nagagawa nilang magbakuna ng lahat na ng kanilang mga mamamayan.

MGA ABERYA

Mga aberya lamang ang makahaharang sa kagustuhan ng pamahalaan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa mabilisang pagbabakuna para makabalik na tayo sa normal na pamumuhay.

Sa ibang bansa, mga Bro, may mga expired o malapit nang ma-expire na bakuna na AstraZeneca.

Sa Malawi sa Africa. sinunog nila ang 20,000 dose at sa South Sudan, sinira nila ang 60,000 dose.



Isinauli naman ng Democratic Republic of Congo sa Covax facility ang 1.3 milyong dose na malapit nang ma-expire din at makaraang hindi tanggapin ng mga mamamayan dahil sa nililikha nitong blood clot na nakamamatay.

Maaari ring mangyari rin sa atin ang naganap sa Africa at sa iba pang bakuna gaya ng expired na Pfizer na naibakuna sa halos 1,000 Amerikano nitong nakaraang linggo lamang.

May dalawang milyong dose ng AstraZeneca na nagagawa naman ng pamahalaan na iturok at itinuturok pa bago ma-expire sa katapusan ng Hunyo at Hulyo.

IBA PANG ABERYA

Nang umatake ang second wave ng COVID-19, partikular ang India o Delta variant, anak ng tokwa, biglang pinatigil ng gobyernong India ang paglalako at pagdodonasyon ng bakunang gawa nila gaya ng Covishield o AstraZeneca at Covaxin.

Kaya naantala mismo ang Covax facility ng World Health Organization sa pagbili at pagtanggap ng mga bakuna na ibinibigay nito sa mga mahihirap na bansa, kabilang na ang Pilipinas.

Nariryan din ang “vaccine hesitancy” o pag-ayaw sa bakuna at pagiging choosy ng mga mamamayan na malaking sakit sa ulo ng halos lahat ng gobyerno na nagpapairal ng boluntaryong pagbabakuna.

ABERYA PA: KULANG NA SUPLAY NG BAKUNA

Hindi madali ang paggawa ng bakuna dahil sa hirap sa pagkuha at paggawa ng mga sangkap nito.

Todo iyak nga ang bansang India nang habang sinasalakay ng India variant na ikanaospital ng nasa 500,000 at ikinamamatay ng nasa 4,000-6,000 araw-ara na Indian, ayaw magbigay ang US ng sangkap na adjutant na gamit sa paglikha ng anti-bodies sa immune system ngunit napilitan din ang US sa huli na magbigay.

Umiiral din ang paghihigpit ng 27 bansa ng European Union na lalabas ang mga bakuna sa kanilang mga teritoryo hangga’t hindi sila nakapagbabakuna para sa herd immunity sa 450 milyong mamamayan nila at apektado rito ang suplay ng Covax facility na pinagkukunan natin ng malaking suplay.

Wala namang nakatitayak na mapapasaatin nang buo maging ang napagkasunduan nang 40 milyong dose ng Pfizer na gawang Amerikano hangga’t wala ito sa ating mga kamay.

ANO ANG GAGAWIN?

Alalahaning dumarami at umabot na sa mahigit 80 bansa ang inaatake ng Delta variant kaya nag-aagawan na ang maraming bansa sa ilang daang milyong dose na nagagawa pa lamang dahil hindi naman ganoon kadali ang paggawa ng bakuna.

Kampanya ng pamahalaan, kung andiyan na ang bakuna, huwag mag-atubili na magbabakuna.

Huwang nating hinataying magkandaospi-ospital at magkandamatay-matay tayo bago tayo magbabakuna.

At huwag na huwag tayong maging choosy dahil ang totoo, lahat ng ginagamit nabakuna sa Pinas ay pare-parehong mabisa at ligtas.

O mag-abang-abang na tayo sa mga may bitbit na bakuna at magpaturok agad.



