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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR eyes Boracay rehab completion by mid-2022

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by [Joseph Pedrajas](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing the completion of rehabilitation of the Boracay Island by June 2022.

According to DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu, water quality in Boracay beaches has significantly improved since its rehabilitation started in 2018.

Water samples in 2018 showed that fecal coliform level was at 900 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 ml). But samples are now down to 45 MPN/100 ml on average.

Meanwhile, Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group (BIARMG) General Manager Natividad Bernardino said a June 2022 completion target is a “realistic goal.”

This is because 282 or 83 percent of 339 structures—composed of commercial, residential, and other establishments—encroaching on the 25+5-meter beach easement have already been demolished, Bernardino added.

“We have to do it. Hindi pwedeng hindi. Gawin natin (We shouldn’t do it. Let’s do it),” Cimatu said during BIATF’s meeting Friday, referring to the removal of illegally-built structures on the island.

After the meeting, Cimatu also conducted beach forest tree-planting of around 50 agojo seedling or native pine trees along the White Beach at Station 3.

“We are doing this as a nature-based solution to address the issue that the 25+5 easement has shrunk a bit because of soil erosion,” Cimatu explained.

The whole stretch of the white beach is targeted to be included in the tree-planting activity. By the second quarter of 2022, BIATF is targeting to demolish 142 more establishments to meet 94 percent completion.



DENR to put up bamboo forests

[Catherine Talavera](#) - The Philippine Star October 24, 2021 | 12:00am



During his meeting with with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) country representative Selva Ramachandran, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu discussed a potential collaboration for the establishment of a “community-based mini forest, bamboo plantation, urban forestry” project.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) plans to put up mini bamboo forests across the country in a bid to create a nature-friendly, export-oriented bamboo lumber industry.

During his meeting with with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) country representative Selva Ramachandran, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu discussed a potential collaboration for the establishment of a “community-based mini forest, bamboo plantation, urban forestry” project.

Cimatu specifically requested if the UNDP could design assistance for localities to put up bamboo nurseries.

Ramachandran has received the same request for support for bamboo plantation establishment during his visits to Albay and Cagayan provinces.

He said Vietnam has a thriving bamboo lumber industry, being a major exporter of bamboo to Canada.

Cimatu said the Philippines has the same opportunities in bamboo products as Vietnam.

Bamboo has both the potential to create a profitable industry and to be a tool for controlling soil erosion and sequestering pollutant carbon dioxide (CO₂).

“Bamboo prevents soil erosion to which riverbank communities have been predisposed to danger,” the DENR said.

According to the DENR, a hectare of bamboo retains 30,000 liters of water during the rainy season. It also absorbs a huge amount of pollutant CO₂.

The DENR’s National Greening Program (NGP) listed bamboo as among the preferred species for reforestation.

“Bamboo will help boost supply for food, products (timber, fiber, non-timber forest products), services, and provide aesthetic value to the environment,”the DENR said.

It has also been considered an excellent substitute for many raw materials in different industries, with its charcoal used as organic fertilizer, while its tall, erect stems and petiolate leaf blades make for good ornamental plants.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/10/24/2136218/denr-put-bamboo-forests>



AGRO-ECO TOURISM PARK SA RIZAL, INILUNSD

INILUNSD noong ika-19 ng Oktubre ang Tayak Adventure, Nature, and Wildlife (TANAW) de Rizal Convergence Area Development, isang 24 ektaryang agro-eco tourism park na magkakatuwang na proyekto ng Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), at Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Ito ay sa ilalim ng Joint Administrative Order No. 01 of 2015 o ang "Strengthening the Implementation of Framework for DA-DAR-DENR-DILG National Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development".

Pinangunahan ito nina DAR Secretary Atty. Rani-bai D. Dilangalen; DAR Undersecretary for Support Services Atty. Emily O. Padilla; DENR Undersecretary for Environment and International Environmental Affairs Atty. Jonas R. Leo-

nes; Bureau of Soils and Water Management Director Pablo M. Montalla; DA IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) OIC-Regional Executive Director Vilma M. Dimaculangan; DENR IV-A Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria; DENR IV-AARTDS Alfredo Palencia; DAR IV-A Regional Director Cupido Gerry D. Asuncion, at DILG IV-A Regional Director Ariel O. Iglesia.

"This project is very promising for the municipality of Rizal because of its Agricultural and livelihood activity towards the area. This promotes development without compromising the environment," ani DA Secretary Dar.

Pangunahing layunin ng pagpapatayo nito ay ang pagkakaroon ng tourist spot sa Rizal, Laguna habang pinalalakas ang industriya ng organikong pagsasaka at ang pangangalaga sa kalikasan.

"Ang programa pong ito ay simula pa lamang ng ating iisang layunin na magkaroon ng agro-eco

tourist spot dito sa Rizal na mapapakinabangan ng nakakarami. Patuloy pong magtutulongan ang mga ahensya ng pamahalaan para dito," ani DA-4A Director Dimaculangan.

Tutulungan din ng parke na magkaroon ng dagdag na kabuhayan, hindi lang ang mga magsasaka kundi maging ang iba pang mga nakatira malapit dito.

Sa proyekto ring ito ay aayusin at inamantina ang Tala-Malasena farm-to-market road, ang nag-iisang pangunahing kalsada patungo sa parke.

Nakapaloob sa parke ang nature park, 14 stations of the cross, mini zoo, adventure activity area, farmers training center na pagdadausan ng mga capacity building trainings para sa mga magsasaka, trading post na pagbabagsakan ng mga produktong pang-agrikultura, at river rehabilitation and soil erosion control facility.

Inaasahang matatapos ang proyekto sa taong 2025. Nakatanggap naman ng

mga organikong pataba, mga binhi ng hybrid glutinous white corn, organikong pestisidyo, iba't ibang binhi ng gulay, kalabaw, baka, seedling trays, plant growth enhancer, grass cutter, multi-cultivator, UV plastic, plastic mulch mula sa DA-4A ang mga magsasaka ng Rizal.

Ang Kagawaran din ang mamamahala sa pagsasakongkreto ng Tala-Malasena FMR.

"Malaking tulong po sa amin ang mga interbensyon dahil malaking katipiran ito sa amin. 'Di na namin kailangang bumili ng mga kagamitan. Pati rin po ang farm-to-market road ay lubos po naming pinasasalamatan. Hindi na kabayo ang

aming gagamitin sa pagdadala ng mga produkto. Mabilis nang makakarating ang mga ito sa pamilihan," ani Elisa B. Comendador, pangulo ng Sto. Nino Agrofisery Farmers Association, Inc.

Dumalo rin sa paglulunsad ng TANAW De Rizal sina DA-4A Regional Technical Director for Operations Abelardo R. Bragas; Field Operations Division (FOD) chief Engr. Redeliza A. Gruezo; Assistant FOD Chief Fidel L. Libao; Livestock Banner Program chief Dr. Jerome G. Cuasay; Laguna Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer (APCO) Annie S. Bucu, at iba pang mga empleyado ng DA-4A.

(JOEL O. AMONGO)



Strengthen Wildlife Protection Act

OCT 23, 2021, 1:35 PM

Rose De La Cruz
Columnist

Theresa Tenazas, OIC of the Wildlife Resources Division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources urged the senators to pass a law strengthening wildlife protection from overexploitation by humans and destruction of their habitats in the name of progress.

Zoonotic diseases, or those infectious diseases transmitted from animals to humans arise not because of the existence of wildlife but because of people who exploit them and destroy their habitat.

This is what numerous scientific studies around the world have shown.

Economic growth has disrupted ecosystems and habitat through unplanned urbanization, land degradation and deforestation. This has allowed people to closely interact with wildlife, leading to hotbeds of zoonotic disease transmission.

The earliest cases of infection of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which causes COVID-19, were traced to a market in Wuhan reportedly selling meat from exotic wild animals such as bats, snakes and pangolins. The Chinese government has since banned the trade, suspecting its role in the spread of the virus.

Most known zoonotic diseases

The SARS outbreak in 2002 was caused by a novel betacoronavirus found in bats and then transmitted to masked palm civets before reaching humans.

A decade later, in 2012, the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) outbreak emerged after coronavirus, which passed through dromedary camels, was transmitted to humans.

