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**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



# Cimatu bats for immediate dredging of Cagayan River

By Villamor Visaya, Jr. November 24, 2020, 7:40 pm



**RIVER DREDGING.** Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu (right) leads a meeting with stakeholders led by Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba (left) in Tuguegarao City on Monday (Nov. 23, 2020). Cimatu pushed for immediate dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River as one way to prevent a repeat of the massive flooding in Isabela and Cagayan during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses. (Photo courtesy of Cagayan PIO)

**TUGUEGARAO CITY** – Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has proposed the immediate dredging and strict enforcement of the 20-meter easement rule along the Cagayan River to prevent a repeat of the massive flooding in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses early this month.

Cimatu's plans for the Cagayan River were received warmly by four governors and 31 mayors in Cagayan Valley when he met with them here on Monday.

"We will create a working group and conduct a joint meeting to come up with important engineering interventions along the Cagayan River," said Cimatu, who co-chairs the Build Back Better Task Force created by President Rodrigo Duterte to oversee the rehabilitation of areas devastated by recent typhoons.

He said the planned working group will be comprised of the governors of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino, and Nueva Vizcaya, as well as the nearby Cordillera Administrative Region.

Aside from the immediate dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River, Cimatu said strict implementation of the easement rule along its riverbanks is a must.

"We have to follow the 20-meter easement. There should be no building or any structure within the easement zone," he said.

Cimatu also asked Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson Soriano to address the problem of illegal structures along creeks that block the waterways.

He also instructed DENR-Region 2 executive director Gwendolyn Bambalan and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)- 2 director Mario Ancheta to work with concerned provincial governments for the relocation of communities living along riverbanks.

Cimatu ordered the MGB to close down small-scale mining operations in a hazard-prone area in Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya, where nine deaths were reported due to landslides during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

He instructed the bureau to identify a possible Minahang Bayan site for those who will be displaced by the closure to ensure their safety and continued livelihood and prevent further destruction of the environment.

The DENR chief also called on local officials whose areas were hit by the recent flooding to ensure the availability of water, electricity, transportation, telecommunication, and adequate basic needs for the victims.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/03/denr-hit-for-planning-to-fill-manila-haywalk-with->



Meanwhile, local officials have advocated for intensified forest protection through a created provincial anti-illegal logging task force.

The Cagayan Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force is chaired by Gov. Manuel Mamba and co-chaired by Bambalan.

It is a multi-sectoral group that will ensure the protection of the environment and sustained natural resource conservation and development particularly within the remaining forest areas of Cagayan.

The memorandum of agreement signed by the DENR and the provincial government said the task force is created to “resolve the pressing issue on illegal logging, timber poaching and 'kaingin' making which aggravated occurrences of flashflood that have devastated thousands of people and families in the province.”

“The worst is yet to come for this province. We have to prepare for it,” Mamba said, noting the effects of environmental destruction that has resulted in the perennial occurrence of flooding in the province.

“We are the solutions to this problem. We need a paradigm shift,” he added. (PNA)



# Cimatu: Enforce easement rule along Cagayan River

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 25, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Immediate dredging and strict enforcement of the 20-meter easement rule along Cagayan River are necessary to avoid a repeat of massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses, according to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

“We have to follow the 20-meter easement rule. There should be no building or any structure within the easement zone,” Cimatu, who co-chairs the Build Back Better Task Force created by President Duterte to oversee the rehabilitation of areas devastated by recent typhoons, said.

He said Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson Soriano should address the problem with illegal structures along creeks.

Cimatu instructed Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Cagayan Valley executive director Gwendolyn Bambalan and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) regional director Mario Ancheta to coordinate with local government officials for the relocation of communities along riverbanks.

He said a technical working group would be created to come up with engineering interventions along Cagayan River.

Cimatu recently met with the governors of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya, who would comprise the technical working group.



# Strict enforcement of easement rule along Cagayan River eyed

November 24, 2020, 4:29 pm



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu (File photo)

MANILA – Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu is eyeing immediate dredging and strict enforcement of the 20-meter easement rule along the Cagayan River to avoid a repeat of massive flooding that submerged the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Cimatu's plans for the Cagayan River received a warm reception from four governors and 31 mayors in Cagayan Valley when he met with them in Tuguegarao City on Nov. 23.

"We will create a working group and conduct a joint meeting to come up with important engineering interventions along the Cagayan River," said Cimatu in a news release on Tuesday.

Cimatu co-chairs the Build Back Better Task Force created by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to oversee the rehabilitation of areas devastated by recent typhoons.

He said the planned working group will be comprised of the governors of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino, and Nueva Vizcaya, as well as the nearby Cordillera Administrative Region.

Aside from the immediate dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River, Cimatu said strict implementation of the easement rule along its riverbanks is a must.

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Cimatu asked Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson Soriano to address the problem of illegal structures along creeks that block the waterways.

He also instructed Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 2 Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Region 2 Director Mario Ancheta to work with concerned provincial governments for the relocation of communities living along riverbanks.

Cimatu likewise ordered the MGB to close down small-scale mining operations in a hazard-prone area in Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya, where nine deaths were reported due to landslides during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

He nevertheless instructed the MGB to identify a possible Minahang Bayan site for those who will be displaced by the closure to ensure their safety and continued livelihood and prevent further destruction of the environment.

At the same time, Cimatu called on local officials whose areas were hit by the recent flooding to ensure the availability of water, electricity, transportation, telecommunication, and adequate basic needs.

"Let us first go back to normal," Cimatu told the local officials. (PR)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1122808>



## Strict enforcement of easement rule along Cagayan River eyed

November 24, 2020 3 min read

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“Let us first go back to normal,” Cimatu told the local officials. **(PNA)**



# Local execs propose measures to lower Cagayan's disaster risk

By Catherine Teves November 24, 2020, 6:58 pm



(PNA file photo of Cagayan River)

MANILA – Authorities are looking into other disaster risk reduction measures for flood-stricken Region 2 (Cagayan Valley), which is still reeling from the effects of the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses (international name Vamco) this month.

Environment chief Roy Cimatu visited Tuguegarao City this week and met with governors and mayors concerned to discuss Cagayan Valley's situation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 2 executive director Gwendolyn Bambalan said.

"There were proposals made during the discussion to include determination of easements of Cagayan River and its tributaries," she said Tuesday during a House committee meeting on "Ulysses" flooding that ravaged Region 2.

She noted that among the proposals are the possible recovery of such easements following regulations in Presidential Decree 1067 (Water Code of the Philippines) -- the planting of bamboo and other suitable species there.

Areas that may no longer be suitable for vegetative measures "will be coordinated properly with the Department of Public Works and Highways for engineering like river control project," she said.

