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**DENR**

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## High hopes for DENR enforcement bureau creation



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By [TDT @tribunephil](#)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has expressed his optimism on the immediate creation of the agency's Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) as two House committees held a joint meeting on proposed measures seeking to strengthen the enforcement of the country's environmental laws.

In a statement, Cimatu stressed that there is an urgent need to reform the implementation of environmental laws in the Philippines to ensure the protection of the nation's environmental resources.

"What we are seeing is a sense of urgency and concerted effort at the House of Representatives and the Senate to reform the implementation of environmental laws of the land and establish a strong institution whose singular task is to be the government's backbone in running after violators of our environmental laws like illegal loggers and wildlife poachers," Cimatu said.

To recall, a joint hearing of the House Committee on Government Reorganization and Committee on Natural Resources was held on 3 March for the deliberations of six proposed measures to strengthen environmental laws.

At least four of the six House Bills (HB) are pushing for the creation of the EPEB — which is seen as a permanent enforcement bureau under the DENR — and it includes HB 6973 filed by Deputy Speaker and Antique Representative Loren Legarda; HB 7873 by Deputy Speaker and South Cotabato, 2nd Dist. Rep. Ferdinand L. Hernandez; HB 7670 by Ilocos Norte, 2nd Dist. Rep. Angelo Marcos Barba; and HB 8028 by Camarines Sur, 2nd Dist. Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" F. Villafuerte.

Meantime, two counterpart bills have already been filed at the Senate — Senate Bill (SB) 1878 filed by Senator Nancy Binay and SB 1579 filed by Senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.



## High hopes for DENR enforcement bureau creation

The House measures seek the transfer of DENR line bureaus, Environmental Management Bureau and Biodiversity Management Bureau, to form the National Environmental Protection Agency or NEPA.

During the meeting, the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the National Bureau of Investigation also expressed their support for the EPEB creation.

“The enforcement of natural resources and environmental laws, rules and regulations is within the powers and functions of the DENR pursuant to the Administrative Code,” said DoJ director Atty. Jane Garcia-Doble.

“Based on our reading of Section 5 of HB 3794, we find that NEPA has no specific powers and function related to enforcement,” she added.



## DENR backs creation of enforcement bureau

By [Jed Macapagal](#)

-March 25, 2021

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is batting for the creation of the Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) to strengthen the enforcement of the country's environmental and mining laws.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said there are four bills in the House of Representatives and two counterpart Senate bills advocating the creation of this body.

Cimatu said the bills aim "to reform the implementation of environmental laws of the land and establish a strong institution whose singular task is to be the government's backbone in running after violators of our environmental laws like illegal loggers and wildlife poachers."

Nilo Tamera, executive director of the agency's Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force, said lodging of regulatory and enforcement functions in a single office became problematic in some cases but EPEB will consolidate and strengthen DENR's mandate to enforce environmental laws through a single office whose core function is exclusively enforcement.

Habeas Corpuz, environmental crime division officer of the National Bureau of Investigation, said EPEB to further strengthen the enforcement of environmental laws.



## Cimatu: Bicol River dredging, massive bamboo planting, plan for resettlement begin on March 23

By DENR Published on March 24, 2021

QUEZON CITY, Mar. 24 -- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary and Task Force Build Back Better (TF BBB) Chairman Roy A. Cimatu has announced the dredging of sandbars along a narrow section of the 94-kilometer Bicol River starting March 23.

"TF BBB's rehabilitation efforts on the Bicol River completes the triumvirate targets to which we have committed ourselves to complete within the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte for Cagayan River, Marikina River, and Bicol River," Cimatu said.

Cimatu pointed out that the TF BBB has early on mounted activities, such as easement recovery and river bank stabilization efforts through planting and raising of bamboos, prior to the March 23 launch.

"In fact, 49,509 bamboo seedlings have already been planted by some 850 beneficiaries of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) which provided some 1,000 food packs for these planter-volunteers," Cimatu said.

The area planted with bamboo covers a total of 173 hectares located in 33 barangays--one in Catanduanes, 24 in Camarines Sur, four in Camarines Norte, and four in Albay.

The DSWD is also expected to provide additional 1,000 food packs for its beneficiaries tapped for the planting activity through its food-for-work initiative under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program.

The beneficiaries will receive family food packs on the last day of planting activities.

Cimatu added that at least 171 lots have been identified by the National Housing Authority (NHA) for resettlement of informal settlers affected by the Bicol River flooding during the onslaught of typhoons Ulysses and Rolly in 2020.

The environment chief will be represented by DENR Undersecretary Rodolfo Garcia during the ceremonial launch of dredging and massive bamboo planting activities in Camaligan, Camarines Sur.

Garcia will be joined by Camarines Sur Gov. Miguel Luis Villafuerte and NHA General Manager Marcelino Escalada Jr., who also heads the TF BBB in Bicol region.

The Department of Public and Highways (DPWH) has estimated around 58,235 cubic meters of deposited sand materials that will be dredged from the middle section of Bicol River.

Citing the DPWH figures, DENR Regional Executive Director for Region 5 Antonio Abawag said the constricted portion of Bicol River in Camaligan is currently 31 meters wide from its ideal width of 80 meters.

He said the sandbar to be dredged is about 49 meters wide and 500 meters long.

DPWH-Bicol Region Assistant Director Gerald Pacanan said the dredging will also require a depth of five meters to restore the river's natural flow rate.



## Cimatu: Bicol River dredging, massive bamboo planting, plan for resettlement begin on March 23

Pacanan reported that the dredging activity will require 281 days using two amphibious excavators, which have a capacity of 17.28 cubic meters per hour each, for a total of 1,686 working hours at six hours per day.

He said the completion can be achieved in 52 days if a bigger multi-purpose amphibious excavator with a capacity of 153 cubic meters per hour can be added to the two excavators, resulting in reduced total working hours of 311 hours at six hours per day.

The Bicol River is the eighth largest river in the country in terms of drainage basin size.

It encompasses 90 percent of Camarines Sur and Albay, while the rest lies in Camarines Norte. (DENR)



## Bicol River Basin commences rehab after ceremonial dredging, bamboo planting activity

By Ana-Liza S. Macatangay Published on March 24, 2021



Photo credits: DCaballero-PIARO5

CAMALIGAN, Camarines Sur, March 24 (PIA) -- The ceremonial dredging and bamboo planting yesterday held in this municipality, March 23, Tuesday signals the commencement of the Bicol River Basin Restoration Project that would minimize flood risk and restore the natural state and flow of the said waterways.

Under the Build Back Better Task Force (BBB Task Force), created through Executive Order 120 signed by President Duterte last Nov. 18, all government agencies with specific roles in the river rehab, will closely coordinate with the LGU and the provincial government to “heal” the 94-kilometer stretch of the Bicol River and ensure that rehab efforts will be immediately carried out.

It will be recalled that the past typhoons that battered the Bicol Region, especially the municipalities of Camarines Sur, caused heavy flooding and inundated most of the barangays in flood-prone barangays and even swamped most of the rivers and spillways causing them to overflow and to be rendered unpassable.

### Gov. Migz to create Bicol River Development Council

Camarines Sur Governor Miguel Villafuerte extended his gratitude to President Rodrigo Duterte for heeding his request to make the immediate rehabilitation of the Bicol River Basin as a priority project. He pointed out that the Basin overflowed every time there is a strong typhoon or even during a heavy downpour which he said is one of the reasons for the occurrence of severe flooding, not just in Camarines Sur but also in the neighboring provinces.

## Bicol River Basin commences rehab after ceremonial dredging, bamboo planting activity



Camarines Sur Governor Miguel "Migz" Villafuerte during the Buildd Back Better Task Force Ceremonial Dredging and Bamboo Planting ceremony held March 23, 2020 , Camaligan, Camarines Sur (PHoto credits: Danica Caballero-PIARO5)

“This week, I will be signing an executive order creating a Bicol River Development Council. This will be composed of council members and co-partners such as the DPWH, DENR, NHA, Provincial Government of CamSur and other agencies which will have a significant role in the rehabilitation of the Bicol River Basin,” Villafuerte added.

Villafuerte gratefully said that from a vision, the rehab project is now a reality.

“It is very important that we build back better the Bicol River because it is not only the 8th largest river in the entire Philippines, but because hundreds of barangays and three provinces will benefit from this project. The most important thing now is to fix, develop, dredge and promote it,” the governor added.

Under the rehab plan, some 58,235 cubic meters of deposited silt or sludge will be removed from the middle portion of Bicol River in Camaligan.

### Whole of Nation Approach

BBB Task Force is a whole-government post-disaster rehab and recovery program of the government that endeavors to strengthen rehabilitation and recovery efforts in typhoon-hit areas. It is a collaborative effort of 25 to 27 national government agencies.

Some of the agencies involved in the BBBTF include DPWH, National Housing Authority (NHA), Dept. of Human Settlement, National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), Office of the Civil Defense, Office of the Presidential Adviser for Bicol Affairs and the local government of Camaligan headed by Mayor Marilou Hirose and the provincial government of Camarines Sur, among others.





## Bicol River Basin commences rehab after ceremonial dredging, bamboo planting activity

BBB Task Force is divided into different key result areas (KRAs).

KRA<sub>1</sub> will be spearheaded by DPWH whose area of focus will be the dredging of the river system. KRA<sub>2</sub> will be under the Dept. of Human Settlement and Development (DHSUD). They are in charge of looking for a safe place where vulnerable communities living in risk areas can transfer. KRA<sub>3</sub>'s lead agency is the Department of National Defense (DND) for the restoration of lifelines after a disaster such as communication lines, transportation and electricity.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is in charge of KRA<sub>4</sub> where they will focus on the livelihood projects for those affected by calamities; KRA<sub>5</sub> is all about governance and will be spearheaded by DILG. They have to check on the compliance of LGUs in implementing their comprehensive land use plans and lastly, the KRA<sub>6</sub> where DENR will take the lead, will be in charge of river bank restoration and ensure that environment laws are enforced. (with reports from ACarinan, PIA<sub>5</sub>/Camarines Sur)

## DENR's solid waste management initiatives on right track— Antiporda

By DENR Published on March 24, 2021

QUEZON CITY, Mar. 24 -- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda sees the recent inclusion of plastic softdrink straws and plastic coffee stirrers in the list of non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAP) in the country as a big boost in the government's solid waste management initiative.