The Ebola outbreak was traced to humans' hunt for primates' meat and habitat fragmentation, with the pathogen likely transmitted from bats to primates and then to people.

A 2020 study found that species that are threatened due to exploitation "have over twice as many zoonotic viruses" than other threatened species. Experts attributed it to the frequent close contact between people and wildlife, as hunters, middle marketers and consumers have some form of contact with species in the trading process.

On top of this, other animals and people in the area are also exposed to the wildlife and its remnants and wastes, expediting the possible spread of diseases.

Wildlife trade stresses animals

The wildlife trade also creates the perfect conditions for new diseases, as it stresses animals and subjects them to unnatural habitat and combinations during trade and transit.



If it is not clear with all these incidents that increased wildlife interaction due to habitat destruction and illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is the main reason for global outbreaks, then I don't know what is.

WT is 4th largest

The Philippines is in the center of this, with widespread habitat destruction and illegal trade. The country has become an important source, transit and destination point in IWT, which is now the fourth largest illegal trade worldwide behind illegal drugs, arms and human trafficking.

While a handful of people gain from IWT in the country, millions more Filipinos are affected by its dire consequences. We have to act now before another deadly pandemic hits us.

Wildlife Act of 2001 must be strengthened

In 2001, Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act was passed into law. While RA 9147 is a groundbreaking law that expanded protection coverage to all wildlife and empowered regulation agencies, there continues to be an increase in IWT cases, threatening extinction of wildlife species and elevating risks of zoonotic diseases.

RA 9147 must be urgently amended and strengthened, as IWT has become increasingly sophisticated and organized two decades after the law's passage.

Crime syndicates are exploiting legal loopholes owing to the law's vague language, low fines and penalties that fail to serve as deterrent, and limited enforcement capacity.

WT is P50-B annually

The value of illegal wildlife trade in the country is estimated at P50 billion annually (\$1 billion). However, as we have seen with COVID-19, we will surely lose more if we do not act immediately.

The House of Representatives passed House Bill 9833 revising the Wildlife Act of 2001 on third and final reading. In the Senate, two bills remain pending at the committee level – SB Nos. 2078 and 2079, filed by Sen. Cynthia Villar and Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, respectively.

A strong legal framework will improve enforcement mechanisms, strengthen inter-agency cooperation against IWT and result in a more forceful and dynamic response to this transnational crime, said Theresa Tenazas, OIC of the Wildlife Resources Division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Stopping IWT through a solid legal basis is a worthy investment against the life-threatening and damaging consequences of potential outbreaks and pandemics, especially to Filipinos, she added.



Senators question DENR fund transfers to PS-DBM, PITC

By: [Melvin Gascon](#) - Correspondent / [@melvingasconINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:42 AM October 22, 2021

MANILA, Philippines — Senators on Thursday castigated the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for transferring more than P1.4 billion over the past nine years to the Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM) and to the Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC), both of which had not delivered the bulk of their purchases.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the department sought the services of the PS-DBM in procuring P1.3 billion worth of “IT (information technology) equipment,” including computers, software, and generators.

Leones said that since 2012, the procurement body has delivered only 34 percent of what it was supposed to purchase for the department.

Sen. Imee Marcos questioned the DENR’s continuing reliance for its purchases on the PS-DBM, which had become controversial following reports of alleged irregularities in its contracts for pandemic supplies.

“Are you not wondering, or even enraged that your funds were idled for as long as nine years?” Marcos asked Leones during a hearing on the DENR’s proposed P25.3-billion budget for 2022. She asked why the DENR transferred the funds to the PS-DBM when its own procurement division was capable of making the purchases.

Leones explained that the DENR asked the PS-DBM to make the purchases to allow the government to save money by buying in bulk, in accordance with “economies of scale.”

‘Don’t make it a habit’

Sen. Nancy Binay pointed out that despite the failure of the PS-DBM to deliver, it continued to charge various government agencies, including the DENR, 4 percent as a service fee.

The PITC, which also performs procurement services for the government, was asked to help in the “procurement of infrastructure and land development projects” and vehicles for the DENR amounting P112 million, according to a Commission on Audit report. Marcos said the PITC also failed to deliver on those deals.

Sen. Cynthia Villar, chair of the Senate committee on environment, told DENR officials: “Do not make it a habit of putting money in [the] PS-DBM and PITC because the common perception is that there is always corruption whenever funds are placed there.”

Villar cited her “bad experience” with PITC, which she said had not delivered 178 composting machines intended for local governments surrounding Manila Bay.

Lawmakers also chided the DENR for pushing and allotting billions for waste-to-energy projects and failing in its National Greening Program (NGP), while leaving meager funds for preserving the country’s protected areas and for managing solid waste.

The DENR’s proposed budget for next year included P9.7 billion for its 10 priority programs. One allocation amounting to P3.7 billion was for the “enhanced” NGP; another totaling P1.7 billion was for the rehabilitation of Manila Bay; P1.1 billion would go to solid waste management; and P1 billion was for the enhanced biodiversity conservation.



Questionable impact

Citing figures from another document, Villar dismissed claims by DENR officials that it had allotted sufficient funding of P876 million for solid waste management, as P774 million of that amount was intended for a waste-to-energy (WTE) project in Davao City, which would eat up nearly all the allotment.

She also criticized DENR officials for pushing WTE projects which had questionable environmental impact.

“Why are you engaging in waste-to-energy projects when you are supposed to be protecting the environment? You better stop that because you are becoming an embarrassment,” she said.

Marcos noted that the Japanese proponents of the Davao City WTE project themselves were now expressing doubts about its feasibility.

Binay asked whether the DENR had conducted a cost-benefit analysis for the WTE project in Davao City, given the scarce funding from the department. She got no reply.

Marcos also questioned the absence of funding to help the country reduce marine litter.

“So important yet it seems to be absent in the 2022 [National Expenditure Program],” she said.

Villar expressed her disgust after the DENR ignored suggestions that it should allot more funding for protected areas but instead retained allocations for project items that were difficult to trace.

She pressed the DENR to revise its proposed budget by transferring funds from the NGP to the management of protected areas.

“If only we can take care of the 7.7 million hectares of protected areas out of the 30 million ha of the country, and the rest will be taken care of by the private sector, that is already 25 percent of the Philippines,” she said.

DENR, nasermonan sa budget hearing ng Senado dahil sa paglalaan ng maliit na pondo sa pangangalaga sa kalikasan

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) -Oct. 23, 2021 at 5:16pm



Nakagalitan ni Senator Cynthia Villar ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa pagtakalakay sa panukalang P25.3 billion na pondo nito sa 2022.

Ikinadismaya kasi ni Villar na 75 percent ng total budget ng DENR ay inilaan sa personal services at sa maintenance and other operating expenses.

Hindi katanggap-tanggap para kay Villar na 25 percent lamang ng budget ng DENR ang inilaan sa mga proyekto nito na nagbibigay-proteksyon sa kalikasan.

Lalo pang nabwisit si Villar ng mabatid na P1.2 billion lamang ang inilaan ng DENR sa development at management ng 107 protected areas sa bansa na nasa 7.7 milyong ektarya.

Giit ni Villar, dapar i-adjust ito at gawing 50 percent ang pondo para sa mga tauhan at operasyon ng DENR at 50 percent para sa mga proyekto na para sa taumbayan.

Nilinaw naman ni DENR Undersecretary Analiza Teh, 50 percent lang ng kanilang budget ang para sa overhead o gastusin ng DENR.

Ipinaliwanag naman ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu na nakapaloob sa kanilang budget para sa capital outlay ang para sa national greening program at one-third nito ang para sa protected areas.

Source: <https://rmn.ph/denr-nasermonan-sa-budget-hearing-ng-senado-dahil-sa-paglalaan-ng-maliit-na-pondo-sa-pangangalaga-sa-kalikasan/?fbclid=IwAR2jgFTY98qjTOUbOBayW7ckJ9Iz6DAQIEWLjvKRURufhPvBaTSu8hO--TU>



BIOMEDICAL WASTE TIYAKING NAITATAPON NANG MAAYOS

PINAKIKILOS ni Senador Francis "Toi" Tolentino ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) upang bumuo ng malinaw na plano kung paano itatapon ang milyun-milyong vials, hiringilya, at karayom na ginamit sa pagbabakuna kontra COVID-19.