Bambalan said there are portions of the Cagayan River that must be widened and deepened.

PD 1067 provides that "banks of rivers and streams and the shores of the seas and lakes throughout their entire length and within a zone of three (3) meters in urban areas, twenty (20) meters in agricultural areas and forty (40) meters in forest areas, along their margins, are subject to the easement of public use in the interest of recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing, and salvage."

"No person shall be allowed to stay in this zone longer than what is necessary for recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing or salvage or to build structures of any kind," it said.

The activities for recovering easements include relocating informal settlers there. The water of the Cagayan River rose significantly and overflowed even as "Ulysses" moved away from the country, flooding the surrounding areas.

To facilitate the flow of water in the Cagayan River and improve its water-carrying capacity, Cimatu approved the request of Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba to dredge its waterway.

Cimatu also targets to have some 200 million tree seedlings planted in Cagayan's low-lying agricultural areas.





Bambalan said the DENR chief instructed the DENR Region 2 to enforce forest protection activities and reforestation through the National Greening Program.

"Other instruction made by our Secretary is for us to facilitate dredging activities," she said.

She noted that the instruction is in line with DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 2020-07, which rationalized dredging in heavily silted river channels nationwide to help restore these waterways' natural state and flow as well as to reduce flooding. (PNA)

# DENR eyes restoring original width of Marikina River to reduce flood risk

Marje Pelayo • November 24, 2020



**MANILA, Philippines** — Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said Marikina River must be widened to reduce flood risk.

During a recent visit to Marikina City, Cimatu recommended the widening of Marikina River to increase its flood carrying capacity.

The recommendation comes after Marikina City and nearby areas were submerged in flood waters during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

The environment chief noticed that the river channel was narrow, prompting him to call for strict imposition of easement requirements pertaining to rivers.

Presidential Decree 1067, also known as the Philippine Water Code, requires riverbank easement of three meters in urban areas.

As part of the planned rehabilitation, Cimatu said the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources \(DENR\)](#) will evaluate the changes in the width of Marikina River based on the data from the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NMRIA).

“We will look into the old river and how the river became narrower through the years,” Cimatu said.

“We will restore the original width of the Marikina River,” he added.

At the same time, Cimatu said the DENR will look into the complaint of the Marikina City government over the alleged reclamation project along the river, which has not secured an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the environment department.

“Definitely, there should be no reclamation. I will really implement the easement law,” he said.

Cimatu said he has directed the DENR-National Capital Region office to look into the non-issuance of ECC, the reclamation, and the retaining wall built along the riverbanks.

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/denr-eyes-restoring-original-width-of-marikina-river-to-reduce-flood-risk/>



# Marikina mayor to file complaint with DENR over river reclamation

**Published** November 24, 2020 10:32pm

Marikina City Mayor Marcy Teodoro said he will file a complaint with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) against the firm of Marikina Representative Bayani Fernando due to a reclamation project in Marikina River, which the former said contributed to the massive flooding in the city during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

According to Maki Pulido's report on "24 Oras" on Tuesday, the reclamation project of Fernando's BFCT Corporation was not permitted by the city government as it failed to secure an environment compliance certificate from the DENR.

"Malinaw 'yong batas, sinasabi na anumang environmentally critical project ay nangangailangan ng ECC at walang sinumang indibidwal o korporasyon ang maaaring magsagawa ng development o ng pagbabago ng river kung walang kaukulang ECC," Teodoro said.

"The least that I want to happen is a political bickering. Importanteng maitama natin 'yong alignment ng Marikina River dahil bahagi ito ng long term solution at permanent solusyon upang kung hindi man maiwasan ay mabawasan ang pagbaha," he added.

Fernando did not issue a statement on the matter.

However, he maintained that there is no reclamation being pursued by his firm.

"There is no such thing as reclamation along Sitio Olandes or anywhere I know," Fernando said in a text message to GMA News.

It can be recalled that Fernando said it was the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) that was pursuing an artificial embankment along Marikina River as part of its flood control project.

Fernando said the DPWH even claimed a part of his land.

The DPWH-National Capital Region said it does not have equipment or manpower in the said location and that it does not have a private contractor involved in such project.

The DPWH said it is involved in a Marikina flood control project, however, it is located in Batasan Hills in Quezon City.

A large part of Marikina became flooded more than a week ago after the Marikina River overflowed due to strong overnight rains brought by Ulysses. -- **Ma. Angelica Garcia/BAP, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/765497/marikina-mayor-to-file-complaint-with-denr-over-river-reclamation/story/>



# DENR warns of quarrying's 'catastrophic' consequences

By [The Manila Times](#)

November 25, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has issued a warning against persistent mining and quarry operations in areas identified as unstable as these may cause serious damage in low-lying villages and further siltation of the Cagayan River.

DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leonel said the department was assessing alternative areas for legal quarry and mining operators in Region 2, which was affected by flooding this month.

“We want to avoid those unstable areas because these are contributory to silt and sediments. Once there are quarry operations on these areas, then it would be catastrophic,” he noted during the Network Briefing News with Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar.

“We want them to conduct operations in our river system,” Leonel said as he appealed to illegal miners and quarry operators to cease operations while assuring that the government is ready to provide alternative livelihood for them.

“Maybe we can ask for a faster assessment so that all illegal quarry operators will be suspended, but legitimate ones and legal operators will be allowed to undertake their quarry operations,” he added.

The DENR has also approved dredging activity along Cagayan River's heavily silted channels to address another onset of widespread flooding.

Leonel said the river is becoming shallow and narrower, which minimizes its holding capacity in times of continuous heavy downpour.

The DENR is also coordinating with concerned agencies and local government units in conducting assessments on areas affected by flooding in order to respond with appropriate programs.

Along with the dredging projects to be conducted, Leonel said they have recommended reforestation projects under DENR's National Greening Projects to be implemented in Cagayan Valley, especially in watershed areas.

The agency is also eyeing reforestation projects in upland areas through its Integrated Social Forestry Program (ISFP), which encourages villagers to cultivate forest trees and agricultural crops.

The ISFP aims to assist families generate incomes through the use of appropriate upland technologies while protecting the environment. JERRY M. HERNANDEZ

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/11/25/news/regions/denr-warns-of-quarryings-catastrophic-consequences/801124/>



# DENR shuts down small-scale mining firm in N. Vizcaya

Published November 24, 2020, 3:59 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has ordered the closure of small-scale mining operations in a landslide-prone area in the municipality of Quezon in Nueva Vizcaya province.