Antiporda said the recent development makes DENR all the more determined to pursue its solid waste management initiatives through the Tayo ang Kalikasan (TAK) campaign.

"With the initial listing of these two items in the NEAP, we are all the more encouraged to uphold our mandate and advocacy on solid waste management despite the lingering pandemic in the country," he said.

Inspired by the inclusion of plastic softdrink straws and plastic coffee stirrers in the NEAP list, Antiporda said DENR regional offices, such as the DENR-MIMAROPA have been stepping up their TAK campaign, which primarily aims to enhance people's awareness on Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 with the end goal of substantially reducing the volume of plastic wastes and prevent these from polluting the environment.

The LGUs in the region, he said, also support the inclusion of the two plastic items in the NEAP list.

Some cities and municipalities already have their own local ordinances which include banning these two unnecessary plastic items, Antiporda said.

"We have LGUs that have started banning plastic coffee stirrers and plastic softdrink straws, such as in El Nido, Palawan. Though there have been challenges in this pandemic, I am glad that our LGUs already realized the damage of such unnecessary items to the environment and that they are our allies in our battle against improper solid waste disposal," he explained.

DENR-MIMAROPA also plans to boost its partnership with universities for the selection of students as Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Ambassadors.

The students will be trained to promote environmental protection and conservation with a focus on the eradication of unnecessary single-use plastics in their respective schools and communities.

The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Taytay, Palawan conducted training programs for selected ENR Ambassadors, who in turn share these learnings to other people.

The region's goal is to deputize groups of ENR Ambassadors for the 15 Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Offices (PENROs) and CENROs, with six ENR Ambassadors for each office.

It will also provide wi-fi modems and gadgets for the ENR Ambassadors to help in their tasks despite the closure of schools brought about by the pandemic.



## DENR's solid waste management initiatives on right track— Antiporda

Aside from the schools and LGUs as TAK local chapters, the DENR regional office is eyeing partnerships with the business and religious sectors to create policies that would prohibit the use of unnecessary single-use plastics in their establishments.

DENR-MIMAROPA also plans to incorporate income-generating opportunities in the creation of TAK chapters in the region.

Since 2018, the regional office has successfully established TAK local chapters in El Nido, Palawan; Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro; and San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

It has also joined hands with the Girl Scouts of the Philippines in Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro and the Apo Reef Natural Park in Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro.

The TAK campaign includes information, education, and communication activities, workshops, online campaigns, innovative solutions, and community involvement to achieve significant reduction of wastes, among others.

"Our ultimate goal is to ban the use of unnecessary single-use plastics in all cities and municipalities in the region. If we all work together, we can defeat the problem on plastic pollution and save communities and the next generation," Antiporda said.

Antiporda is concurrently the Supervising Undersecretary for Task Force Tayo ang Kalikasan. (DENR)



## KABABAIHAN MAHALAGA SA CLIMATE CHANGE

**T**AMA po lamang ng para matugunan ang lumalalang problema sa climate change at kasalukuyang pandemya ay dapat pagtuunan ng pansin ng bawat isang Pinoy ang aktibong partisipasyon ng kababaihan sa mga polisiya at programa ng gobierno.

"Ang ating mga kababaihan, lalo na ang ating mga kababaihan na nagmumula sa ating mga low-income communities, ay kabilang sa mga pinaka-apektado ng climate change at COVID-19, dahil sila ay mayroong mas kaunting resources at impormasyon na magagamit upang labanan ang epekto ng mga ito," ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change Analiza Rebuella-Teh.

Sa 2020 report ng international climate research organization Project Drawdown, ang pagpapalakas sa mga kababaihan sa developing countries tulad ng Pilipinas ay pumapangalawa sa 76 solutions para sa "curbing global warming to 2 degrees Celsius". "Ang mga kababaihan rin ay may likas na kagalingan sa pag-adapt sa climate change. Ang pagbibigay edukasyon sa ating mga kababaihan at batang babae ay nakakatulong din upang itaas ang kanilang resilience mula sa mga kalamidad," sabi ni Teh na bumabase sa naturang ulat.

Sa National Women's Month celebration ngayong taon, binigyang diin ng report ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang kahalagahan ng kababaihan upang magkaroon ng pagbabago tungkol sa problema sa climate crisis at COVID-19.

Ang month-long event ay nakatutok sa patas at aktibong partisipasyon ng kababaihan sa mga isyu patungkol sa environment, partikular na ang climate change, disaster risk reduction at health crisis.

"For women's month this year, we highlight on expanding and upscaling transformative actions of individuals, women, men, groups and communities, that is why we are taking centerstage a climate and disaster resiliency recognition awards scheme, dubbed as, 'Mga Kwentong KLIMALikasan Tungo sa Katatagan' (Stories on climate-environment towards stability)," saad ni Teh.

Layunin ng DENR sa pamamagitan ng Gender and Development Office and Climate Change Service (CCS) na mabigyan ng halaga ang kuwento ng mga indibidwal at grupo kung ano ang epekto ng climate change sa kanilang komunidad at paano nila ito nilalabanan sa pamamagitan ng mga programa sa environmental protection and conservation, climate change at disaster risk reduction.

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### WASTE SEGREGATION DAPAT IPATUPAD NG LGU'S

ISANG ordinansa na nag-aatas sa mga barangay na ipatupad ang waste segregation ang iminungkahing ipasa ng Department of

Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa local government units (LGUs).

Sinabi ni DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGUs Concerns Benny D. Antiporda, dapat na tutukan ng mga lungsod at munisipalidad sa buong bansa ang waste segregation mula sa pinanggalingan nito o waste segregation at source para maging epektibo ang pagkolekta at pagtapon sa mga basura.

Muling nanawagan si Antiporda na maging epektibo ang pangangasiwa sa solid waste sa ginanap na dialogue sa Cavite provincial, city, at municipal environment officers na inorganisa ng grupong EcoWaste Coalition noong Marso 3. "Propose to your local council to create an ordinance that will act on those who do not practice segregation in their barangays," sabi ni Antiporda.

"It is already stated in RA (Republic Act) 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000), but let us strengthen it with the help of your council," dagdag pa nito.

Inirekomenda rin ni Antiporda na siya ring alternate chair ng National Solid Waste Management Commission, na bumuo ng inter-barangay enforcement group o magtatalaga ng "environmental marshals" sa bawat barangay ng lungsod at munisipalidad upang mag-monitor sa solid waste management practices ng katabing barangay.

Hinikayat din nito ang Cavite LGU representatives na talakayin sa kanilang local chief executives na maglaan ng pondo upang mabigyan ng solusyon ang problema sa paghakot ng biodegradable at residual waste.

"Kindly tell your mayors to allocate funds for biodegradable and residual wastes," saad pa ni Antiporda. Batay sa data ng Provincial Government – Environment and Natural Resources Office ng Cavite, 58.78% ng mga nakukuhang basura sa probinsiya ay biodegradable habang ang 28.19% naman ay residual wastes.

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### KALAGAYAN NG QUARANTINE SA BANSANG PATULOY NA MINOMONITOR

PATULOY na minomonitor po ng gobierno ang mga kaso ngayong buong Marso upang siyang maging basehan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte para sa gagawing rekomendasyon ng quarantine status sa buwan ng Abril.

Sa matuling sabi ay nakasalalay sa pagtaas ng kaso ng COVID-19 ang magiging quarantine status sa Abril kung kaya't patuloy ang kanilang pagmomonitor sa mga nangyayari ngayon sa paglaas ng bilang sa Pasay City at iba pang areas ng Metro Manila.

Sinabi ni Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles na ang genome

## Ang MANUNURI

Andy Verde



sequencing ang kailangan ngayon lalo na sa Kamaynilaan para ma-detect ang South African at UK variants at ang sinasabi pang dalawang worrisome na variants.

Magugunita na nitong nakalipas na mga araw ay nakapagtala ang Department of Health ng mahigit na 3,000 na kaso ng COVID-19, dahil dito kaya pinulong na rin umano ng kagawaran ang mga ospital sa Metro Manila para talakayin ang pagtaas ng kaso.

Sang-ayon naman ang nakakarami nating kababayan sa naging desisyon ng Metro Manila Mayors na ipagpaliban ang pagbubukas ng mga sinehan at arcades sa National Capital Region (NCR) sa gitna ng patuloy na pagtaas ng coronavirus sa bansa.

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SAMANTALA nakararanas daw ngayon ng "red flag" ang mga ospital dahil sa pagsirit ng mga kaso sa maigsing panahon na inamin nitong si Philippine General Hospital spokesperson Jonas del Rosario.

Hindi isinantabi ng health expert ang posibleng kagagawan ng mga natuklasang bagong variant ang pagtaas ng mga kaso.

Na base sa data ng OCTA Research Group, higit na mataas ang pagtaas ng kaso ng COVID-19 sa Metro Manila ngayon kumpara noong Hulyo-Agosto 2020 na nakapag-rekord daw ng average 1.025 bagong kaso sa NCR mula Pebrero 28 hanggang Marso 6. Tumaas ito ng 42 porsyento kumpara sa datos ng sinundang linggo at tumaas ng 130 porsyento kumpara sa nakalipas na dalawang linggo nito.