Sa budget hearing ng DENR, inusisa ni Tolentino kung paano tinutugunan ng ahensya ang pagtatapon ng mga gamit na vials, hiringilya, at karayom na ginamit sa pagbabakuna kontra COVID-19.

Sinabi ni Tolentino na nangangamba ito sa posibleng banta sa kalusugan ng mga Pinoy sakaling mapabayaang ang mga gamit na karayom at hiringilya.

"Lumalabas po na tatlong uri lang ito, una 'yung karayom, pangalawa 'yung hiringilya, pangatlo po 'yung maliit na bote na pinanggalingan ng bakuna, hindi po siguro ito magkakahok kasi 'yung needle ay contaminated, lalung-lalo na 'pag may saturated blood nu'ng pasyente na tinurukan," sabi ni Tolentino.

Ani Tolentino wala pa itong nakikita ni isang treatment facility sa buong bansa na tumutu-

tok para masigurong maayos na maitatapon ang mga nasa-bing biomedical waste.

Paliwanag naman ni Undersecretary Benny Antiporda may inaayos na umangong lugar para paglagyan ng mga gamit nang hiringilya at karayom na galing sa mga ospital at nilalagyan naman ito ng kemikal bago dalhin sa treatments, storage, and disposal (TSD) facility.

Sinabi pa ni Tolentino na dapat makabuo na nang malinaw na plano ang DENR kung paano maayos na maitatapon ang mga gamit na vials, hiringilya, at karayom na gagamitin sa 70 milyong Pilipino, ang bilang na kailangan para makamit ang herd-immunity sa bansa.

"And if we will add another booster, which was approved by the US-FDA yesterday, that would total to 210-million needles, syringes, and small bottles, saan po itatambak 'yung 210-million needles, syringes, and small bottles? Dapat before the plenary we can have a playbook for this, a timetable and timeframe how to dispose all of these 210-million vials, syringes, and needles," paliwanag ng mambabatas.

(NOEL ABUEL)



Bataan National Park: A park in the jungle

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA OCTOBER 24, 2021



Picnic sheds are among the tourism facilities developed in Bataan National Park.

About 130 km and some two-and-half hours drive from the country's most famous landmark, the Luneta Park in Manila, the Bataan National Park (BNP) in Bataan province is considered as one of Luzon's popular tourist destinations.

It serves as home to a variety of unique and endangered plant and animal wildlife and boasts of tourism facilities developed over the years, which make it stand out as a natural park.

The more than 20,000 hectares park is covered with tropical jungle and mountain terrains with unique geological features like rivers, springs and waterfalls.



The endemic *Rafflesia manillana*, a unique large and pungent flower that blooms once in 10 years can be found in BNP.

Bataan's oldest

First proclaimed as a national park in 1945 through Proclamation 24, BNP is one of the oldest protected areas in the Philippines.

Its status as a protected area was reaffirmed by President Duterte when he signed Republic Act 11038, also known as the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (Enipas) on June 22, 2018, being one of the 97 legislated protected areas listed under the law.

The protectors of BNP expect regular funding to boost the number of Bantay Gubat from 15 to 30, and a workforce that is specially dedicated to running and managing the park.

The park is shared by a total of 19 barangays from the six municipalities of Bagac, Morong, Abucay, Samal, Orani and Hermosa in Bataan.



Not to be confused, the Bataan National Park, is a natural park because of its vast expanse, said Don Guevarra, the chief information officer for Central Luzon of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). He explained that with its around 20,000 hectares qualifies BNP under the natural park category.

Key biodiversity area, old growth forest

Along with the Subic Bay Forest Reserve, the BNP was declared a key biodiversity area (KBA), as well.

A site overview of the two areas stated that the Subic Bay Forest Reserve and the Bataan National Park are “KBA’s of international significance.”

The reason is that in the BNP is the remaining residual old-growth forest in the Zambales Biogeographical Zone.

“[There are] notable flora and fauna found in BNP, such as dipterocarp species, endemic and threatened species [like the] green-faced parrot, Philippines warty pig, Philippines brown deer, mountain rose and fire orchids,” states a profile of the BNP obtained by the BusinessMirror from the DENR Central Luzon.

Major watersheds

In Bataan, protecting and conserving the BNP cannot be overemphasized. It is a major source of fresh water that supplies farms and provides a life support system for the diverse wildlife that thrive in the park.

Freshwater shrimps and native snails and different species of frogs are commonly found within the park.

Likewise, a total of seven watersheds are found within the area.

These are the Morong River, Almacén, Talisay, Bagac, Kabayo, Sutuín and Bayandati watersheds. Combined, they cover a total of 22,976.58 hectares of the all-important watershed area.

Rich biodiversity

Birds of prey are often spotted in the BNP, a proof that the area has plenty of prey to choose from for these high-flying feathered hunters.

The BNP also hosts a still undetermined population of palm civet cats and cloud rats, and was found to be home to a still unknown population of large flying fox, the largest fruit bat in the world.

One unique find in the BNP is the rafflesia (*Rafflesia manillana*), a unique plant with large, pungent-smelling flower that blooms only every 10 years.

Tourism potential

The BNP has a vast tourism potential because of the many recreational activities and ecotourism products and services it offers, including trekking and hiking, nature photography and viewing, camping, bird watching, picnic and swimming.

It also boasts of tourism facilities that attract visitors. It has the BNP-Marine and Terrestrial Training Center in Sitio Looc, Barangay Banawang in the Bagac side of the park, and a picnic shed in the same area.

A similar facility is also available for tourists in Sitio Binutas in Barnagay Tala, in the Orani side of the park, together with railings and path walk.



Natural attractions

The BNP boasts of a long list of natural attractions from scenic mountain peaks, unique waterfalls, unique ecosystems like caves, and all-time favorites, the lovely beaches.

It has a total of 14 waterfalls, which are all tourist magnets for nature trippers. Trekkers also climb Mt. Natib Peak, the highest peak in the BNP at 1,253 meters above sea level.

For many, the Looc beach, Matikis gulf, thermal spring found within the old caldera, the Tawawa hotspring and Bakyas hto-otspring are also not-be-missed attractions in the park.

Partnership for conservation

Interviewed by the BusinessMirror via Zoom on October 18, Merliza Torre, the Community Environment and Natural Resource Officer of Bagac, Bataan, said a key to protecting and conserving the BNP is the partnership with various people's organizations and community-based groups.

One partnership that stands out, she said, is that for the National Greening Program (NGP). "Bataan was a logged area and was subjected to deforestation. Although logging has already stopped because it was declared a park, stopping extractive activities remains a challenge," Torre, also the BNP's concurrent Protected Area Superintendent, explained.

Continuing threats

The unbridled development in the bustling province of Bataan, according to Torre, is becoming a big problem. Encroachment, she said, is hard to control, considering the vast expanse of the protected area.

This, she said, can also be attributed to industrialization in the province, which naturally attracts migration.

"As you may have known, Bataan has a fast-growing economy and the protected area is not a gated park so the problem is the illegal occupancy," she said.

Other major factors that cause the park's degradation are industrial and infrastructure development projects in the Subic Bay Metropolitan Area, Morong Special Economic Zone and the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

The environment official also said the expansion of the large coffee and mango plantations continues to threaten the BNP, aggravating the usual problem brought about by illegal logging and timber poaching, and the slash-and-burn farming activities.

'Responsible ecotourism'

As tourism activities are being eyed as part of a long-term solution to the problems that threaten the BNP, Torre said they are closely coordinating with concerned tourism officers of the Bataan and the six BNP local governments.

More importantly, however, the DENR Central Luzon led by Guevarra is helping educate the various stakeholders of the BNP to observe environmental laws, particularly Republic Act 9003 or the Solid Waste Management Act.

"We've seen the problem in many Protected Areas. So our IEC Program is also focused on having responsible eco-tourists," says Guevarra, who noted that despite the pandemic, the garbage problem seemed to have worsened, because communities in and around the BNP have added face masks and face shields in their household wastes.