(PIXABAY / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Cimatu directed the MGB to close down small-scale mining operations at barangay Runruno after nine miners have died due to landslides during the onslaught of typhoon Ulysses.

In spite of that, he instructed the MGB to identify a possible “minahang bayan” site for those who will be displaced by the closure to ensure their safety and continued livelihood, and prevent further destruction of the environment.

Identifying a site for “minahang bayan” will allow small-scale miners to operate legally.

It will also enable the government to better monitor and regulate their extractive activities, while helping promote the safety of these workers, protect the environment, and generate revenues for government.

Also during his visit in Tuguegarao City on Nov. 23, Cimatu also broached plans of dredging and enforcement of 20-meter easement rule along the largest river in the country to avoid a repeat of massive flooding that submerged the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of typhoon Ulysses.

The DENR chief discussed the proposal with four governors and 31 mayors from Cagayan Valley.

“We will create a working group and conduct a joint meeting to come up with important engineering interventions along the Cagayan River,” said Cimatu, who co-chairs the Build Back Better Task Force that will oversee the rehabilitation of areas devastated by recent typhoons.

He explained that the planned working group will be comprised of the governors of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya, as well as the provinces in the nearby Cordillera Administrative Region.

Aside from the immediate dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River, Cimatu said strict implementation of the easement rule along its riverbanks is a must.



“We have to follow the 20-meter easement. There should be no building or any structure within the easement zone,” he said.

Cimatu also asked Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson Soriano to address the problem of illegal structures along creeks that block the waterways.

He also instructed DENR-Cagayan Valley Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Cagayan Valley Director Mario Ancheta to work with the concerned provincial governments for the relocation of communities living along riverbanks.

At the same time, Cimatu called on local officials whose areas were hit by the recent flooding to ensure the availability of water, electricity, transportation, telecommunication and adequate basic needs.



# 15 quarry operators in Albay found with permit violations

November 23, 2020 4 min read

**LEGAZPI CITY** – At least 15 quarry operators extracting aggregates around Mayon Volcano were found to have violated their permits and were recommended for appropriate sanctions, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) said on Monday.

In a phone interview, Guillermo Molina, MGB regional director, said the eight groups of Task Force Quarry investigators sent by Environment Sec. Roy Cimatu found out that of 106 operators granted permits, 15 did not comply with provisions of their license to operate issued by the provincial government of Albay.

Quoting investigation report, he said nine operators were found extracting sand and gravel in areas outside of their designated areas while the other six operators either have no permits or were operating with expired permits.

He said, “quarry regulations dictate that an operator is allowed to extract aggregate in river channels not to exceed five hectares of a town”.

Documents gathered named some operators that could be meted with sanctions as Sanrho Builders, John Michael Freno, Lawrence Lubiano, NFH Construction, WCD Construction and Supply, AMEG Construction and Supply, Maria Lourdes Leoncito, Sunwest Construction (Legazpi), and Sunwest Construction (Daraga).

Molina said of these quarry operators, only Sunwest construction has an Industrial Sand and Gravel (ISAG) permit that allows stockpiling of extracted aggregates while the rest are considered commercial quarry operators permitted to haul and load their extracted sand and gravel materials.

Molina said based on the finding of the Task Force, the matter would be endorsed to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), which could recommend the suspension of the issued Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) or for the violators to undertake rehabilitation in the areas where quarry practices were violated.

The Task Force sent by Cimatu to determine whether the quarry operators indeed violated provisions in their issued ECC and business permits took more than a week (Nov. 7-15) to complete its probe.

Upon consultation with the local government units, it recommended the lifting of the suspension order that was issued after lahar flows flooded villages during the onslaught of Super Typhoon Rolly, on those that are compliant with the ECC and permits. At least six people were reported to have died in the lahar flooding incident.



The task force said the finding indicates that sand and gravel extraction is situated in areas which, considering their geological and geomorphological settings, are highly prone to lahar flows.

It said the lahar deposit outside the channel confines in Guinobatan, Camalig, Tabaco City, Legazpi City is largely due to “natural processes”.

There were mining practices such as extraction outside the active river and lahar channel, over and improper extraction near existing dikes and flood controls and creation of artificial pits as well as stockpiling inside the active lahar channel that could have a significant impact in the long term and could alter the structures of the channel and would contribute to lahar flows, the Task Force noted.

It recommended the immediate relocation of residents severely affected by lahar flows in the villages of Bantayan in Tabaco City, and Travesia and San Francisco in Guinobatan town.

It also recommended a detailed study for the lahar flows that occurred in Guinobatan, Camalig, and Daraga, particularly within and along the channels in the villages of Maninila, Quirangay and Mi-isi to understand the factors that contributed to its occurrence.

It likewise recommended a further study on the erosional and depositional sites on the foot slopes of Mayon Volcano to determine the most suitable areas for sand and gravel quarrying and extraction.

Further, the Task Force batted for a policy that quarrying and extraction should only be made in the areas that get a steady supply of sand and gravel materials while areas that experienced significant net erosion should be excluded from such operations. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/23/15-quarry-operators-in-albay-found-with-permit-violations/?fbclid=IwAR3bpt4hkonLzyhHudSTbL-PbyHbBp9n-L7nrYLzIeIhYhaecmDZ8ML5Rws>





## Palace, DILG after mayors in logging, mining

The mayors can be kicked out of their posts and will be slapped with charges.

Published 6 hours ago on November 25, 2020 12:20 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) @tribunephil\_MJB



The Palace on Tuesday warned mayors involved in illegal logging and mining activities of sanctions as the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) began a crackdown on violators of environmental rules.

Presidential spokesperson Secretary Harry Roque issued the warning after DILG Secretary Eduardo Año disclosed that some local leaders are either directly or indirectly benefiting from illegal mining and logging.

“That is being probed by Secretary Año and depending on the final results of the investigation, the mayors can be kicked out of their posts and will be slapped with charges,” Roque said.

Roque’s statement came after President Rodrigo Duterte approved the release of an additional P1.5 billion to fund recovery efforts by the areas devastated by typhoon “Ulysses.”

The Palace official also reminded officials that they are mandated to implement the law and not benefit from illegal activities that supposedly worsen the impact of natural calamities.

“Mayors, you are in your posts to implement the law, not to break it and use your influence to further your businesses,” Roque said.

“You have seen the damage brought by illegal logging and illegal mining, especially the province of Cagayan. Blood is in your hands if you keep protecting illegal miners and illegal loggers,” he added.

The Palace official also reminded officials that they are mandated to implement the law and not benefit from illegal activities that supposedly worsen the impact of natural calamities.

The successive typhoons which hit the country caused unprecedented flooding and landslides, prompting the government to probe illegal logging and mining that are blamed for the catastrophic impact of calamities.