Sinasabi na aminado daw ang OCTA Group na maaaring dulot nga ito ng bagong strain ng virus tulad ng South African, United Kingdom at iba pang mutations na higit na nakakahawa kumpara sa orihinal na variant na tumaas din ang reproduction rate ng NCR sa 1.66 na huling naitala noong Hulyo 2020.



## Tagalog PR: MGB Mimaropa, nagbigay parangal sa #WonderJuanas ng industriya ng pagmimina

By MGB MIMAROPA Published on March 24, 2021



Kinilala ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Mimaropa ang mahahalagang kontribusyon ng #WonderJuanas ng industriya ng pagmimina sa gitna ng pandemya.

Kinilala ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Mimaropa ang mahahalagang kontribusyon ng #WonderJuanas ng industriya ng pagmimina sa gitna ng pandemya sa isinagawa nitong taunang Gender and Development (GAD) program: "Juana Laban sa Pandemya: Kaya!"

Ibinahagi ni Dr. Gladys Desiderio, Medical Officer IV ng City of Manila Health Department, ang karanasan ng kababaihang frontliners na kabilang sa mga patuloy na humaharap at nakikipaglaban sa mga hamon ng pandemya. Tinugunan din ni Dr. Desiderio ang mga katanungan at iba pang impormasyon kaugnay ng mga bakuna upang labanan ang COVID-19.

Samantala, iginawad ng MGB Mimaropa GAD Focal Point System sa Berong Nickel Corporation (BNC), isang minahang may operasyon sa bayan ng Quezon, Palawan, ang 2021 Gender Sensitive Mining Company in Mimaropa para sa kanilang pagtataguyod ng gender equality at women empowerment sa "male-dominated" na industriya ng pagmimina.

Pinarangalan din bilang 2021 Most Empowered Women in Mining in Mimaropa sina Deborah Arquio, Officer-in-Charge ng BNC Community Relations Department, at Rofely Saldajeno, hydraulic excavator operator ng BNC, bilang pagkilala sa kanilang natatanging husay at dedikasyon sa kanilang sinumpaang tungkulin sa kanilang propesyon at komunidad lalo na sa panahon ng pandemya. (MGB MIMAROPA)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/releases/1070416>



## DENR-12 intensifies crackdown vs. online wildlife sale

By Allen Estabillo March 24, 2021, 3:35 pm



Forester Dirie Macabaning, enforcement division chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 12 (File photo courtesy of DENR-12)

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 12 (Soccsksargen) has intensified its crackdown on the selling online of various rare plants and wildlife species.

Forester Dirie Macabaning, chief of the DENR-12's enforcement division, said they have widened their monitoring of the illegal activity in various social media platforms in coordination with police and other law enforcement units.

He said they conducted entrapment activities in the past months that netted rare flora as well as forest animals like lizards and pythons.

"We pose as buyers and then set up meetings with the sellers in public places, like our plazas, along with our policemen," he said in a press conference in Koronadal City on Tuesday.

Since last year, Macabaning said they already rescued and recovered from unauthorized persons at least 57 wildlife animals, including a mother tarsier with a young, monkey, reticulated python, Pinsker's Hawk Eagle, Philippine Honey Buzzard, Philippine Serpent Eagle, Eastern Grass Owl, and Brahminy Kite.

Citing the provisions of Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, he said the hunting and collection of wildlife species, as well as flora and fauna, are prohibited.

He said violators could face jail term of up to 12 years and a fine of as much as PHP1 million.

Individuals who find any wildlife animal are not allowed to keep them and should contact concerned environmental personnel to facilitate their retrieval or rescue, he said.



## DENR-12 intensifies crackdown vs. online wildlife sale

“Keeping or putting them in a cage could constitute illegal possession of wildlife,” Macabaning said.

The official said they have strengthened their coordination with local stakeholders to help monitor and prevent the hunting and collection of wildlife as well as flora and fauna in parts of the region, especially in the protected areas.

He added that they have trained and deputized volunteers in various communities to arrest violators.

Macabaning said they complement these efforts with the awareness and advocacy activities in the community and barangay levels regarding the importance of wildlife in an area’s biodiversity.

“We’re not just focusing on the enforcement side as there should be a paradigm shift in wildlife conservation. We should be able to prevent or stop these illegal activities from happening,” he said. (PNA)



## DENR in Caraga, Davao regions close ranks vs. illegal logging

By Alexander Lopez March 24, 2021, 2:56 pm



**COLLABORATION.** Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Caraga and Davao regions meet Tuesday (March 23, 2021) in Butuan City to strengthen the enforcement of environmental laws in the border areas of both regions. Specifically, the officials also seek to thresh out concerns to stem the rising illegal logging activities in the two neighboring areas. *(Photo courtesy of DENR-13)*

**BUTUAN CITY** – The regional offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Caraga and Davao regions have agreed to a coordinated approach against illegal logging.

In a press statement Wednesday, DENR-13 said Executive Director Nonito M. Tamayo and DENR-11 Director Bagani Fidel A. Evasco said Tuesday's inter-regional meeting aims to strengthen the implementation of environmental laws, especially concerning the illegal logging problem in both regions.

Caraga's Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur provinces border the Davao Region provinces of Davao de Oro and Davao Oriental.

“The inter-regional meeting seeks to brainstorm and thresh out issues and concerns necessary to prevent and mitigate the re-emerging rise of illegal transport and possible illegal logging activities affecting the two regions, considering that both regions are closely inter-connected with each other as the main gateway and source of forest products, respectively,” DENR-13 said.

Tamayo explained that the people's dependency on the forestry sector has led to numerous illegal logging and timber poaching incidents.

He also underscored the importance of community participation to put an end to the illegal logging and timber poaching activities in the areas.





## DENR in Caraga, Davao regions close ranks vs. illegal logging

“Over the years, we continue to strengthen our enforcement efforts. We established 42 patrol bases and monitoring stations and five look-out towers. To date, only eight of the previously identified 17 hotspot areas are considered as areas of concern,” Tamayo said.

He said the areas of concern are located in the borders of Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, and Davao Oriental and Davao de Oro.

“Working together is essential in stopping these illegal logging activities in our areas,” Tamayo said.

In the same statement, Evasco also pointed out the importance of envisioning more collaborations and a coalition of forces between the two offices.

Part of the activity is a scheduled site inspection within the areas bordering the two regions, particularly in Bislig Surigao del Sur and Baganga, Davao Oriental. *(PNA)*

## P240-K worth of logs seized in Northern Samar

By Sarwell Meniano March 24, 2021, 1:02 pm



**HOT LOGS.** A truckload of undocumented logs confiscated by policemen in Bobon, Northern Samar on Tuesday (March 23). The operation is part of its intensified campaign against illegal logging. *(Photo courtesy of Northern Samar police)*

**TACLOBAN CITY** – Policemen on Tuesday seized PHP240,000 worth of hot logs in Bobon, Northern Samar as part of its intensified campaign against illegal logging.

The 4,800 board feet of logs loaded in a six-wheeler truck were transported without permits, prompting the local police to confiscate the logs and arrest seven men, including the truck driver and haulers, the Philippine National Police (PNP) Northern Samar provincial office reported on Wednesday.

Northern Samar police provincial director Col. Arnel Apud said in a statement that violators will face charges under Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines while confiscated lumber will be turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“We have been intensifying our forest protection efforts in the past weeks. With our recent confiscations and apprehensions we hope to send a strong message to illegal loggers that we will deal with them with the full force of the law,” Apud said.

“I also urge the public to be vigilant and help us protect our environment by reporting any suspected illegal logging activities in their localities,” he added.

The PNP has considered anti-illegal logging drive as one of its priorities to address frequent flooding in the province.

Northern Samar has been the target by illegal loggers given its vast forest. Of the 3,692.93 square kilometers land area in the province, about 52 percent is covered by forest, according to DENR. *(PNA)*



Nag-ugat ito sa isang memorandum of agreement sa pagitan ng pamahalaan at ng Masungi Georeserve para pamahalaan ng huli ang libu-libong ektaryang lupain sa Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL). Naniningil rin umano ng malaki ang pribadong operator ng libong halaga ng entrance fee sa mga turista makaraang buksan ito sa publiko.

Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Handout

## Aksyon ng gobyerno sa protected areas sa Rizal, hinihintay pa rin

[Danilo Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - March 25, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nawawalan na umano ng kumpiyansa sa pamahalaan ang mga Dumagat sa Antipolo City sa Rizal dahil sa kawalan ng aksyon ukol sa mga kasong isinampa nila laban sa mga operators ng Masungi Georeserve kaugnay ng paniningil sa mga turistang bumibisita dito.

Kabilang sa mga kasong isinampa sa Rizal Prosecutor's Office ng mga Dumagat laban sa pribadong operator ng Masungi ay paglabag sa Anti-Graft Law at maging ang Indigenous People's Right.

Nag-ugat ito sa isang memorandum of agreement sa pagitan ng pamahalaan at ng Masungi Georeserve para pamahalaan ng huli ang libu-libong ektaryang lupain sa Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL). Naniningil rin umano ng malaki ang pribadong operator ng libong halaga ng entrance fee sa mga turista makaraang buksan ito sa publiko.

Unang sinabi ni Environment Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon na lugi ang pamahalaan dito dahil sa walang binabayaranang buwis o parte ng kita ang pribadong operator.

Giit ng mga Dumagat na ipawalang-bisa ng pamahalaan ang MOA na pinasok ng DENR at operator ng Masungi Georeserve na matatagpuan sa Baras, Rizal. Taong 1993 nang ideklara ng DENR ang lugar bilang istriktong "nature reserve at wildlife sanctuary".

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2021/03/25/2086842/aksyon-ng-gobyerno-sa-protected-areas-sa-rizal-hinihintay-pa-rin>



## Imagining a world of zero waste

March 24, 2021 | 11:00 am



Human progress has grown by leaps and bounds in the past century, owing to social, economic, and technological revolutions that have shaped the world into what it is today. Yet, all of it has been at a cost to the environment; climate change is now one of the biggest problems the world is facing, along with the constant, ever-growing issue of human waste.