“It is sad because during our coastal and river cleanups, face masks and face shield are now part of the garbage we are hauling,” Guevarra said in Filipino.

Saving Manila Bay, too

“This year, we held a lot of online lectures with the barangays as targets because they are our frontliners. The lectures gave tips on reducing plastic waste, particularly single-use plastics that are threats to BNP’s [environment],” he said,

He added that the campaign for environmental protection and conservation in Central Luzon is aligned with the ongoing Battle for Manila Bay campaign.

Guevarra said because responsible ecotourism calls for responsible waste disposal, the information, education and communication campaign revolves around keeping the BNP not only green, but more importantly, clean and ensure it is garbage-free.

“We are talking to barangays and the communities that there are ways to avoid single-use plastics. For instance, we tell them to bring a water canister and avoid bottled water. Also, we appeal to them not to use soft drink straws and plastic stirrers because these are one-time use that we can avoid using,” he said.

Image courtesy of BNP Protected Area Management Office photo



New policy on bamboo welcomed for development, climate mitigation

BYS&T MEDIA SERVICES OCTOBER 24, 2021



Stakeholders welcomed the new government policy on bamboo, saying that it will encourage more Filipino farmers to grow bamboo in their lands, help local and national development, and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The policy is the Department of Environment and Natural Resources's (DENR) Department Administrative Order 2021-26 (DAO 2021-26)-Rules and Regulations Governing the Establishment, Harvesting, and Transport of Bamboo.

As a council with bamboo as one of its main focus commodities, the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PCAARRD) welcomed the issuance of DAO 2021-26.

DAO 2021-26 to help bamboo entrepreneurs, plantation owners

DAO 2021-26 that was issued in August amended various policies on the establishment, harvest and transport of bamboo products with the aim of encouraging the development of bamboo plantations and promotion of sustainable use of bamboo as wood substitute.

Bamboo is durable, versatile and multifunctional, and can be used to make various products, such as furniture, handicrafts, construction material and chemical products.

It has high carbon capturing capacity compared to other plants, which makes growing and using bamboo very sustainable.

DAO 2021-26 removed the Certificate of Verification (CoV) as a previous requirement for harvesting and transporting bamboo.

CoV was considered a factor that discourages investment in the bamboo industry due to tedious and lengthy application process, its short validity of only three days, and its high cost because its use requires multiple applications.

The new DAO 2021-26 requires only a one-time registration fee for a Certificate of Bamboo Plantation Registration, which has no expiration until the bamboo stand is declared unproductive.

Registration of tenured forest land holders and backyard farms is also exempted, if they are for personal consumption and transported within the municipality.



Backyard farms may also be registered for commercial production as individuals, provided they have steady and sustainable supply, or they may opt to form a cooperative/association, instead.

DENR will also help bamboo entrepreneurs in accessing technology transfer arrangements provided by DOST and concerned units.

DAO 2021-26 also provides incentives to bamboo plantation owners for development and processing enterprises, and outlines guidance on capacity-building, research and development, technology transfer, financial subsidy, and other support activities.

Contribution of DOST-PCAARRD in DAO 2021-26

With awareness of the importance of the bamboo industry and the issues surrounding it, a roundtable discussion (RTD) with various government agencies, private sector representatives and bamboo farmers of Laguna was held in 2016 at DOST-PCAARRD.

The RTD highlighted the regulations for harvesting and transporting bamboo, specifically, the much-criticized CoV requirement.

As a result, the DOST-PCAARRD supported a policy analysis project in 2017 to investigate the issue and provide scientific basis to create an enabling policy environment for the bamboo industry.

The project titled, "Creating an Enabling Environment for A Vibrant Philippine Bamboo Industry- Addressing Policy Constraints and Information Needs," was implemented by the University of the Philippines Los Baños under the leadership of Dr. Ramon Razal, a professor in the Department of Forest Products and Paper Science of UPLB College of Forestry.

The study assessed the policies surrounding bamboo resources and came up with a proposed draft DAO based on the result of regional workshops, RTDs, the National Policy Consultation Workshop on Bamboo, and conduct of cost-benefit analysis.

The document was presented and submitted to the DENR through the Forest Management Bureau in 2019.

Several recommendations of Razal's team were adopted in the new DAO. This includes the registration of bamboo plantations that now serves as the only requirement for the cutting and transport of harvested bamboo poles, as opposed to the previous policy where a CoV was required.

CoV, as found by a 2017 study, was a disincentive to bamboo growers because acquiring it is expensive and time consuming. *Farah Y. Sevilla and Monica B. Castillo/S&T Media Services*



Families continue to flock to dolomite beach amid looser restrictions in NCR

By RICHA NORIEGA, GMA News

Published October 24, 2021 12:20am

Families continue to visit the dolomite beach in Manila amid looser COVID-19 restrictions in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Some had set up tents and brought mats and toys for the children to play with, according to Jamie Santos' "24 Oras Weekend" report on Saturday.

However, some people expressed dismay as the beach became crowded, increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) personnel continued patrolling the area to prevent tourists from going near the water while some police officers set up assistance desks.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) marshals were also deployed to ensure that health and safety protocols were observed.

Metro Manila was first placed under Alert Level 4 from September 16 to October 15, then to a more relaxed Alert Level 3 from October 16 to 31.

Under Alert Level 3, several establishments will be allowed to operate at 30% indoor venue capacity only for fully vaccinated individuals and 50% outdoor venue capacity, provided that all employees are fully vaccinated.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said earlier Saturday that COVID-19 curbs in NCR [could be eased further next month if the virus response was maintained](#). — **VBL, GMA News**



Dolomite beach dinagsa ng strollers madaling-araw pa lamang nitong Sabado

October 23, 2021 1 min read

Madaling-araw pa lamang nitong Sabado (23 Oct 2021) ay muling dinagsa ng mga kabataang gustong matunghayan at makapaglakad-lakad sa dolomite beach na matatagpuan sa Baywalk sa Roxas Boulevard, Maynila.

Matapos itong buksan publiko noong nakaraang Sabado (16 Oct 2021), araw din kung kelan ibinaba ng health authorities and Alert Level ng Metro Manila sa No. 3,, ay naging pasyalan ng mga taga-Maynila at mga karatig-lugar ang artificial beach.

At dahil sa parating hitik ito sa tao, minabuti ng mga namamahala ng dolomite beach na gawing mas-maaga ang pagbubukas nito. Mula sa alas-8 ng umaga ay ginawa itong 5:30a.m.



(Jhun Mabanag/BENJAMIN CUARESMA/ai/mtn)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2021/10/23/dolomite-beach-dinagsa-ng-strollers-madaling-araw-pa-lamang-nitong-sabado/?fbclid=IwAR2Yz3yOtocVTMKuAn6NegCV-hEV24k4wYnwMgDpPzOCwWed8Hhx30dWqLg>

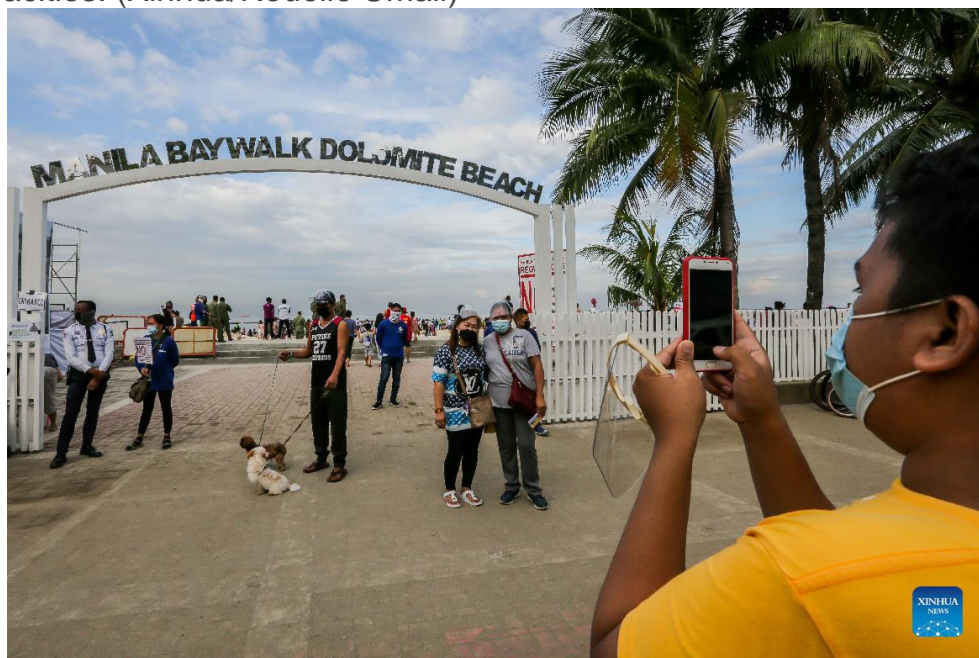


People visit Manila Bay Dolomite Beach in Manila, the Philippines

Source: Xinhua | 2021-10-21 20:37:58 | Editor: huaxia



A mother carries her baby at the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach in Manila, the Philippines, Oct. 21, 2021. People flocked to the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach as COVID-related lockdown in Metro Manila is being eased, which allows more public establishments in the capital to operate at limited capacities. (Xinhua/Rouelle Umali)