Año recently ordered local chief executives and police to reactivate their respective anti-illegal logging task forces and to expedite reforestation initiatives.

This follows President Rodrigo Duterte’s order to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to look into illegal logging and mining in Cagayan after the province was submerged in the worst floods in years due to typhoon “Ulysses.”

Government officials attributed the flooding to successive typhoons which saturated the soil, as well as climate change, mining, deforestation and Magat Dam’s water release.



Thousands of families were displaced and about P6-billion worth of damage to infrastructure and agriculture was recorded.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Constructors Association (PCA) mobilized its members, chapters and affiliates to provide relief, trucks and equipment to be used in clearing debris from the effects of the recent tropical storms.

The PCA's Task Force Rolly + Ulysses over the weekend alleviated the plights of over 40,000 households in Marikina and its fringes alone.

Blood is in your hands if you keep protecting illegal miners and illegal loggers.

In another development, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Tuesday arrested 12 individuals in Mabalacat, Pampanga for illegal quarrying.

NBI Officer-In-Charge Eric B. Distor identified those nabbed as John Patrick Reyes, Jhun Murillo, Francis Pangilinan, John Michael Malias, Egilberto San Pascual, Ronald Linsangan, Edcel Ruiz, Vincent Canlas, Aldrin Anson, Jomar Nazar, Christopher Moreno and Joel Ong.



# Palace warns mayors vs. coddling illegal loggers, miners

By Azer Parrocha November 24, 2020, 4:26 pm



ULYSSES AFTERMATH. Aerial photo shows the aftermath of Typhoon Ulysses in Cagayan Valley. Authorities cited illegal logging and mining as among the factors that contributed to the massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela when “Ulysses” hit Luzon on Nov. 11, 2020. (Presidential photo)

MANILA – Malacañang on Tuesday asked mayors to stop being involved in illegal logging and mining operations in their towns, warning that they will have blood in their hands if they pursue activities that have environmental consequences.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this statement after Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said that there were cases wherein mayors either directly or indirectly benefited from illegal mining and logging.

“*Iniimbestigahan nga po ‘yan ni Secretary Año* (That’s being investigated by Secretary Año) and depending on the final results of the investigation, pupuwede pong matanggal sa puwesto yung mga mayor na ‘yan at pupuwede rin makasuhan ng kasong kriminal (they can be removed from their post while others could face criminal charges),” he said in a Palace press briefing.

Roque reminded mayors that they as public officials, should abide by the law and not violate it.

“Well mga mayors, nandiyan po kayo diyan para ipatupad po ang batas hindi para kayo ang lumabag ng batas. Hindi po dapat ginagamit para sa negosyo ang inyong posisyon (To mayors, you’re there to implement the law, not violate the law. You shouldn’t use your position for business),” he said.

Earlier, Año said he had also ordered all local governments and police nationwide to start a crackdown on illegal logging and quarrying and fast-track tree planting activities.

“Nakita naman po natin ang danyos na dulot ng illegal logging at illegal mining lalung-lalo na diyan sa probinsya ng Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands kung puprotektahan niyo po ang mga (We saw the damage caused by illegal logging and illegal mining especially in the province of Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands if you protect) illegal miners at illegal loggers,” he added.

He also reminded mayors to conduct upland monitoring against illegal logging and other forms of forest destruction.

Año also advised residents to be wise in voting for local officials who have no connections with anything illegal.

On Nov. 15, Duterte ordered Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to look into reports of illegal logging and mining after Cagayan Valley experienced massive flooding triggered by heavy rainfall due to Typhoon Ulysses.

He lamented that despite being discussed in various meetings, “nothing” has been done to address illegal logging and mining in the country.



“We always talk about illegal logging and mining but actually nothing has been done about it,” he said.

He reiterated the need for urgent climate action, warning that poor countries like the Philippines are most affected by the effects of climate change. (PNA)



# Palace poises ax over mayors abetting illegal mining, logging

Published November 24, 2020, 4:35 PM

by [Genalyn Kabiling](#)

Malacañang has warned about the possible dismissal of mayors allegedly involved in illegal mining and logging operations in their towns.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said mayors allegedly protecting such illegal activities would have “blood in your hands.”



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque  
(OPS / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

“Well, mga mayors ‘no, nandiyang po kayo para ipatupad po ang batas hindi para kayo ang lumabag ng batas. Hindi po dapat ginagamit na para sa negosyo ang inyong posisyon (Mayors are in power to enforce the law, not to violate the law. You should not use your position to engage in businesses),” he said during a televised press briefing Tuesday.

“Nakita naman po natin ang danyos na dulot ng illegal logging at illegal mining lalung-lalo na diyan sa probinsiya ng Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands kung puprotektahan ninyo po ang mga illegal miners at illegal loggers (You’ve seen the data on the impact of illegal logging and mining in the province of Cagayan. You will have blood in your hands if you protect the illegal miners and loggers),” he said.

Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año earlier bared that some mayors were allegedly involved in illegal logging and mining in their areas of jurisdiction.

Año raised suspicion that some mayors were in cahoots with illegal loggers and miners in exchange of financial support for their candidacies. He said he hopes voters would reject public servants who are allegedly involved in illegal activities.

Shortly after the catastrophic flooding in Cagayan, President Duterte ordered the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to probe illegal mining and logging in the region.

The Palace later admitted that there might have been lapses in law enforcement in preventing such illegal activities in Cagayan. The police force has been advised to strictly enforce the country’s law against illegal mining. “They have limited enforcement so I would accept that we need to better enforce and implement the laws banning illegal mining even in secluded areas,” Roque said.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/24/palace-poises-ax-over-mayors-abetting-illegal-mining-logging/>



## Palace warns mayors against coddling illegal loggers, miners

November 24, 2020 3 min read

**MANILA** – Malacañang on Tuesday asked mayors to stop being involved in illegal logging and mining operations in their towns, warning that they will have blood in their hands if they pursue activities that have environmental consequences.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this statement after Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said that there were cases wherein mayors either directly or indirectly benefited from illegal mining and logging.

*“Iniimbestigahan nga po ‘yan ni Secretary Año (That’s being investigated by Secretary Año) and depending on the final results of the investigation, pupuwede pong matanggal sa puwesto yung mga mayor na ‘yan at pupuwede rin makasuhan ng kasong kriminal (they can be removed from their post while others could face criminal charges),”* he said in a Palace press briefing.

Roque reminded mayors that they as public officials, should abide by the law and not violate it.