According to the World Bank, waste generation is set to increase from 2.01 billion tons in 2016 to 3.40 billion tons in 2050, as more nations and cities urbanize, develop economically, and grow in terms of population. At least 33% of this waste is mismanaged globally today through open dumping or burning.

How can nations address this growing problem without compromising their social and economic goals? Is it even possible?

The latest edition of BusinessWorld Insights aimed to tackle this problem. In celebration of Global Recycling Day, the virtual forum, with the theme “Recycling and Proper Waste Management for a Sustainable Future,” gathered two of the country’s top stakeholders in solid waste management to discuss a zero-waste future and what might look like for the Philippines.

“The Philippines generates about 44 thousand tons of waste on a daily basis. In Metro Manila, that’s about 10 thousand tons. If you look at it on a per capita basis, it’s about .4 to .7 depending on where you are,” Crispian Lao, vice-chairman of the National Solid Waste Management Commission and founding president of the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS), said.

“In a developing country like the Philippines, where we have been ranked as the third biggest contributor to marine litter, we found that the gap really is in the infrastructure,” he added.

Recycling is one of the easiest and most effective methods to reduce waste, conserve the environment, and address climate change. Dubbed as the ‘Seventh Resource’, the use of recyclables saves over 700 million tons in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and this is projected to increase to one billion tons by 2030.



## Imagining a world of zero waste



Utilizing such a resource is key. Mr. Lao pointed out that the country already has some of the most comprehensive laws on solid waste management, yet the real challenge is in their implementation.

“Obviously you need financing for that. And this is where the private sector can pitch in by putting up the necessary infrastructure in partnership with all stakeholders, not only government, including civil society and the general public, so we can actually address waste management and to prevent leakage to the environment,” he said.

Also a representative from the private sector, Atty. Joseph Fabul, country manager for corporate and government affairs of Mondelez Philippines, echoed this sentiment. For its part, Mondelez Philippines has emphasized its commitment to sustainability in its processes in various ways.

“First, we make snacks using sustainable ingredients. Second, we ensure that our manufacturing processes continue to evolve in order to reduce the environmental impact of our operations,” he said, adding that the company’s manufacturing plant in Parañaque is now 100% powered by renewable energy.

“Third, we also make sure that we continue to innovate in terms of packaging material. And that’s why we made a commitment to ensure that 100% of our packaging material is recycle-ready by 2025, and the good news is that to-date we are already 94% compliant with that commitment,” he added.

### The problem of single-use plastics

## Imagining a world of zero waste



The ban on single-use plastics has become a popular method proposed by environmentalists to curb solid waste. But is the solution really that simple?

Reality is more complicated. Atty. Fabul noted that there is a wide spectrum in the types of plastics society generates, and some of these are absolutely necessary.

“First we need to define the necessary and unnecessary types of plastics. Because there are types of plastics that we need. There are also plastics that have no viable commercial and large-scale alternatives, so how do we replace them?” he said.

As a food manufacturer, there is yet to be a viable alternative to plastic when it comes to preserving and protecting packaged food from spoilage or contamination. In addition, because of its weight making it easy to transport, Mr. Lao pointed out that plastic reduces overall greenhouse gas emissions.

According to Mr. Lao, only 30% of local government units have access to materials recovery facilities, where materials could go for recycling and composting. Only 24% to date have access to sanitary landfills at disposal facilities. This is not to mention that many of the country’s poor communities depend on plastic-packaged food for their daily needs.

“What would be the socio-economic impact of a ban that would affect those who live by the day? Sachets are designed for poor communities, the lower economic brackets. We do need to transition and look for better options. While those options are not yet here, it is important to look for solutions. That’s where we are right now, and that’s where we want to set our targets towards zero waste,” Mr. Lao said.

“There are cities that already banned plastic bags. The substitutes are still alternatives that are disposable. Given that the country lacks infrastructure to properly dispose of waste, it only causes more strain to a system that is lacking. The problem has to be viewed holistically,” he added.

Last January 2020, the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS) and its member companies have committed to build and execute “Zero Waste to Nature Ambisyon 2030,” a strategy and a commitment to manage plastic waste, aiming to ensure that by 2030, none of the members’ plastic packaging waste will end up in nature.



## Imagining a world of zero waste

As part of this commitment, Mondelez Philippines, maker of snacks products like Eden Cheese, Cheez Whiz and Toblerone, pledged that by 2025, it will reduce its global use of virgin plastic for rigid packaging by 25% or reduce virgin plastic use in overall plastic packaging by 5% in 2025. This goes hand in hand with targeting to have 5% recycled content by weight across plastic packaging globally by the same period.



BusinessWorld ✓

12h · 🌐



Crispian Lao, vice-chairman of the National Solid Waste Management Commission and founding president of the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability, said that the Philippines generates about 44,000 tons of waste on a daily basis. Rewatch the forum on [https://youtu.be/lue\\_VHBHAd4](https://youtu.be/lue_VHBHAd4) ✓

***“In a developing country like the Philippines, where we have been ranked as the third biggest contributor to marine litter, we found that the gap is really in the infrastructure. Obviously you need financing for that. And this is where the private sector can pitch in by putting up the necessary infrastructure in partnership with all stakeholders.”***

### CRISPIAN LAO

*Vice-Chairman*

NATIONAL SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

*Founding President*

PHILIPPINE ALLIANCE FOR RECYCLING  
AND MATERIALS SUSTAINABILITY



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## WB studies: PHL, 2 others lose \$6 billion in 'wasted' plastic

By [JONATHAN L. MAYUGA](#)

MARCH 24, 2021



In file photo: Crushed plastic bottles and containers sit bound in a bale ready to be recycled at the new Poly recycling AG facility in Bilten, Switzerland.

MALAYSIA, the Philippines and Thailand can gain so much from better managing plastic waste, a series of World Bank Group studies launched Tuesday reported.

Aside from combating marine pollution, country studies show that each of three Southeast Asian countries could actually unlock billions of dollars for a circular economy, specifically in recovering and recycling plastic waste.

The support for the Thailand and Malaysia studies was provided by PROBLUE, an umbrella multidonor trust fund, housed at the World Bank, that supports the sustainable and integrated development of marine and coastal resources in healthy oceans while the funding for the Philippines study was provided by the Korea Green Growth Trust Fund (KGGTF), a partnership between the World Bank Group and the Republic of Korea, which supports the mainstreaming of green growth through the World Bank's lending operations.

The three studies were conducted by a team from GA Circular, a research and strategy firm specializing in waste management and recycling.

The studies examine the untapped economic opportunities to promote plastic circularity and address marine debris in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

They evaluate the plastics recycling industry and its role in supporting a circular economy and scaling up recycling efforts via targeted public and private sector interventions using a plastic value chain approach,

The studies found that less than a quarter of plastics are available for recycling in the three countries and that the rest or more than 75 percent of the material value of the plastics are lost.



## WB studies: PHL, 2 others lose \$6 billion in 'wasted' plastic

This is equivalent to some \$6 billion lost annually across the three countries when single-use plastics are discarded rather than recovered and recycled, representing a significant untapped business opportunity "if key market barriers can be addressed," a World Bank Group news release stated.

"Mismanaged plastic waste across Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand is threatening key economic sectors such as tourism and fisheries, and impacting livelihoods and infrastructure, but there is strong government momentum in these countries to identify critical policies, and craft roadmaps to strengthen demand for all recycled plastic resins level the playing field for global and domestic companies and help drive a circular economy for plastics," Ndiame Diop, World Bank Country Director for Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, said.

"These studies show that there is an untapped opportunity to reap environmental and economic benefits with clear and complementary interventions from the private and public sector," he added.

The studies present the size and scale of each country's plastics production and recycling industry, focusing on four key recyclable resins.

The researchers consulted with resin manufacturers, brand owners, converters, aggregators, and recyclers across the plastic value chain to compile and develop baseline data for each targeted resin. They also undertook analyses to quantify the untapped market potential for each resin and identified the pressures that contribute to material value loss in each country.

While the studies found that barriers to plastic recycling are unique to each country, there are common actions that governments and industries could take to help Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand unlock additional material value.

The recommendations include:

- Increase sorting efficiency of post-consumer collection of plastics.
- Set recycled content targets across all major end-use applications.
- Mandate "design for recycling" standards for plastics, especially for packaging.
- Encourage an increase in recycling capacities (mechanical and chemical).
- Implement industry-specific requirements to increase waste collection rates.
- Restrict disposal of waste plastics in landfills and phase-out non-essential plastic items.

"These studies serve a critical need for country-specific data on how plastics are produced, used, and managed in Southeast Asia," said Rana Karadsheh, Asia Pacific Regional Industry Director Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Services at the International Finance Corporation. "They clearly highlight the importance of managing plastic waste as a valuable resource, and not solely as a waste management problem."

Image credits: [Stefan Wermuth/Bloomberg](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/03/24/wb-studies-phl-2-others-lose-6-billion-in-wasted-plastic/>



## PHL loses up to \$890M a year due to plastics recycling ‘failure’ — WB

March 24, 2021 | 12:31 am



THE PHILIPPINES recycled about 28% of the key plastics resins in 2019, a World Bank study showed. — THE PHILIPPINE STAR/ EDD GUMBAN

By **Angelica Y. Yang**

THE PHILIPPINE economy is losing up to \$890 million a year due to what is described as a “market failure” in plastic waste recycling efforts, a new World Bank Group (WB) country study showed.

“Only 22% of the total material value of plastics (\$246 million/year) is currently unlocked. This results in \$790-890 million/year of potential material value that is lost to the Philippine economy,” the World Bank Group said in “Market Study for the Philippines: Plastics Circularity Opportunities and Barriers” released on Tuesday.