People visit the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach in Manila, the Philippines, Oct. 21, 2021. People flocked to the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach as COVID-related lockdown in Metro Manila is being eased, which allows more public establishments in the capital to operate at limited capacities. (Xinhua/Rouelle Umali)



10h · 🌐



Isang linggo matapos buksan sa publiko, wala pa ring humpay ang pagdating ng mga turista sa dolomite beach sa Manila Bay.

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources, umabot sa 25,000 ang dumalaw sa lugar.

BASA HIN ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/.../anong-panganib-ang-maaaring...>



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Pami-pamilya, dumagsa sa Dolomite beach | 24 Oras Weekend

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Sa unang weekend na pinapayagan na muling lumabas ang mga bata, pami-pamilya ang dumagsa sa Dolomite Beach sa Maynila. May ilang natuwa na nakalabas na sila.

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Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9nTAyScg5o>



Planong maligo sa 'Dolomite Beach'? Delikado ito, ayon sa dermatologist

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 23 2021 03:02 PM | Updated as of Oct 23 2021 03:12 PM



Dinagsa ang Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach noong Oktubre 21, 2021. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MAYNILA— Nagbabala ang isang doktor laban sa mga sakit na maaaring makuha sa exposure o pagligo sa Dolomite Beach ng Manila Bay.

Kasabay ito ng pagdagsa kamakailan ng mga tao sa Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach, na puno ng crushed dolomite para magsilbing kunwaring white sand.

Binuksan ito ng gobyerno kasabay ng pagbaba ng quarantine alert level sa Metro Manila dahil sa pag-unti ng mga kaso ng COVID-19.

Sa TeleRadyo, sinabi ng dermatologist na si Dr. Grace Beltran na bagama't magandang tingnan ang beach ay mapanganib sa kalusugan ang dolomite sand dahil puwede itong magdulot ng sakit sa balat, allergy, at maaari ring sanhi ng sakit sa baga.

Paliwanag pa ni Beltran, ang dolomite sand ay gawa sa crystalline silica na maaaring magdulot ng iritasyon sa baga at mauwi sa lung cancer.

"The dolomite sand is crystalline silica kaya puwede kang magkaroon ng irritation doon sa lungs... then eventually can also lead to lung cancer," ani Beltran.

Delikado rin aniya kung sa paliligo sa beach ay aksidenteng makalunok ng tubig na nahaluan ng dolomite sand.

"Aside pa dito kapag ikaw ay naka-ingest accidentally kasi syempre kapag nagsu-swimming ka o naglalangoy-langoy ka na doon, pwede mong ma-ingest yung water doon sa lugar na yun," dagdag niya.

Sa ngayo'y mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ang pagligo sa dolomite beach bagama't marami ang nasita dahil sa pagtampisaw sa tubig.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/23/21/anong-panganib-ang-maaaring-maidulot-ng-dolomite-beach?fbclid=IwAR3KJeqZeErp9C-VdMTJ64NoizmuI1oOUxG1pY1If9fhz7cP7veh8d2ckT8>



SC ibinasura ang hirit ni Sen. Villar na writ of kalikasan vs Manila Bay reclamation project

By [Bombo Jovino Galang](#) - October 23, 2021 | 5:36 AM

Tinanggihan ng Korte Suprema ang kahilingan ni Senator Cynthia Villar at mahigit 315,000 na residente na kontra sa reclamation project.

Ang P14-bilyon reclamation project ay sasakupin ang 635 hectares ng lupain mula baybayin ng Manila Bay sa kahabaan ng Las Pinas City, Paranaque City at Bacoor City sa Cavite.

Ang court decision ay inilabas ni Associate Justice Rosmari Carandang.

Nakasaad sa desisyon na walang anumang ebidensiya na nagpapakita na ang panukalang coastal bay project ay maaaring makasira ng kalikasan, kalusugan at makakamatay.

Nagsimula ang naturang petition noong Abril 2013.



Villar to file MR on SC go-signal for bay reclamation

The Philippine Star October 24, 2021 | 12:00am



Sen. Cynthia Villar
STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Cynthia Villar yesterday said she will file a Motion for Reconsideration (MR) before the Supreme Court (SC) over its go-signal to reclaim the Manila Bay areas in Las Piñas and Parañaque as she urged the High Court to take a “different and fresh appreciation” of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) rules.

She has been asserting that any reclamation project in the areas would impede the flow of the six rivers exiting in Manila Bay, which would cause massive flooding.

These rivers are Imus River in Imus City; Bacoor River and Molino River in Bacoor City; Zapote River between Bacoor and Las Piñas cities; Las Pinas River in Las Piñas City and Parañaque River in Parañaque City.

The damage to Imus River led to the filing of a case by Antonio Oposa, Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Environmental Law, which resulted in the issuance of Mandamus of Manila Bay by the SC.

Marking the first year of the UN Decade for Ecological Restoration, the senator called on the court to revisit its ruling which favored Alltech Contractors’ proposed projects to develop hectares of land in Las Piñas and Parañaque, both along the coastline of Manila Bay, which has been given up and declared illegal and the ECC expired.

“This and the declaration by Congress of the existence of a climate crisis and the two reports of the Nobel laureate group Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have long since rendered any decisions of the DENR made in 2012 irrelevant,” stressed Villar.

The senator said the SC can also take judicial notice of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act or RA 11038 which was passed in 2018.

“This legislated the now renamed Las Piñas Parañaque Wetland Park into a protected area,” said Villar, noting that this was included in the Ramsar Convention list of Wetlands of International Importance in 2013.

The legislated protected area, Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland, is entitled to a buffer zone in Manila Bay which cannot be reclaimed.

She related that the DENR is also determining the extent of buffer zone needed for the conservation of the protected wetland park.



“The DENR’s procedures on EIA should take into consideration all these 94 newly established Protected Areas,” said Villar, chair of the Senate environmental committee.

“We have long imagined that the ecological services like the flood drainage mechanisms and the filtering capacity of the soil will be there forever. But without proper care and paying the costs of that care, these services will dissipate. The EIA system must account for this degeneration,” she added.

The SC recently affirmed a Court of Appeals (CA) decision denying the petition for a Writ of Kalikasan filed by Villar and 315,000 petitioners to stop reclamation that is beside the said international important wetland.

According to Villar, the SC issued the decision eight years after the CA junked her petition to stop any reclamation project in the area.

She likewise emphasized that the DENR’s decision to allow the reclamation has long since been overtaken by multiple studies, many scientific and valuation findings, most of which were not in the case file.

“Worse, any environmental decision taken in an application for an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) only has a 5-year validity, considering the changes in the surrounding environment and new scientific findings that may happen,” Villar said.

She also pointed out that the ECC of Alltech has long since expired and the failure to start the project was not caused by this case.

She added that if the SC believes the DENR currently has sufficient technical capacity to make a determination in this case of all the factors that need to be taken into account, then why is our environment still on the decline.



12 nabbed for illegal quarrying in Rizal

[Ghio Ong](#) - The Philippine Star October 24, 2021 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Twelve persons have been arrested for alleged illegal quarry operations in Rodriguez, Rizal.