*“Well mga mayors, nandiyan po kayo diyan para ipatupad po ang batas hindi para kayo ang lumabag ng batas. Hindi po dapat ginagamit para sa negosyo ang inyong posisyon (To mayors, you’re there to implement the law, not violate the law. You shouldn’t use your position for business),”* he said.

Earlier, Año said he had also ordered all local governments and police nationwide to start a crackdown on illegal logging and quarrying and fast-track tree planting activities.

*“Nakita naman po natin ang danyos na dulot ng illegal logging at illegal mining lalung-lalo na diyan sa probinsya ng Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands kung puprotektahan niyo po ang mga (We saw the damage caused by illegal logging and illegal mining especially in the province of Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands if you protect) illegal miners at illegal loggers,”* he added.

He also reminded mayors to conduct upland monitoring against illegal logging and other forms of forest destruction.

Año also advised residents to be wise in voting for local officials who have no connections with anything illegal.

On Nov. 15, Duterte ordered Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to look into reports of illegal logging and mining after Cagayan Valley experienced massive flooding triggered by heavy rainfall due to Typhoon Ulysses.



He lamented that despite being discussed in various meetings, “nothing” has been done to address illegal logging and mining in the country.

“We always talk about illegal logging and mining but actually nothing has been done about it,” he said.

He reiterated the need for urgent climate action, warning that poor countries like the Philippines are most affected by the effects of climate change. **(PNA)**



## Palasyo sa mga mayor: Illegal mining 'wag gawing negosyo

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Nov 24, 2020

NEWS



“You will have blood in your hands kung poprotektahan niyo po ang mga illegal logger at illegal miner.”

‘Yan ang babala ni presidential spokesperson Harry Roque sa mga alkalde na pinoprotektahan ang mga iligal na aktibidad sa kanilang nasasakupan kahit pa nakasisira ito sa kapaligiran. Ito’y kasunod ng paglantad ni Interior Secretary Eduardo Año na iniimbestigahan na ang mga alkalde na nakikinabang sa illegal logging at mining.

Source: <https://tonite.abante.com.ph/palasyo-sa-mga-mayor-illegal-mining-wag-gawing-negosyo/>





# Mga mayors, kasabwat, kakastiguhin sa illegal logging at mining

ni [Ronalyne Seminiano Reonico](#) | November 25, 2020



Itinuturong dahilan ng matinding pagbaha sa ilang lugar nang manalasa ang sunud-sunod na bagyo sa bansa. Photo: File source

Maaaring matanggal sa puwesto at makasuhan ang mga mayors na sangkot sa illegal logging at mining operations, ayon sa Malacañang.

Matatandaang ang illegal logging at mining ops ang itinuturong dahilan ng matinding pagbaha sa ilang lugar nang manalasa ang sunud-sunod na bagyo sa bansa.

Ayon kay Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, sangkot ang ilang mayor sa naturang gawain at nagsasagawa na rin umano ng imbestigasyon ang ahensiya sa tulong ng Philippine National Police at local government units upang mabantayan ang illegal logging at mining sa ilang lugar.

Saad pa ni Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque, “Depending on the final results of the investigation, pupuwede pong matanggal sa puwesto iyang mga mayor na iyan at pupuwede ring kasuhan ng kasong kriminal.”

Mensahe naman ni Roque sa mga mayors, “Well, mga mayors, ‘no, nandiyan po kayo para ipatupad po ang batas, hindi para kayo ang lumabag ng batas. Hindi po dapat ginagamit na para sa negosyo ang inyong posisyon.

“Nakita naman po natin ang danyos na dulot ng illegal logging at illegal mining lalung-lalo na rian sa probinsiya ng Cagayan, you will have blood in your hands kung poprotektahan ninyo po ang mga illegal miners at illegal loggers.”

Source: <https://www.bulgaronline.com/post/mga-mayors-kasabwat-kakastiguhin-sa-illegal-logging-at-mining>

# DILG orders nationwide crackdown vs. illegal logging, quarrying

November 24, 2020



Operators of illegal logging and quarrying in the country are about to lose their businesses as the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) boosts its campaign against such prohibited activities.

DILG Secretary Eduardo Año has already ordered all local government units and the Philippine National Police to ensure the nationwide crackdown on the environmentally destructive activities after many areas in Luzon got flooded due to Typhoon Ulysses. The incident has also been attributed to climate change.

Año has also urged the public to plant more trees and protect forests prevent flooding and its devastating impact.

Meanwhile, Malacañang responded on Tuesday to the reported involvement of some local chief executives in illegal mining and the alleged support they receive from operators.

“Iniimbestigahan nga po ‘yan ni Secretary Año. And depending on the final results of the investigation, pwedeng matanggal sa pwesto ang mga mayor na ‘yan at pwedeng kasuhan ng kasong criminal (Secretary Año is now probing into that. Depending on the final results of the investigation, those mayors can be sacked and charged criminally),” Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque stated. – *PTV Balita Ngayon*



## Quarrying, illegal logging susugpuin ng DILG (Ikinatuwa ng mga Bulakenyo)

Posted by: [Micka Bautista](#) on November 24, 2020 in [News](#) [Leave a comment](#)

**IPINAG-UTOS** kahapon, 23 Nobyembre, ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) na sugpuin ang illegal logging at quarrying, na itinuturo ng mga awtoridad na dahilan ng matinding pagbaha kasunod ng magkakasunod na bagyo sa bansa.

Ipinahatid ni DILG Secretary Eduardo Año sa mga local government units (LGUs) at Philippine National Police (PNP) na ipatupad ang pagsugpo sa pamamagitan ng muling pagpapasigla ng kanilang lokal na Anti-Illegal Logging Task Forces.

Ipinaalala ng kalihim, sa ilalim ng 2011 Memorandum ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), kinakailangang tiyakin ng mga municipal at city mayor na walang illegal logging, quarrying, kaingin, at iba pang uri ng pagkasira ng kagubatan ang mangyayari sa kanilang mga nasasakupan.

Matapos mabatid ang kautusan, natuwa ang mga residente sa Bulacan kung saan namamayagpag ang illegal logging sa mga kabundukan gayondin ang quarrying sa mga maraming ilog sa lalawigan.

Ilang linggo ang nakararaan ay nahuli sa akto ng Bulacan police ang illegal loggers mula sa Nueva Ecija na ilegal na nagpuputol ng puno sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre sa bayan ng Doña Remedios Trinidad.

Wala rin tigil ang reklamo ng taong bayan sa walang habas na quarrying sa mga burol at ilog sa mga bayan ng Sta. Maria, Pandi, Norzagaray, lalo sa Angat na ang itinuturong nasa likod ay mga lokal na opisyal.