The total material value which could be unlocked from plastics recycling amounted to \$1.1 billion, assuming that four of the country’s key plastics resins had 100% collected-for-recycling (CFR) rates and were sold for maximum value in the market, the World Bank said.

The four key plastics resins in the Philippines are Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE), Low-Density Polyethylene or Linear Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE/LLDPE) and Polypropylene (PP). They accounted for up to 93% of all the plastics resins used by Filipinos in 2015.

The World Bank said the annual material value loss of \$790-\$890 million is the result of “various structural challenges which affected CFR rates and value yields for the four key resins.”

The World Bank cited six challenges which prevented the Philippines from maximizing the value of plastic waste. These include high logistics costs, expensive electricity bills, and the presence of low-value and hard-to-recycle packaging, which makes up 61% of the plastic packaging units in the market.



## PHL loses up to \$890M a year due to plastics recycling ‘failure’ — WB

The Philippines also faced intense competition from the informal recycling industry, low tipping fees which discourage local governments from investing in waste management solutions, and small and medium enterprises who dominated the recycling industry but cannot capitalize on the growing demand for recycled resins.

In 2019, the Philippines recycled only 28% of its key plastics resins, the report showed.

The World Bank recommended six interventions, which called for an increase in waste collection and sorting of plastics, a national design for recycling standards, and the creation of industry-specific requirements in ramping up waste collection and recycling rates, among others.

In a separate press release on Tuesday, the World Bank Group said that the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand are losing a total of \$6 billion a year due to un-recycled plastic waste, based on the group’s series of country studies.

“More than 75% of the material value of the plastics is lost — the equivalent of \$6 billion per year across the three countries — when single-use plastics are discarded rather than recovered and recycled, representing a significant untapped business opportunity if key market barriers can be addressed,” the multilateral lender said.

The World Bank noted that less than a quarter of plastics were available for recycling in Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines.

World Bank Country Director for Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand Ndiame Diop said that the issue of mismanaged plastics in the three countries is threatening the tourism and fisheries sectors.

“But there is strong government momentum in these countries to identify critical policies, and craft roadmaps to strengthen demand for all recycled plastics resins, level the playing field for global and domestic companies, and help drive a circular economy for plastics,” he was quoted as saying.

GA Circular, a research and strategy firm that specializes in waste management and recycling, conducted the three country studies. The GA Circular researchers consulted with workers across the plastics value chain to develop baseline data, and undertook analyses to quantify the untapped market potential for each resin.

The Korea Green Growth Trust Fund, a partnership between the World Bank Group and Republic of Korea, provided the funding for the Philippine study. Meanwhile, umbrella multi-donor trust fund PROBLUE, which is housed at the World Bank, funded the Thailand and Malaysia studies.



## First PH mining firm accepted at UN sustainability initiative

March 24, 2021, 11:08 pm



Nickel Asia Corp. President and Chief Executive Officer Dennis Zamora. *(Contributed photo)*

**SURIGAO CITY** — Mining conglomerate Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC) has been accepted as one of the newest members of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the first mining company in the Philippines to be admitted at the world body's sustainability initiative.

In a statement Wednesday, NAC said UNGC “supports global companies that are committed to responsible business practices in the areas of human rights, labor, the environment, and corruption.”

By signing up as a member, NAC vowed to uphold the UNGC principles in all aspects of its operations.

Two of NAC's affiliates operate in the Surigao del Norte town of Claver and Hinatuan, and the Dinagat Islands town of Cagdianao. It also has an operating mine in Bataraza, Palawan.

“This is a huge deal for all of us at NAC because it effectively binds us to the proverbial umbilical cord of what UNGC represents to the world,” NAC President and Chief Executive Officer Dennis Zamora said.

NAC added that to be considered a member, the company “had to lay bare to UNGC its value system and its approach to doing business in the communities.”

“NAC also had to share how the company’s relationships with all its stakeholders are the actual narratives of its best mining practices,” it said.

The world’s largest sustainability initiative, the UNGC was launched at the United Nation’s headquarters in New York in 2000.



## First PH mining firm accepted at UN sustainability initiative

UNGC emphasizes that “member companies of the UN Global Compact are expected to act in environmentally responsible ways with regard to climate change, water and sanitation, energy, biodiversity, and food and agriculture. They are also expected to recognize the link between environmental issues and social and development priorities.”

Jose Bayani Baylon, NAC vice president for corporate communications, said the standard operating procedures in all the mining companies under the NAC umbrella "have long been setting the stage for the UNGC membership."

“The UNGC principles have been integrated into our corporate strategies and day-to-day operations, and our membership to this global pact exposes the NAC companies to a more intense peer review which in effect will be beneficial to the industry as a whole because,” Baylon said.

"Mining continues to fight in the reputation category, and UNGC will help demonstrate our track record as we publicly report on how effectively we manage the environment, social and governance issues," he added. **(PR)**

## Gender and biodiversity training materials to be launched in ASEAN

By ACB Published on March 24, 2021



Convention on Biological Diversity GIZ ASEAN CENTRE FOR BIODIVERSITY

**GENDER MATTERS IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: LAUNCH OF REGIONAL TRAINING MATERIALS**

**25 March 2021, 10:00 - 11:45 (GMT+8)**  
**Webinar Format**  
**(Zoom and Facebook Live)**

25 MARCH

Register at [bit.ly/GenderMattersLaunch](https://bit.ly/GenderMattersLaunch) to receive a confirmation of your Zoom attendance.

You may also access the webinar-launch via [facebook.com/ASEANBiodiversity](https://facebook.com/ASEANBiodiversity)

LAGUNA, Mar. 24 -- The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), in partnership with the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, is organising a two-part webinar to launch a set of gender and biodiversity training materials for South East Asia and the Pacific designed to promote greater gender-responsiveness in biodiversity policy and programming.

The training materials to be launched include three modules containing a variety of exercises to address key gender concepts and biodiversity linkages, international policy commitments, and programming aspects. These were pilot-tested on 11 to 12 December 2019 in Manila, Philippines, through a regional Training of Trainers session, followed by the training of the ACB staff and other organisations.

Inputs from these sessions, with case studies from the ASEAN, helped in further developing these materials.

As part of the celebrations of International Women's Day, and the Philippines' National Women's Month of March, the actual launch will take place on 25 March 2021 at 10:00 (GMT+8) via Zoom and Facebook live. Titled Gender Matters in Biodiversity Conservation: Launch of regional training materials, the online event will be moderated by Miss Earth England 2015 and Philippines Protected Area Ambassador, Ms. Katrina Kendall.

Before the launch, there will be a review session with the participants of the previous workshops who will share their experiences and inputs on the dissemination of the materials and training of target actors in the region on 24 March 2021 at 10:00 (GMT+8)

"More and more women are getting actively involved in nature conservation and resource management from the community to decision-making levels. Developing and disseminating this set of training materials that will serve as a tool to mainstream gender is a crucial step to enhance our efforts in biodiversity," ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim said.



## Gender and biodiversity training materials to be launched in ASEAN

Among the resource persons in the webinar are Alexander Sheshtakov, Director of the Science Society and Sustainable Futures Division of Secretariat of the CBD; Ms. Tanya McGregor, Gender Programme Officer of the Secretariat of the CBD; Ms. Maricel Aguilar, Gender Specialist in Philippines; Dr. Mary Kristerie Baleva, ACB External Relations and Policy Specialist; and Ms. Katherine Viñegas, Senior Advisor of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH.

The initiative to develop regional training materials on gender and biodiversity began in late 2017, when the Secretariat of the CBD, with support from the Government of Sweden, United Nations Environment Programme's Asia Pacific Office, and GIZ Philippines, held a consultative regional expert workshop on gender and biodiversity training materials in Bangkok, Thailand.

Participants from national governments, civil society, and international organizations in the South East Asia and Pacific regions contributed to the development of a rich compilation of knowledge, which informed a set of regional training materials. (ACB)





## Philippines logs 6,666 new COVID-19 cases

(Philstar.com)

- March 24, 2021 - 4:00pm



Police officers inspect passing two-wheel and four-wheel vehicles and issue tickets to non-Authorized Persons Outside Residence (APOR) motorists plying EDSA in Pasay City on Monday night, March 22, 2021.  
The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Health officials on Wednesday reported 6,666 new coronavirus cases, pushing the country's total count to 684,311.

The number of active cases continued to be on a record-high since the pandemic began with additional 5,554 from yesterday's 86,200.

- **Active cases:** 91,754 or 13.4% of the total
- **Recoveries:** 1,072, bringing the overall count to 579,518.
- **Deaths:** 47, or the total now reaching 13,039

### What's new today?

- There are now 508,332 Filipinos who have legally received the COVID-19 vaccine, according to a March 23 bulletin by officials. Some 1,105,500 out of the 1,125,600 doses the country has have been distributed in 1,759 vaccination sites.
- The health department reiterated the World Health Organization's warning that Filipinos skipping the line in vaccination could [risk](#) the country's share in the COVAX facility. This came after non-medical workers and mayors were inoculated despite not in the priority.