Heavy equipment and minerals worth P36.4 million were reportedly recovered from Ericson Cinco, Raul Garcia, Windel Bueno, Pablo Rimorin, Nico Yunapa, Roldan Bonife, Dexter Colas, Jojie Manzanillo, Albert Esto, Fernando Lopez, Randy Caganan and Danieboy Alejandro.

The suspects allegedly yielded 13 backhoes, three bulldozers, a drill rig, six dump trucks, six conveyor belts, 40 cubic meters of manufactured sand and 9,000 cubic meters of extracted and liberated aggregates.

Agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)'s Environmental Crime Division launched an anti-illegal mining operation in Barangay San Isidro recently.

The NBI said it received reports that a group of workers were conducting mining and mineral extraction at the site.

It was later learned that neither the Mines and Geosciences Bureau nor the Rizal provincial and Rodriguez municipal governments issued a permit for the quarry operations.

The suspects, along with a certain Jose Allan Abarra Cruz, have been charged with violation of Republic Act 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act.



Volume of treated wastewater rises in Metro Manila with more facilities in place

October 22, 2021 | 6:20 pm



Wastewater volumes in Metro Manila rose 32% in 2019 from their levels in 2010, while the percentage of wastewater treated grew to 14.5% from 9.7% over the same period, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

“The volume of wastewater generated increased from 624.46 million cubic meters in 2010 to 821.55 million cubic meters in 2019 for the east and west zones of Metro Manila, collectively,” National Statistician Claire Dennis S. Mapa said in a statement Thursday.

“The percentage of wastewater collected and treated relative to the amount of wastewater generated exhibited an increasing trend during the 10-year period,” he added.

In Metro Manila’s east and west zones combined, wastewater treatment increased from 9.7% in 2010 to 14.5% in 2019.

“The projected waste generation increased by 19.8% from 48,070 tons per day in 2010 to 57,579 tons per day in 2019,” Mr. Mapa noted.

The PSA said the estimate is derived from the waste generation rate per capita multiplied by the population.

The PSA was citing data from the two water concession holders in the capital, Manila Water Co., Inc. and Maynilad Water Services, Inc.

Projections of waste generation were based on data from the Environmental Management Bureau.

Maynilad, the west zone water supplier, announced in September a partnership with the Tourism department on a wastewater management campaign to increase public awareness of environmental protection and sustainable tourism.

Under the partnership, the Tourism department and Maynilad will award “seal of good toilet-keeping” to 24 tourist destinations such as parks, historical sites, and restaurants within the water provider’s service area.

In February, Manila Water, the east zone provider, broke ground on its P4.16-billion Aglipay sewage treatment plant in Mandaluyong City, which can treat 60 million liters per day.



Manila Water said the plant is the company's 42nd sewage treatment facility and will treat wastewater from a 2,115-hectare catchment covering Mandaluyong, San Juan, and Quezon City.

Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which has a majority stake in Maynilad, is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT, Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has an interest in BusinessWorld through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls.

– **Arjay L. Balinbin**

Source: https://www.bworldonline.com/volume-of-treated-wastewater-rises-in-metro-manila-with-more-facilities-in-place/?fbclid=IwAR2sMshDs6ViW_sf0fm4P8wscT81Zv0VfBaMSR_n7PKhQVovcT_S_1-ZMuM



DOST backs establishment of waste-to-energy facility in Laguna

Published October 23, 2021, 1:17 PM by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) threw all-out support to the establishment of a 25-kilowatt (kW) waste-to-energy (WTE) facility in Los Baños, Laguna, citing the “rapidly increasing” waste generation in the country.



Waste-to-energy (WTE) facility in Los Baños, Laguna. (DOST Secretary Fortunato “Boy” T. de la Peña’s Facebook page)

DOST Secretary Fortunato “Boy” T. de la Peña graced the opening of the WTE facility which uses a direct combustion process for municipal solid waste.

“DOST supported the establishment of the 25kW Waste-To-Energy (WTE) Facility using a direct combustion process for municipal solid waste as a possible solution to ever-increasing municipal solid waste production in the country,” he said in a Facebook post on Friday night, Oct. 22.

He said to prove that WTE works has been one of my wishes at the start of my term as the DOST chief.

“Our neighboring countries like Singapore and Taiwan have functioning WTE facilities, so why can’t we do it here in the country? Earlier this week, I was able to see that vision finally fulfilled when we visited and inspected a fully-functioning WTE facility in Los Baños, Laguna.”

The DOST chief explained the direct combustion system will be fed with solid wastes generated by the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

“The combustible fraction of the solid waste will be fed into a combustion chamber with a moving grate and the heat will be recovered using a steam, which will be fed into a steam turbine to generate 25kW of power.”



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the establishment of a 25-kilowatt (kW) waste-to-energy (WTE) facility in Los Baños, Laguna. (DOST Secretary Fortunato “Boy” T. de la Peña’s Facebook page)



He said the gas emissions during combustion will be monitored using a continuous emission monitoring system (CEMS) and Gas Chromatograph-Multi Spectrometer (GC-MS).

The DOST chief said a technical study zeroed in on the efficiency of the energy recovery as power from municipal solid waste to assess whether a WTE direct combustion technology is feasible in the Philippines. "Mitigation control steps for the gas emission will also be evaluated to ensure the process will be environmentally acceptable."

He said the two-year project sought to establish a 25-kW waste-to-energy (WTE) facility for municipal solid waste based on a direct combustion technology.

Led by Dr. Manolito E. Bambase Jr., the project also aims to monitor and characterize the flue gas emissions generated by the WTE process; assess the economic viability and environmental impacts of the WTE process; and provide action plans and recommendations for the implementation of a WTE direct combustion process as a potential option of municipal solid waste management in the Philippines. The project is funded by the DOST's Grants-in-Aid (GIA) program.



DOST Secretary Fortunato "Boy" T. de la Peña visits and inspects on Oct. 20, 2021, a 25-kilowatt (kW) waste-to-energy (WTE) facility in Los Baños, Laguna. (DOST Secretary Fortunato "Boy" T. de la Peña's Facebook page)

De la Peña said the initiative can benefit policymakers, government institutions, lawmakers, and energy sector in the country.

"In the municipality level, the proposed technology can be utilized to resolve the issue of waste disposal of the university and of Los Baños. The facility can be used to treat the wastes of the university and its nearby communities."

He laments that waste generation has become a major problem especially in highly populated areas such as Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog, and Central Luzon.

"We expect that this project will provide a science-based data on waste-to-energy technology through direct combustion system, aid in solid waste management scheme of the country by providing a technology that is compliant to international environmental standards, and aid in the assessment and improvement of WTE technologies and possibly revive the incinerations plant in the country."



EU eyes collab with small PH towns on environment projects

By Liza Agoot **October 23, 2021, 11:13 am**



COLLABORATION. The European Union (EU) is eyeing collaborations with small communities in the Philippines, especially on limiting the use of plastics, in the next seven years, EU Ambassador to the Philippines Luc Veron says on Friday (Oct. 22, 2021). He said they are also looking into collaborations on indigenous peoples' concerns, peacebuilding, and rule of law. *(PNA photo by Liza T. Agoot)*

ITOGON, Benguet – The European Union (EU) sees possibilities for collaboration projects related to climate change and waste management in small towns in the Philippines, including the Cordillera region, in the next seven years.

EU Ambassador to the Philippines Luc Veron, in a media interview on Friday, said they are into projects, "particularly around circular economy in the management of waste, which is very important."

The United Nations defines a circular economy as a model in which products and materials are designed in such a way that they can be reused, remanufactured, recycled, or recovered and thus maintained in the economy for as long as possible.

Veron said their focus in the next seven years of cooperation with the Philippines is on limiting the use of plastic materials.

Christoph Wagner, head of the development section of the EU Delegation, noted that "circular economy is a bigger concept that reduces wastes, producing materials and changes the way how the economy works."

The EU's idea is to go to low-class municipalities for cooperation.

"We are looking for programs on certain aspects related to waste, on the side of climate change, rule of law, and peacebuilding," Wagner said.

The EU mission, he said, has ongoing projects in the Cordillera where they work with indigenous people communities for the protection of rights and programs with young people.