“Sana, hindi nila balewalain ang kautusang ito ng DILG dahil kung magpapatuloy ang pagsira ng kalikasan sa Bulacan ay baka humantong ito sa trahedyang, na harinawang ‘wag naman sanang mangyari,” pahayag ng isang environmentalist sa bayan ng Angat. **(MICKA BAUTISTA)**

Source: [https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2020/11/24/quarrying-illegal-logging-susugpuin-ng-dilg-ikinatuwa-ng-mga-bulakenyo/?fbclid=IwAR3saXcEEMJBhGPABf6PEs\\_t\\_YUbb6nCGvoMuU9Y1fBantVb77qbTnlX\\_CA](https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2020/11/24/quarrying-illegal-logging-susugpuin-ng-dilg-ikinatuwa-ng-mga-bulakenyo/?fbclid=IwAR3saXcEEMJBhGPABf6PEs_t_YUbb6nCGvoMuU9Y1fBantVb77qbTnlX_CA)



# Año orders crackdown on illegal logging, quarrying

[THIRD ANNE PERALTA-MALONZO](#)

November 23, 2020

DEPARTMENT of the Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año on Monday, November 23, 2020, ordered the Philippine National Police (PNP) and local government units (LGUs) to strengthen the campaign against illegal logging and illegal quarrying as well as expedite the planting of trees in coordination with the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Año issued the order in the wake of massive flooding in several parts of the country caused by Typhoons Rolly and Ulysses.

Año said all LGUs and PNP units across the country must prioritize the protection of the environment.

“We must act quickly and in a whole-of-society fashion to protect our remaining forests across the country otherwise we are creating and causing more disasters for our country,” he said.

“The flooding brought by Typhoon Ulysses is a harsh reminder that we are failing at doing our level best to protect the environment, especially our remaining forest cover. Kayat inaatasan ko ang lahat ng PNP units at LGUs na pigilan ang illegal logging at illegal quarrying sa kanilang mga nasasakupan,” he added.

Año said local Anti-Illegal Logging Task Forces composed of the DENR, DILG, Department of National Defense, Armed Forces of the Philippines, PNP and LGUs in coordination with the Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Office of the DENR should be strengthened.

“It is imperative that we must stop the wanton destruction of our remaining forest resources not only for our sake but also for future generations who will suffer the consequences of our inaction,” he said.

Meantime, Año admitted that not all mayors are involved in illegal logging and quarrying, which triggered the massive destruction during the onslaught of the typhoons.

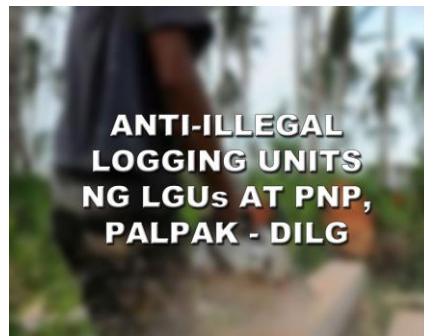
“Merong mga instance na ganun, pero 'di naman lahat. Merong hindi naman siya kasabwat, pero alam niya. Alam mo na, baka nagbibigay din ng pondo sa kampanya, sumusuporta sa kandidatura,” he said.

“Dapat paigtingin ito nationwide sa pangunguna dapat ng DENR supported by the Armed Forces of the Philippines at saka Philippine National Police. This time, dapat istrikto talaga tayo. Walang perso-personalidad dito, kahit politician ka,” he added. **(SunStar Philippines)**



## ANTI-ILLEGAL LOGGING UNITS NG LGUs AT PNP, PALPAK – DILG

9 hours ago jake



INAMIN ni Interior Secretary Eduardo Año na hindi aktibo ang anti-illegal logging units ng local government units (LGUs) at ng Philippine National Police (PNP).

Ang nasabing task force (TF) laban sa pagtotroso ay nakasaad sa Executive Order No. 23 na inilabas noong 2011.

Ani Año, ang ilegal na pagtotroso ang isa sa mga dahilan ng malawakang pagbaha sa ilang rehiyon sa Luzon na tinamaan ng magkakasunod na bagyo.

Maraming barangay sa mga lugar na hinagupit ng mga bagyo tulad sa Bicol, Cagayan, Rizal at Lungsod ng Marikina, ang lumubog sa baha.

Aniya, ang sinapit ng nasabing mga lugar ay sakunang nagsasabing dapat nang “magising” ang pamahalaan.

Dahil hindi aktibo ang mga organo ng LGUs at PNP sa mga rehiyon na dapat magpatigil sa ilegal na pagtotroso, kailangang buhayin ang mga ito.

Maging ang illegal quarrying ay dapat na ring matuldukan, patuloy ng kalihim.

“The flooding brought by Typhoon Ulysses is a harsh reminder that we are failing at doing our level best to protect the environment, especially our remaining forest cover. Kaya’t inaatasan ko ang lahat ng PNP units at LGUs na pigilan ang illegal logging at illegal quarrying sa kanilang mga nasasakupan,” paliwanag ni Año.

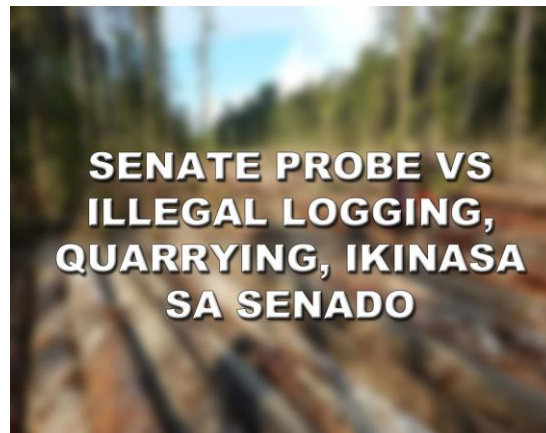
Binanggit din niya na kailangang makipag-ugnayan ang anti-illegal logging units sa pangrehiyong tanggapan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). (NELSON S. BADILLA)

Source: [http://saksingayon.com/metro/anti-illegal-logging-units-ng-lgus-at-pnp-palpak-dilg/?utm\\_source=ReviveOldPost&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR1tJ7IZizDxXhTbf6Ad4YQ1eGpTteQ2dNaFr4j6pDrEuTKnhR9bEa4Tq2M](http://saksingayon.com/metro/anti-illegal-logging-units-ng-lgus-at-pnp-palpak-dilg/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR1tJ7IZizDxXhTbf6Ad4YQ1eGpTteQ2dNaFr4j6pDrEuTKnhR9bEa4Tq2M)



## SENATE PROBE VS ILLEGAL LOGGING, QUARRYING, IKINASA SA SENADO

9 hours ago jake



INIHAİN ni Senador Cynthia Villar ang isang panukalang resolusyon upang imbestigahan ang pagkalbo ng kagubatan at watershed sanhi ng illegal logging, walang patumanggang quarrying na nagdulot ng malawakang pagbaha sa nakaraang Bagyong Ulysses.