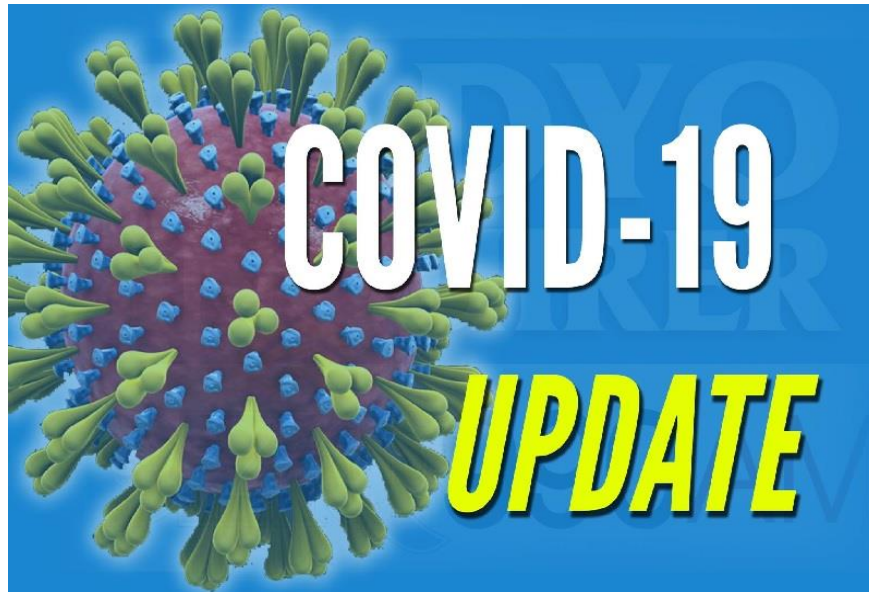
## Philippines logs 6,666 new COVID-19 cases

- Sen. Risa Hontiveros said the labor department should classify the COVID-19 as an [occupational disease](#) to allow workers to avail of insurance and other benefits.
- Courts within the 'NCR Plus' were allowed to operate at [30% capacity](#) until April 16, the Office of the Court Administrator said in a circular. — **Christian Deiparine**



## Kaso ng COVID-19 sa mundo, umabot na sa 124.80 milyon

By Angellic Jordan March 24, 2021 - 01:29 PM



Pumalo na sa 124.80 milyon ang bilang ng kumpirmadong kaso ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo.

Batay sa huling tala, pumalo na sa kabuuang 124,806,956 ang tinamaan ng nakakahawang sakit sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nangunguna pa rin sa may pinakamaraming naitalang kaso ng COVID-19 ang Estados Unidos na may 30,636,534 cases.

Sumunod na rito ang Brazil na may 12,136,615 na nagpositibo sa pandemiya.

Nasa 11,734,058 naman ang kaso sa India habang 4,474,610 ang napaulat na kaso sa Russia.

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

- France - 4,313,073
- United Kingdom - 4,307,304
- Italy - 3,419,616
- Spain - 3,234,319
- Turkey - 3,061,520
- Germany - 2,689,205
- Colombia - 2,347,224
- Argentina - 2,261,577
- Mexico - 2,203,041
- Poland - 2,089,869

Samantala, lumabas din sa pinakahuling datos na umakyat na sa kabuuang 2,746,311 ang bilang ng nasawi sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nasa 100,842,866 naman ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 pandemic sa buong mundo.

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/287910/kaso-ng-covid-19-sa-mundo-umabot-na-sa-124-80-milyon#ixzz6q4Sodgwy>

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## ‘Climate change drove tribes to PH’

posted March 24, 2021 at 10:15 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

A landmark study revealed the complex shared origins, inter-relatedness, and genetic diversity of the Filipino people.

Taking advantage of the latest advances in genomics and computational biology, a team of researchers investigated into the Filipino’s DNA and looked into 2.3 million molecular DNA markers that were known to differ between various populations.

Markers from more than 1,000 individuals representing 115 Philippine cultural communities were comprehensively analyzed.

“This finally gives us a clearer picture of who we are as Filipinos, where we came from, and our sense of relatedness,” said Carlo Ebeo, Board of Trustee member of the National Museum who was involved in the study.

It was revealed that through time, the Philippines was inhabited by at least five major waves of human migration: starting with Northern and Southern Negritos as the first Filipinos, then followed by Manobo, Sama, and Cordilleran-related populations.

The latter three major waves happened around 15 to 7 thousand years ago, coinciding with the major geographic changes in the region that was brought about by climate change. These include the inundation of the Sunda landmass as well as the loss of land bridge between Taiwan and southern China.

It was previously thought that the search for new arable lands by expanding farmer populations was the main reason for driving population migrations, such as the dispersal of Austronesian-speaking groups into the Philippines.

However, Dr. Maximilian Larena, a Filipino scientist based in Sweden who co-led the study, challenged this view.

“Our findings suggest that instead of farming, climate change may have played a more important role in driving the mass movement of populations in various directions,” he said.

The significant geographic changes may have prompted the migration of Manobo and Sama-related ancestral groups from Borneo into southern Philippines and Cordilleran-related ancestral groups from southern China-Taiwan area into the various islands of the Philippines.

The arrival of Manobo, Sama, and Cordilleran-related groups resulted in interbreeding with resident Negritos.

Interestingly, some Cordillerans remained to be the only ethnic group in the Philippines who did not show evidence of historical interbreeding with Negritos; and consequently are the only population in the world who remained to be the unadmixed (not comparable) descendants of Basal East Asians.

According to Dr. Adrian Albano, a Kalanguya Cordilleran from Ifugao State University and co-author of the study: “This affirms that Cordillerans were isolated for quite some time, which is evident on the retention of distinct indigenous cultural practices and presence of immense linguistic diversity in the region.”



## ‘Climate change drove tribes to PH’

Additional minor genetic signals were also detected in some Filipino ethnic groups, including Papuan, South Asian, and European genetic ancestry.

The Papuan-related ancestry is found among the coastal ethnic groups of southeastern Philippines. This likely reflects a westward migration or gene flow of Papuan-related ancestry from Papua New Guinea or the Bismarck’s archipelago into eastern Indonesia and subsequently into southeastern Philippines.

The South Asian or Indian-related genetic signal was detected among the Sama Dilaut and other coastal Sama ethnic groups of southwestern Philippines.

“This is a groundbreaking study that the commission heartily endorsed, and we should be thankful for this collaboration as it sheds some light on the longstanding question of our origins. It will certainly revise our understanding and appreciate that the story of the peopling of the Philippines from three waves of migration as proposed by Otley Beyer is not supported by archeological, genetic, or historical evidence,” said former NCCA chairman Felipe Mendoza de Leon.



## Implementation challenges of science diplomacy in ‘Climate Smart Philippines’



By [Glenn S. Banaguas](#)

March 25, 2021

SCIENCE diplomacy plays a vital role in the implementation of “Climate Smart Philippines,” the flagship program of the Environmental and Climate Change Research Institute. It is a platform that provides elucidations in reducing disaster risks and preventing potential damage and losses through scientific wide-ranging assessment, capacity development, project management, and multilateral cooperation among stakeholders. It is an avenue for all the actors to understand, plan, develop and implement not only the best science and evidence-based strategic solutions but also the most humane and gender-responsive schemes in the most diplomatic way. It is also a stratagem designed to bring out the best in every individual to solve the most pressing conundrum regardless of culture, gender, and nationality. And it is also a bridge that influences and impacts public policy, which deals with matters of fretfulness, peevishness and sensitivity.

But despite the solutions that this program has provided for more than a decade, recurring issues and threats still occur to some areas in the country. Here are some of them:

### **Policy and governance**

Obstructions to an institution’s growth are indissolubly snarled by the conundrum of governance. Unless the management performs its assigned tasks and does so in an enduringly efficient manner, lull will be found from other enigmas plaguing the system. There is only so much that observation forces can do. This salient fact has been thoroughly acknowledged. Over the past few years, the stakeholders have turned their attention to problems of governance, including such matter as awareness, policy understanding, leadership and management, and so forth.

Some of the major issues are as follows:

- Laws and policies. Aside from the politics within the organization, there is an issue with establishing a road map, vision, thrusts, and direction. There is also a gap in the implementation of policies related to the overall goal. There is a lack of awareness of the action plans being implemented. There are conflicting policies and legislations. And most especially, the policies and procedures are neither science nor evidence-based.
- Leadership and management. There are challenges not only on the competency of the leaders but also on the specific roles and responsibilities of the cohorts.

### **Science communication**

Science communication is about converting scientific information into understandable communication. Communicating science contributes toward streamlining the ideas problems, projects and deployment driving toward productivity. It is creating a synthesis between the people and the information to the point that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. In any organization, science communication is intended to provide building blocks for more effective implementation. Some of the concerns are:



## Implementation challenges of science diplomacy in 'Climate Smart Philippines'

- Science and technology. Aside from the technological and scientific trap, there is a limitation of the knowledge array in climate and disaster sciences, climate change, risk, and other pertinent climate-disaster-related information. There are also issues with transmuting implicit knowledge into explicit information.
- Communication. There are glitches both in internal and external communications. People do not understand the importance of science in a particular project or program.
- Planning and process. There are activities or efforts that are carried out without planning.
- Science-sharing culture and behavioral pattern. There is a limited science-sharing culture that exists. And there is a dispute on the human factor, which includes individual behavior that affects science communication procedures.

### Monitoring and evaluation systems

At present, there are institutions and organizations that have no monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. This M&E system is highly significant and beneficial for the a) planning process; b) institutional alignment instruments such as strategic management, agreements, results commitments; c) benchmarks and strategic project goals and their key findings; and d) feedback processes and methods.

Monitoring and evaluation are recurrently presented as a twofold model. Monitoring is defined as a continuous function that provides stakeholders with the methodical and consistent response, criticism, advice, or even pointer on the performance of a certain project. Evaluation, on the other hand, provides a decision and conclusion based on comprehensive systematic analyses, tests, and assessments. It emphasizes both positive and negative outcomes, which will guide the decisionmakers and other stakeholders.

Some of the concerns are as follows:

- Data Information and technology. There are no tools and sets of indicators that address the priority areas of the institution or organization. There is a lack of science technology innovation (STI) approach that can be utilized in the system. There are gaps and constraints in the technical knowledge with regard to defining key performance indicators, the retrieval, collection, preparation, and interpretation of data. There is a need to establish strong linkages between evaluation and programming.
- Stakeholders engagement. There is limited involvement of all stakeholders concerns. And there is also a harmonization issue and alignment concerns of programs and projects being implemented.