Veron said whenever they go around the country, they make it a point to meet with local officials so they could see and learn what is on the field.

"We do have some experience and we can share our experience and we can also learn from the experience of the municipalities in the Philippines," he said.

The EU delegation visited Itogon, Benguet on Friday to turn over disaster risk reduction equipment for nine villages under the PHP22-million EMPOWER project. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1157537>



Climate change: Why Australia refuses to give up coal

By Frances Mao
BBC News, Sydney



Scott Morrison famously praised coal's value to Australia in a parliamentary debate on renewable energy in 2017

In a world racing to reduce pollution, Australia is a stark outlier.

It is one of the dirtiest countries per head of population and a massive global supplier of fossil fuels. Unusually for a rich nation, it also still burns coal for most of its electricity.

Australia's 2030 emissions target - a 26% cut on 2005 levels - is half the US and UK benchmarks.

Canberra has also resisted joining the two-thirds of countries who have pledged net zero emissions by 2050.

And instead of phasing out coal - the worst fossil fuel - it's committed to digging for more.

So it's no surprise that Australia is being viewed as a "bad guy" going into the COP26 global climate talks in Glasgow, analysts say.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison's government is under huge pressure to do more.

Loyalty to the industry

Mining has helped drive Australia's economy for decades, and coal remains the country's second-biggest export.

Only Indonesia sells more coal than Australia globally.

The government often credits coal for much of the country's wealth, but many analysts argue this is overblown.

Coal exports totalled A\$55bn (£29bn; \$40bn) last year, but most of this wealth was kept by mining companies. Less than a tenth went to Australia directly - that's about 1% of national revenue.

The coal workforce of 40,000 is about half the size of McDonald's in Australia. But coal jobs do sustain some rural communities.



Australia has 99 operating coal mines, and ambitions to build more

The mining sector has always wielded influence in Canberra.

Though most voters want tougher climate action, some coal towns lie in swing constituencies that are key to winning elections.

The mining lobby has "distorted" much policy over the years, says Prof Samantha Hepburn, a climate law expert at Deakin University.

The current government dismantled Australia's emissions trading scheme in 2014, shortly after winning power in a campaign heavily backed by mining interests.

It's never again tried to put a price on carbon, or to restrict emissions from fossil fuel producers. Instead it's provided extra support to coal. This includes:

- **Approving new mines and extensions:** There are over 80 proposed projects including plant upgrades
- **Tax subsidies:** About A\$10bn went to fossil fuel companies last year alone
- **'Clean coal' investments:** Schemes such as carbon capture and storage, often criticised as ineffective

Chasing a shrinking market

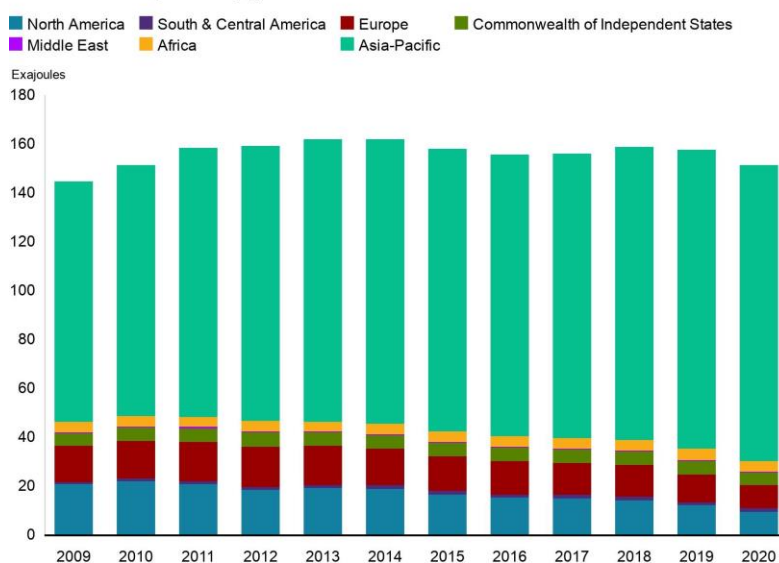
Australia argues coal will continue to generate national wealth for decades to come.

It talks up demand in Asia, particularly from industrialising economies.

China and India alone account for 64% of global coal consumption. Demand in Indonesia and Vietnam has also surged.

But analysts say there's no long-term market as countries race to meet emissions goals.

Coal consumption by year



Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy



Australia's biggest coal buyers - Japan, South Korea and China - have all pledged net zero targets by mid-century.

Coal use has already plunged in North America and Europe. The G7 rich nations and China, as well as many banks, have committed to stop financing overseas coal projects.

"Australia knows the party is over. But the police haven't been called yet. So they'll continue to party on until they're stopped," says Richie Merzian, a climate expert at the Australia Institute.

Missing the green opportunity?

Australia could end its literally toxic relationship with coal fairly quickly, experts say.

Its economy is stable and well-diversified to absorb the loss of coal exports.

But Australia controversially sees liquified natural gas - another dirty fuel - as its next big domestic energy source.

The government has already pledged half a billion dollars to new gas basins and plants, defying global calls for an end to new fossil fuel projects.

This has frustrated those who say Australia should be investing to become a renewables superpower.

As one of the sunniest and windiest continents on Earth, Australia is "uniquely placed to benefit economically" from its abundant natural resources, says the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an intergovernmental organisation.

Its industries are also well positioned to pivot to new export markets like green steel and aluminium.

Advocates say coal workers could instead mine for the rare minerals needed for batteries and magnets that will power renewable energy grids.

Canberra has put some money into renewables, but the majority has come from state governments and businesses.

Its allegiance to fossil fuels has scuppered progress, critics say.

The government has cut its renewables spending in recent years, and there is no current national clean energy target.

It has also withdrawn from the UN's Green Climate Fund, and tried to change one local fund's mandate so taxpayer money could go to coal projects instead.

"The rest of the world is accelerating past coal," says the Climate Council, a group of scientists. "Australia can either choose to reap the opportunities of this transition, or be left poorer and less secure."

24 OCTOBER 2021, SUNDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Philippines logs 5,807 more coronavirus infections

Philstar.com October 23, 2021 | 4:00pm



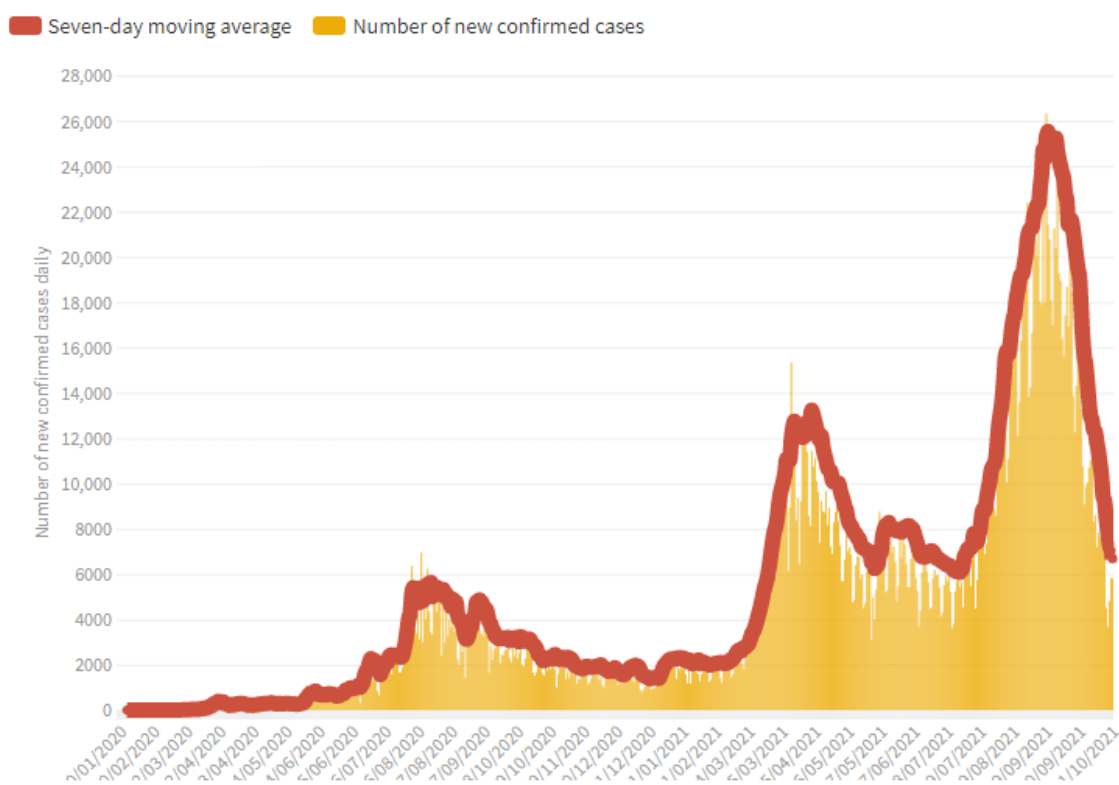
Joggers and cyclists enjoy the open air as they exercise along the riverbanks in Marikina City on Friday morning, Oct. 22, 2021.