Sa Proposed Senate Resolution No. 581, sinabi ni Villar na maraming batas sa proteksiyon at pamamahala ng kagubatan at watershed ang hindi naipatutupad o nilalabag ng marami sanhi ng illegal logging, quarrying kabilang ang slash and burn agriculture.

“Science has taught us that forest and the watersheds should be kept health and protected and that deforestation should be avoided so that the abundant forest trees could help forest soil absorb and retain rainwater, thereby naturally regulating the release of rainwater from hills and mountains and serving as natural protection to the adverse impact of natural disasters, such as heavy rainfalls during typhoons and extreme flooding,” ayon kay Villar.

Sinabi ni Villar na hindi mangyayari ito kung hindi nakakalbo ang ating kagubatan sanhi ng illegal logging, quarrying, unregulated and open-pit mining at slash-and-burn agriculture na patuloy na nagbabanta sa forest cover ng bansa, kaya nababawasan ang proteksiyon sa natural na kalamidad.

“While the Filipino people continually suffers from the destructive effects of typhoons, which just keep on escalating through the years as exemplified by Ulysses, it is equally devastating that the Sierra Madre Mountain range, which stretches from Cagayan Province in the north of Luzon and Quezon Province in the south of Luzon and represents 40 percent of the country’s forest cover, continues to be threatened by illegal logging, unregulated mining activities, and unhampered quarrying,” ayon kay Villar.

Binanggit din ni Villar ang Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape ay hindi rin nakaligtas sa pagsasamantala kabilang ang Masungi Georeserve na may natagpuan sa naturang protected area na patuloy na pinapasok ng illegal quarrying kay nagsasagawa sila ng estriktong conservation interventions.

“The muddy quality of the water that flooded Cagayan and Marikina alike is an indication that the surrounding forest and watersheds are already so denuded such that they do not anymore retain soil water and prevent erosions,” ayon kay Villar.

“The apparent silted condition of the rivers and tributaries in the flooded areas did little in containing the rainwater that flowed from the mountains and so may have contributed to the rapid rise of the flood water as well,” dagdag niya.

Ayon kay Villar na sa pagkasirang ng buhay at ari-arian sanhi ng nakaraang bagyo ay mayroon nang pangangailangan nang protektahan at magkaroon ng konserbasyon sa ating kagubatan at watershed at panatiliing malinis at nasa maayos na kondisyon ang ating mga ilog na walang burak, na lumilitaw na pinaka-epiktibong pamamaraan upang maiwasan ang mapanirang baha.



“Now, there, be it resolved as it is hereby resolved by the Senate to direct the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alleged denuded state of forest and watersheds as well as the apparent heavy siltation on rivers and tributaries, which largely contributed to the immense flooding in some parts of the Luzon during the onslaught of the recent typhoon particularly Typhoon Ulysses, with the end in view of strengthening the conservation of the country’s forest cover and waterways in order to mitigate, if not altogether prevent, the devastating effects of natural disaster,” ayon sa resolusyon. (ERNIE REYES)

Source: [http://saksingayon.com/metro/senate-probe-vs-illegal-logging-quarrying-ikinasa-sa-senado/?utm\\_source=ReviveOldPost&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR2c4u4j7GCKHxfUBU8OBX4Xgu\\_86HVOeR80cTrde18XtHJU6AcAkSKs820](http://saksingayon.com/metro/senate-probe-vs-illegal-logging-quarrying-ikinasa-sa-senado/?utm_source=ReviveOldPost&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=ReviveOldPost&fbclid=IwAR2c4u4j7GCKHxfUBU8OBX4Xgu_86HVOeR80cTrde18XtHJU6AcAkSKs820)



## 12 nilambat sa illegal quarrying

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Nov 24, 2020

METRO



Arestado ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) ang 12 kataong sangkot sa illegal quarrying kamakailan sa Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Nabatid na ang mga suspek na hindi pinangalanan ng NBI-Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) at DENR-MGB3 ay naaresto noong Nob.19, 2020 habang aktong ini-extract ang mga lahar materials.





## CRACKDOWN VS ILLEGAL LOGGING AT MINING HINDI SANA MAGING NINGAS-KUGON



November 24, 2020 @ 10:08 AM 21 hours ago

ANG mga nakakalbong kagubatan at ang walang habas na paghuhukay ng mga lupa ang siyang pangunahing itinuturong dahilan sa malawakang pagbaha sa ilang probinsya matapos manalasa ang malalakas na bagyo.

Kaya inatasan na ni Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Sec. Eduardo Año ang Philippine National Police (PNP) na tutukan ang paghahabol sa mga taong nasa likod ng illegal logging at illegal mining sa Cagayan, Isabela at sa buong Bicol Region.

Bukod sa kampanya sa illegal drugs, isinama na rin sa mga prayoridad ng kampanya ng PNP ang pagsugpo sa illegal logging at illegal na pagmimina.

Isinusulong na rin ang national tree planting at target na makapagtanim ng 200 milyong puno sa kagubatan.

Maganda kung ganon???

Inaasahang makatutuwang sa proyektong ito ang iba't ibang local government unit at iba pang mga sangay ng gobyerno.

Ang sabi nga ni DILG Usec. Jonathan Malaya, maglalabas ng mga memorandum circular at department order ang DILG para hikayating lumahok sa malawakang tree planting at greening program ang mga barangay hanggang sa pinakamataas na antas ng local government unit.

Aba'y ok 'yan, sama ako riyan.

Ang isang matindi rito, may mga natatanggap na reklamo laban sa ilang opisyal ng Region 2 kaugnay sa umano'y hindi maayos na pamamalakad sa panahon ng kalamidad.

Habang tila aligaga ang mga ito, ang iba naman, sa halip na damayan ang mga kababayan na naghuhumiyaw sa kasagsagan ng pagbaha, mas ginusto pang iselebreyt ang birthday sa ibang lugar.

Samantala may ilang lokal na opisyal na sa halip na makipagtulungan sa kampanya ng gobyerno laban sa talamak na illegal na pagtotroso at pagmimina, sila pa mismo 'yung mga nasa likod ng nasabing ka-iligalan kaya ganon na lamang katindi ang pagbaha mula sa nakakalbong kagubatan.



Aray ko pooo.