### Resource mobilizations

Resource mobilization is a procedural approach whereby resources-both financial and non-financial resources are mobilized either externally or internally to support the activities and efforts of the institution or organization. Some of the issues faced by the majority of the stakeholders are the following:



## Implementation challenges of science diplomacy in 'Climate Smart Philippines'

– Policies and objectives. There are problems in determining the key developments needed in the context of broader national, regional, and international goals. There is a lack of understanding of current policies, programs, and priorities for development- assistance activities from the relevant national authorities. There is a poor identification potential sources of funds There is a need to do a comprehensive research on the policies, programs, priorities potential donors, and partners. And there is a lack of understanding and experiences on grants from international organizations.

– Linkages and collaborations. Aside from strengthening the collaboration among stakeholders (e.g., national government agencies, local government units, academe, civil society organizations), there is also a need to strengthen the linkages with the United Nations system, development banks and other donors. It is also good to create a strong network with different climate investment funds such as the Global Environment Facility and other mechanisms. And it is also necessary to improve the collaboration with the overseas mission and embassies

### Capacity development

Capacity development is an approach by which individuals, organizations, and institutions intensify their skills and aptitudes to solve enigmatic conditions and attain the vision or mission through a scientific diplomatic way.

Some of the key issues are:

– Balancing knowledge and skills. The main issue is defining the role and responsibility among cohorts.

– Contextualization of learning. There is a lack of proper orientation and training in some organizations or institutions. There is no tailored capacity-building program for all the stakeholders. There are organizations that have no staff development programs, rewards and incentives.

– Institutional development. There are no road maps, long-term and short-term goals in some institutions. There is limited engagement with internal and external stakeholders. There are no tools or sets of indicators to assess the learning/training styles of the stakeholders

– Keeping up with technological advancement. There are no emerging technologies for the institution's long-term development. And there is no identification of the best technologies to be used for the capacity development of the stakeholders.

The abovementioned primary challenges may slow down the success of utilizing science diplomacy in the implementation of the "Climate Smart Philippines" if they are not going to be addressed. And there is a big probability that the whole institution or organization might collapse giving rise to discord and acrimony.





## Implementation challenges of science diplomacy in 'Climate Smart Philippines'

So, it is imperative to revisit the entire system to understand the root cause of the quandary and reapply the plethora of elucidations once again. It is a must to have a competitive, innovative, and dynamic institution or organization that fosters robust productivity growth that includes the creation and sensible application of scientific knowledge, supportive policies toward development, science-based schemes, and embracing the evolving expertise and know-how, promotion of good governance, transparency, and responsible regulations, effective dispute decision, and a view toward enhancing participation in both internal and external states of affairs.

*Sci. Dpl. Glenn S. Banaguas is an Outstanding Filipino laureate, NAST Outstanding Young Scientist of the Philippines, US-Asean Science and Technology fellow; European Union-Asia Climate diplomat; Asean science diplomat; Royal Society-The World Academy of Sciences awardee; and Asia Leaders Awardee for sustainability leadership.*



## Ensuring dependable long-term water supply for Metro Manila

Published March 25, 2021, 12:12 AM  
by [Manila Bulletin](#)



Two years ago this month, Metro Manila residents experienced a water supply crisis. President Duterte berated the two concessionaires, Manila Water and Maynilad, and issued threats on dire consequences if the problem would not be resolved.

Today's edition of the PAGASA website reports: "La Niña is likely to continue through March-April-May 2021 (55 per cent chance), with a rising probability of returning to El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-neutral during April-May-June 2021 (60 per cent probability)."

What makes this forecast significant? Scientists explain further:

"The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a recurring climate pattern involving changes in the temperature of waters in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. ... El Niño and La Niña are the extreme phases of the ENSO cycle; between these two phases is a third phase called ENSO-neutral." An ENSO-neutral forecast with a 60 per cent probability indicates a more stable climate regime that is neither extremely hot nor rainy.

The March 2019 water crisis occurred during an El Niño climate phase, triggering lower levels of water supply. Currently, Angat, Ipo and La Mesa Dams — the sources of Metro Manila's water supply are all enjoying relatively high levels of elevation. Angat Dam is at 207.53 meters, Ipo Dam is at 98.64 meters, and La Mesa Dam is at 79.01 meters — all of which are at least 95 percent of their respective spilling levels.

The present supply situation could be disrupted anew if the climate change needle tilts toward the El Niño phase. Hence, the long-term solution is to tap into new sources that would provide sufficient water supply to meet the needs of a burgeoning urban population.

Two major projects are currently on stream: the NEDA- approved P12-billion Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon province billed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) as the New Centennial Water project; and the P 20-billion Wawa Bulk Water Supply project in Rizal province of Enrique Razon's Prime Metroline Infrastructure Holdings, Inc., a privately-funded joint venture deal approved by the MWSS.

Both projects are reportedly hobbled by implementation challenges. In September 2020, President Duterte issued Administrative Order No. 32 "expediting the review and approval process of infrastructure flagship projects on water security.



## Ensuring dependable long-term water supply for Metro Manila

Both the Kaliwa and the Wawa dam projects are included in the priority listing. The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) has been tasked to ensure that local permits and barangay clearances related to these projects are “applied, issued and obtained strictly in accordance with the prescribed processing time” provided for in the amended Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007.

Current challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic should not derail the timely completion of the vital major infrastructure projects that are geared to ensure long-term water security as the specter of climate change continues to threaten the stability of water supply. Equally important, too, is for the citizenry — as well as business and industry — to undertake purposive water conservation measures.



## Coastal waters in 10 areas around PH remain positive for shellfish toxin

Published March 24, 2021, 6:09 PM

by [Betheena Unite](#)

Coastal waters in 10 areas in the country remained positive for paralytic shellfish poison, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said Wednesday, March 24.



Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)  
(MANILA BULLETIN)

Latest laboratory results showed that various shellfish collected from the coastal waters are “positive for paralytic shellfish poison that is beyond the regulatory limit.”

Affected coastal waters include the Inner Malampaya Sound; Taytay in Palawan; coastal waters of Dauis and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Tambobo Bay in Siaton, Negros Oriental; coastal waters of Calubian, and Cancabato Bay in Tacloban City, Leyte; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; Murcielagos Bay (Sapang Dalaga and Baliangao) and the waters of Ozamiz City in Misamis Occidental; and Taguines Lagoon, Benoni, Mahinog, in Camiguin; Balite Bay in Mati City, Davao Oriental; and Lianga Bay and coastal waters of Hinatuan in Surigao del Sur.

All types of shellfish and alamang gathered from the identified areas “are not safe for human consumption, the agency cautioned the public.

However, fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking, it added.

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However, fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking, it added.

Meanwhile, Sorsogon Bay in Sorsogon is now free of the toxic red tides.



## Malaysia to return US plastic waste shipment under new UN rules

Reuters

Posted at Mar 24 2021 05:27 PM



Plastic waste is piled outside an illegal recycling factory in Jenjarom, Kuala Langat, Malaysia October 14, 2018. *Lai Seng Sin, Reuters/File Photo*

KUALA LUMPUR - Malaysia will return a container of plastic trash en route from the United States as it violates new UN rules governing hazardous waste, the environment ministry said on Wednesday, one of the first signs of the regulations being enforced.

Two years ago, more than 180 countries agreed to ban hard-to-recycle plastic waste trade in an attempt to stop rich countries dumping trash in the developing world, where it often ends up polluting the local environment and the ocean.

The new restrictions, which come under the Basel Convention, a United Nations treaty that polices the trade in hazardous waste, came into force in January.

- [Malaysia, flooded with plastic waste, to send back some scrap to source](#)

Signatory countries can now only trade plastic waste if it meets certain low-contamination criteria - which means it is clean, sorted and easy-to-recycle - or if the exporting country gets prior consent from the importing country.

Mohamad Khalil Zaiyany Sumiran, the environment ministry's spokesman, told Reuters a shipment was on its way from the United States, that authorities have said did not meet that criteria or have prior approval to be imported into Malaysia.

"After investigations, Malaysia will send back the container to the origin country," said Mohamad Khalil, adding that it was unclear when the shipment would arrive.

- [Filipinos can save P2.5K to P4.6K if they switch to reusable products](#)

Malaysia's environment minister Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man had said in a statement on Saturday that authorities would bar the container, which was shipped from Los Angeles, California on March 14.



## Malaysia to return US plastic waste shipment under new UN rules

The United States, which produces more plastic waste per capita than any other country, is the only major nation not to have ratified the Basel Convention and is not bound by its rules. However, under the treaty, Malaysia cannot accept prohibited plastic waste from the United States.

Malaysia, which became the leading destination for the world's plastic trash after China banned imports in 2018, has returned thousands of tonnes of plastic scrap since then.

The Basel Action Network, an NGO, said this month that contaminated plastic waste trade was still flowing despite the new U.N. rules, highlighting the high volume being shipped from the United States to Malaysia.