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DENR-CO COVID-19 Monitoring



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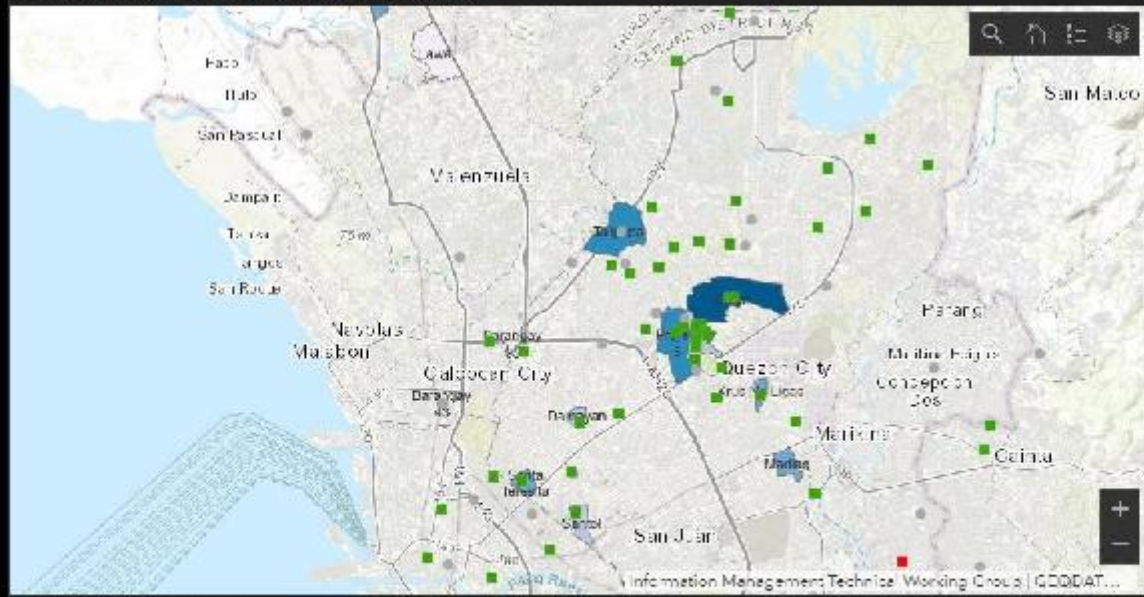
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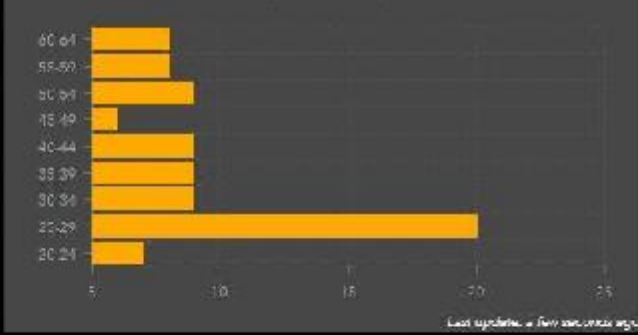
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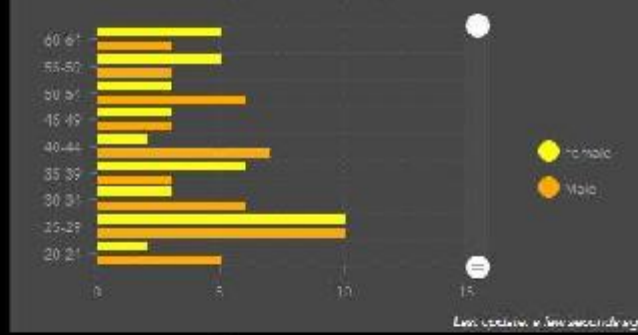
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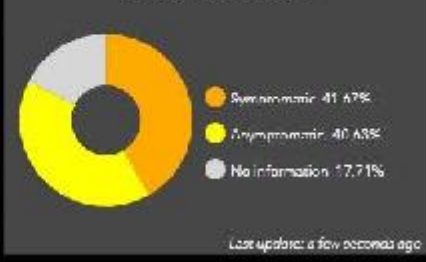
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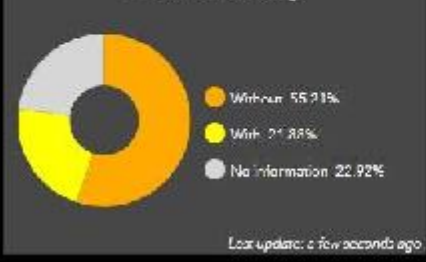
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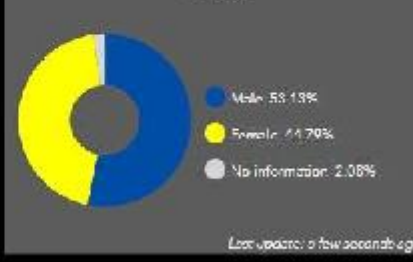
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


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
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