The STAR / Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health on Saturday reported 5,807 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the country’s total number of coronavirus infections to 2,751,667.

- Active cases: 63,051 or 2.3% of the total
- Fatalities: 65, pushing the death toll to 41,585
- Recoveries: 9,578, totalling to 2,647,031

COVID-19 cases in the Philippines



Source: [Department of Health](#) • As of October 23, 2021, 4 p.m.



Cases dropping

- This is the 13th consecutive day that the country logged COVID-19 cases in four-digit numbers, indicating a continued decrease in infections.
- OCTA Research fellow Guido David said that the seven-day average of new cases in Metro Manila dropped below 1,000 to just 996. Last week it was at 1,762, he said.
- Guido added that the reproduction rate in the capital region was at 0.45, while the positivity rate dropped to 7% from 10% last week.
- Over one million doses of Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine which were procured by the national government through a loan from the Asian Development Bank arrived Friday night.



NCR shift to alert level 2 likely, officials say

Published 16 hours ago on October 23, 2021 03:11 PM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) [@tribunephil_MJB](#)



The government is eyeing to loosen quarantine restrictions in Metro Manila next month if the region sustains a downward trend in coronavirus infections, officials said Saturday.

Speaking at a televised briefing, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the possibility of the capital region's shift from alert level 3 to alert level 2 was "very high" based on the decreasing number of Covid-19 cases and hospital admissions.

"We hope this gets maintained, so we can de-escalate the alert level in Metro Manila come November," she told reporters.

Interior Undersecretary Epimaco Densing III, in a separate interview, said the government may impose alert level 2 in the metro if its daily tally drops to 1,000 from the current record of 1,500 to 1,600.

"If that goes down to less than 1,000 [cases], it's possible," he said, responding to a query whether Metro Manila will be downgraded to a more relaxed alert level.

"We should be disciplined to prevent the spread of Covid-19. If we're all vaccinated and our health care capacity improves, the possibility of alert level 2 is not too far," Densing added.

He also justified the metro's possible shift to alert level 2, saying the intensive care unit bed utilization rate in the region dropped to 49 percent.

Meanwhile, 37 percent of isolation beds, 39 percent of ward beds, and 37 percent of ventilators in Metro Manila have been occupied.

Officials said the decrease in hospital admissions were partly due to the increasing number of vaccinated people in the region, since anti-coronavirus shots were deemed effective in preventing severe Covid-19 infection.

As of Wednesday, some 7.95 million Metro Manila residents have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19, according to government data. The figure accounted for 81 percent of the region's target vaccine beneficiaries.

On the other hand, 9.12 million individuals or 93 percent of the target population in the metro have been partially vaccinated, or waiting for their second vaccine shots.



Business groups have long been calling on the government to ease quarantine restrictions in the capital. Shifting to alert level 2 means more people may access commercial establishments located in the metro, thus spurring economic growth.

In areas under alert level 3, the indoor operations of food establishments, fitness studios, and cinemas are limited to fully-vaccinated individuals at 30 percent of venue capacity. It expands to 50 percent under alert level 2, and subsequently, 100 percent under alert level 1 or the most-relaxed quarantine level.

At present, Negros Oriental and Davao Occidental have been placed under alert level 4, the second strictest of the five-tier experimental lockdown scheme.

Meanwhile, the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Siquijor, Davao City and Davao del Norte have been placed by the task force under alert level 3, similar to Metro Manila's quarantine level at present.

Batangas, Quezon Province, Lucena City, Bohol, Cebu City, Lapu-Lapu City, Mandaue City, Cebu Province, Davao de Oro, Davao del Sur, and Davao Oriental were classified under alert level 2.

Alert level 1 is not yet hoisted in any province or city, while the rest of the country remains under varying levels of the old quarantine system.

OCTA: NCR's 7-day case average below 1,000 again

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Oct 23, 2021 3:15:39 PM



FILE PHOTO

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, October 23) — The seven-day average of new coronavirus cases in Metro Manila dropped to below 1,000 for the first time since July 22 to 28, OCTA Research fellow Guido David said Saturday.

The average this week is 996 — 43% lower than last week's 1,762, David [said on Twitter](#).

He said the positivity rate also went down to 7% from the 10% recorded seven days ago, but it still has not reached the below 5% set by the World Health Organization.

The reproduction number in the National Capital Region (NCR) was 0.45, David added. Medical experts have said the ideal reproduction number should be one or less, as anything higher means there is still significant community transmission.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire, for her part, said the current COVID-19 bed utilization rate in Metro Manila is low at 39% while the intensive care unit occupancy stands at 48%.

Vergeire said in a government briefing she sees a "very high" possibility that NCR could shift to Alert Level 2 from 3 if cases and coronavirus-related admissions continue to drop.

Metro Manila is under Alert Level 3 for the second half of October.



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 588

OKTUBRE 23, 2021

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

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

2.3%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
63,051

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

96.2%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
2,647,031

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.51%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
41,585

MGA BAGONG KASO **5,807**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **9,578**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **65**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **2,751,667**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING OKTUBRE 21

DATOS NGAYONG OKTUBRE 23
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG OKTUBRE 21

10.3%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

58,834

BILANG NG
TINEST

HALOS

84.2%

ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

ALAMIN
ANG TAMANG
IMPORMASYON

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (4.3K TOTAL BEDS)
55% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (21.1K TOTAL BEDS)
42% Utilized

WARD BEDS (14.6K TOTAL BEDS)
40% Utilized

VENTILATORS (3.3K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
38% Utilized

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (1.5K TOTAL BEDS)
49% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.9K TOTAL BEDS)
37% Utilized

WARD BEDS (4.1K TOTAL BEDS)
36% Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
36% Utilized

KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO

Mild 77.7%

6.5% Asymptomatic

2.1% Critical

4.9% Severe

8.89% Moderate



UPDATE AND MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Panatilihin natin ang ating masusing pag-iingat saan man tayo naroroon, dahil ang ating nagkakaisang pagsunod sa **Minimum Public Health Standards** ang susi sa ating kaligtasan. Agad ding makipag-ugnayan sa ating **BHERTS o One COVID Referral Center** sa oras na makaramdam ng sintomas, upang mabawasan ang pagkakataong makahawa pa. Maaabot ang One COVID Referral Center sa **1555, (02)886-505-00, 0915-777-7777, o sa 0919-977-3333**.

Para sa iba pang pangangailangang medikal, puntahan ang <http://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine> upang malaman kung papaano maabot ang serbisyo ng ating **Telemedicine Service Providers**, at ang <http://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines> para maabot ang ating mga ospital sa lalong mabilis na panahon.



Ihahanap ka namin ng lugar para mag-isolate o magpagamot, tumawag lang sa sumusunod:

SMART: 0919 977 3333
GLOBE: 0915 777 7777
TEL NO: (02) 886 505 00



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?

I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH

MESSANGER: Department of Health PH

KONTRACOVID PH: kontracovid.ph



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App

O Gamiting ang WEBAPP

at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

OfficialDOHgov

@DOHgovph

doh.gov.ph

(02) 894-COVID / 1555

24 OCTOBER 2021, SUNDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_fwya3680

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#dolomitesand

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engr. berto

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MANILA

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
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