25 MARCH 2021, Thursday



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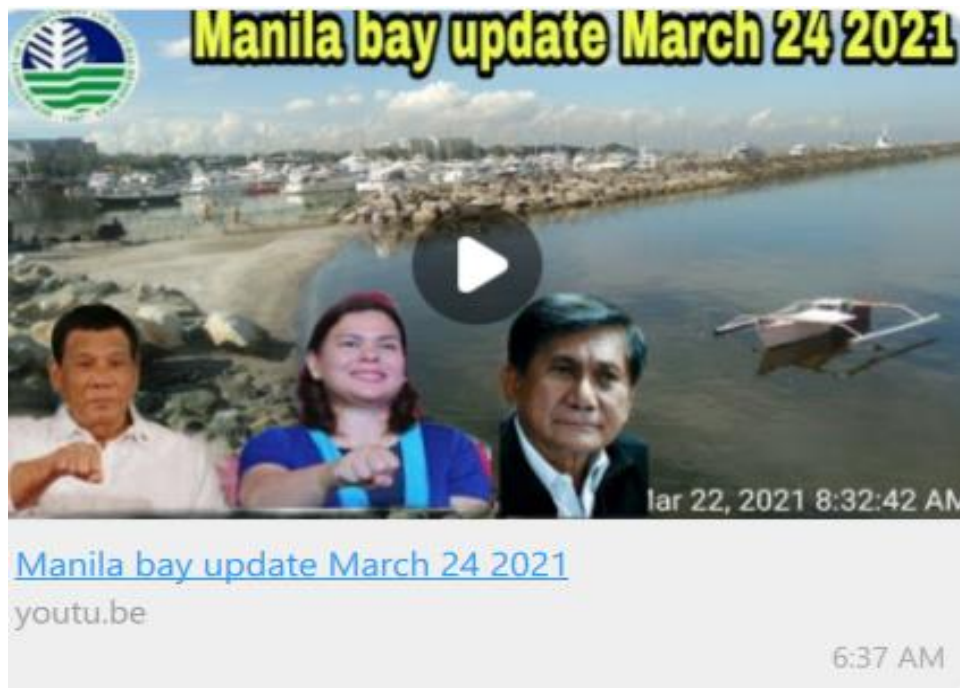
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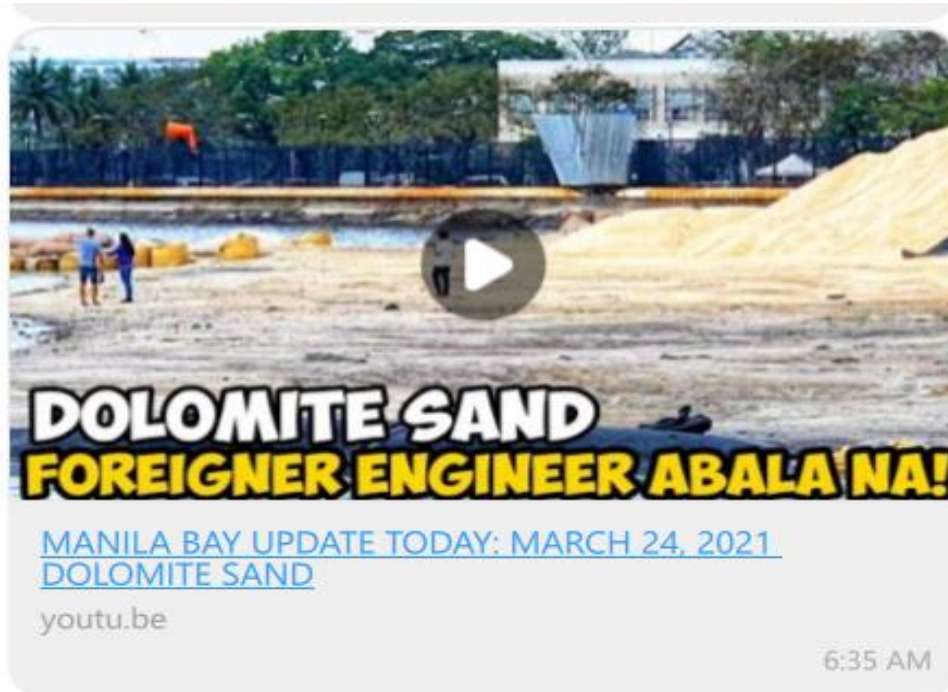


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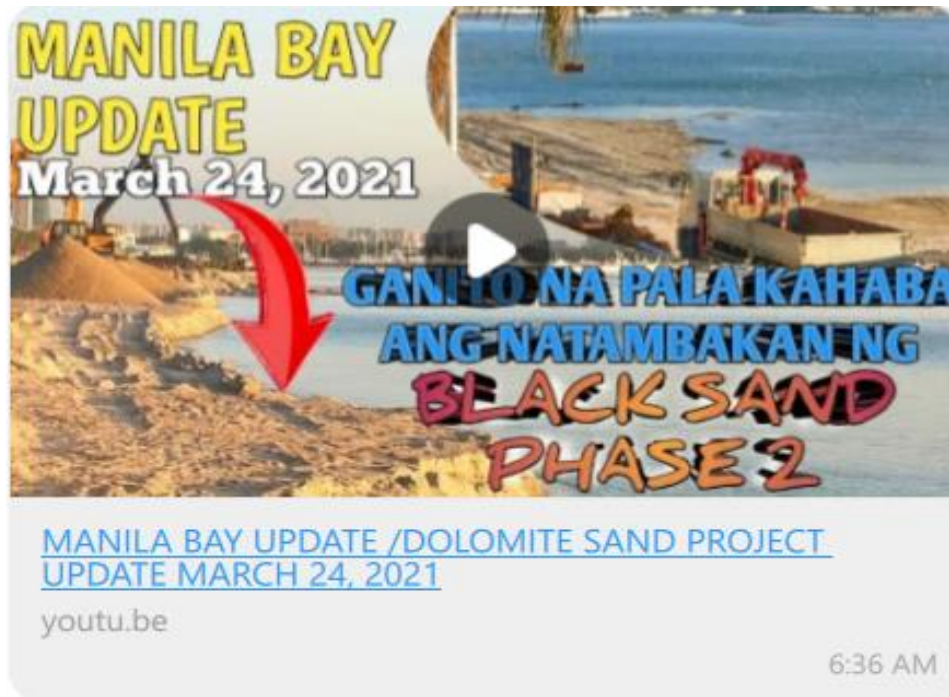
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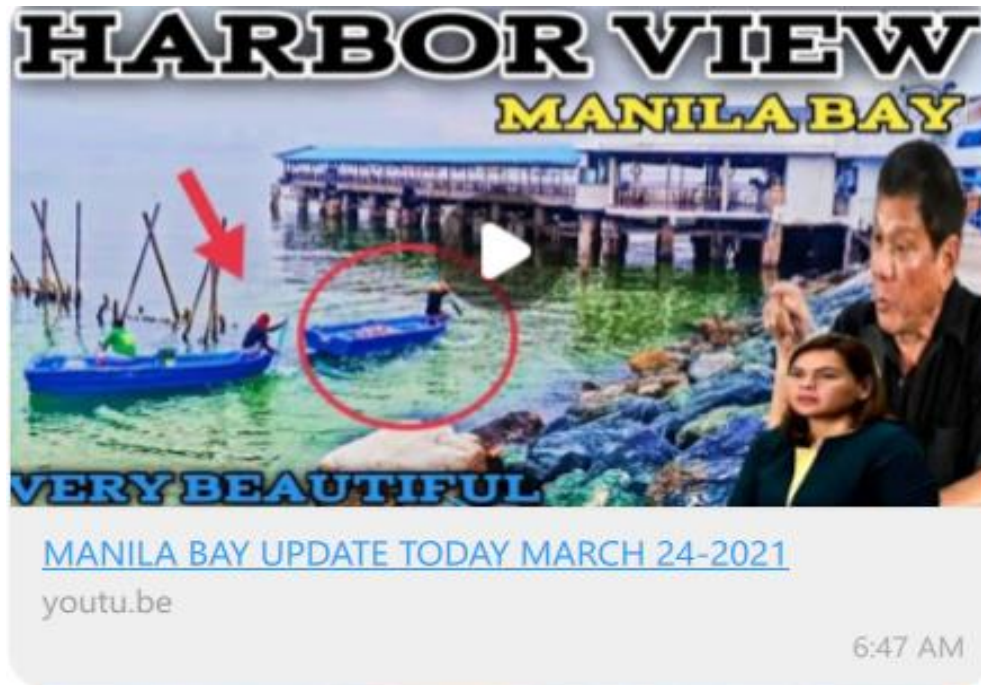
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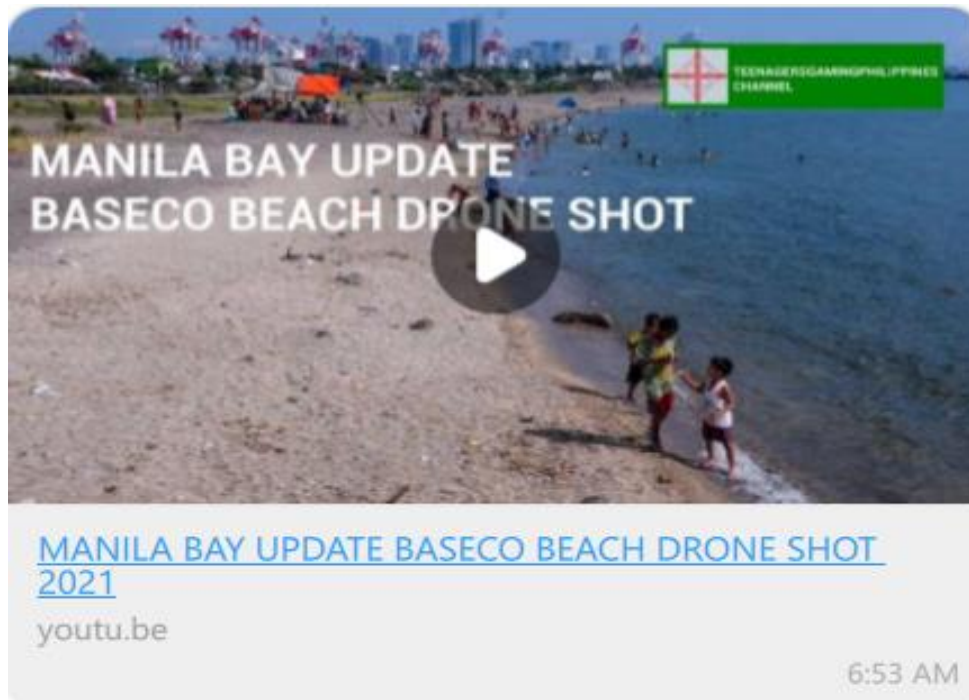
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