Ang tanong: Hanggang kailan kaya tatagal ang kampanya laban sa illegal mining at illegal logging????

Hanggang kailaannnn?

Baka naman ningas-kugon lamang ang ating gobyerno at kumikilos lang kung may mga nangyayari nang kalamidad.

Nagtatanong lang po ako.

Anomang puna o reklamo i-text sa 09189274764,09266719269 o i-email sa juandesabog@yahoo.com o juandesabog48@gmail.com.



## EDITORIAL - Political will

(The Philippine Star) - November 25, 2020 - 12:00am

Logging and mining activities are difficult to conceal, especially in rural areas where people typically know all the members of their community. If there is political will to stop illegal logging and mining, these will stop. But what if the politicians themselves are the ones engaged in the illegal activities?

It's not surprising that local politicians are being linked to illegal logging and mining, which are being blamed for the recent catastrophic flooding that inundated large areas of Cagayan Valley following a series of typhoons.

The House of Representatives began yesterday its probe of the causes of the flooding, including reports that certain mayors were behind illegal logging and mining activities in the three mountain ranges around the valley.

In Marikina, which again suffered massive flooding reminiscent of Storm Ondoy when Typhoon Ulysses battered Luzon, the city government is investigating a private company owned by a congressman, which is reportedly undertaking a reclamation project in the Marikina River without a permit from the city or an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The project reportedly aggravated the muddy flooding from the Sierra Madre.

Around Laguna de Bay, politicians are also reported to be among the biggest owners of fish pens that have caused heavy siltation in the lake, as well as reclamation projects in the natural floodplain. Flooding from Ulysses in several communities around the lake has yet to fully subside; after Ondoy, the flood took about three months to disappear.

Congressmen themselves have been linked to what the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission described as anomalous transactions in the Department of Public Works and Highways. President Duterte, invoking the independence of the legislature as a co-equal branch, said he could not investigate congressmen, and has tossed the issue to the Department of Justice and Office of the Ombudsman.

These are cases of abuse of power that can be stopped. There are enough laws against corruption and unethical conduct of public officials and employees. Like the long-existing laws against unauthorized logging and mining, what they need is political will in enforcement.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/11/25/2059233/editorial-political-will>



# 'Environment and disasters: too much water or not enough of it'

[CROSSROADS TOWARD PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS](#) - [Gerardo P. Sicat](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 25, 2020 - 12:00am

Through the year's annual cycle, we get disasters that happen with regularity. During part of the year, there could be too much water, but during the hot months, too little of it.

**Destructive floods and inadequate water supply.** The visit of a one-two-punch succession of Typhoons Rolly and Ulysses just recently made this point abundantly clear.

The country experienced disastrous floods, made complicated by the release of excess water from dams that have accumulated threateningly high water levels. The damage from these floods has led the government to declare the recent episode as a calamity in the island of Luzon.

Yet, not long ago, the other face of the problem stared us in the face. Metro Manila's water supply became dangerously low. The water supply for the national metropolis fell far short.

Recreation against the water companies was vehement, and they felt great public anger fall on them. Though there was blame thrown around, this was essentially a failure of long-term investment in water.

**An environmental system approach.** Water resources investments have to be harnessed safely for national development. Some of the extremes of problems – whether excessive abundance or lack of it – could be minimized, if not avoided.

We cannot completely control nature's fury, but we can prepare more reasonably and ably with proper planning and investments.

Like the nation's energy development program, water resources investments got hijacked in the wrong direction some decades ago. This explains the paucity of investments in the water sector to enable the nation to catch up with the needs. Our politics when it came to water was one of benign neglect.

The major water dams that provide for irrigation, water supply, and hydro-power for the island of Luzon, for instance, were all undertaken before the 1980s.

It is only lately that a project for the construction of a major dam – the Kaliwa Dam – which is to expand the water catchment system for the Metro Manila region was started almost two years ago.

The life of major investments in water resources depends on keeping watershed areas safe from encroachments and destruction through deforestation. The reduction of watershed areas has made flooding a general problem of the nation in low-lying plains.

The logging that was allowed in the past to exploit forests for economic reasons that led to opening up of agricultural lands also left us denuded hills and mountains. The nation faces the problem of reforestation as a major issue.

One avenue to keep reforestation alive and sustainable is to encourage tree plantations, by incentivizing local governments to promote them for national survival and economy. So far, the nation has not succeeded in sustaining such a long-term industry.

Public efforts to replant the hills and mountains have failed despite public outcries and government promises of giant-scale reforestation. A potential solution is to involve private enterprise and encourage tree plantations. But trees are long term investments and households and private enterprise do not have the needed time-horizon to make it succeed.



Tree plantation investments to reforest the country as a corporate enterprise has not progressed much because of impediments in land laws. Yet, some countries have managed it as a national way of life. (This is a heavy topic, in part related to the constitutional issues on foreign investments.)

**Prone to natural disasters.** Our country has been tagged as is highly vulnerable to environmental disasters. We are along the same rim of countries fronting the Pacific Ocean as Korea, Japan and Taiwan.

Although the same countries are as exposed to environmental disasters as we are, they do not seem to suffer as much as we do from the visits of typhoons and floods. Our archipelago could be the most exposed from the standpoint of the Asian continent's first defense against the big Pacific-made typhoons.

When it comes to the relative magnitude of damage and human suffering, we tend to suffer more. I talk in human economic terms, in numbers of people and families who suffer from such disasters.

There are obvious reasons for this.

The first is the level of the country's economic development. The other countries have achieved a higher degree of growth over the past decades compared to us and have surpassed our achievements in industry and commerce.

As a result, they have greater control over their environment at the household and national levels. Against the force of nature's fury, the three countries can use stronger materials to build their houses, public structures, and other coastal and anti-flooding investments. They have greater capacity to fight the brute force of nature because they can invest more resources to strengthen their defenses.

The second is that the three countries have much broader forest cover over their hills and mountains than we have. Historically, they have not exploited their forest resources the way we have.

In our case, we have consumed our forests through heavy logging, but have neglected as a nation to reforest effectively.

A third reason for the denudation of our forest cover is rapid population growth. Our population growth has been high compared to the other countries. While South Korea and Taiwan during their early years of growth in the postwar period had high rates of population growth, they experienced a decline as soon as the rapid economic growth took hold on them. Japan, for most of the recent decades, has been on a stable, even declining, population level.

Rapid population growth in our country has been in part responsible for the higher rate of clearing of lands for cultivation and for human exploitation. In the early stages of economic development, when much activity depends on the early rudiments of growth, the land has to sustain the living through the cultivation of food.

With people depending on the environment, there is also higher potential for degrading it: cutting or burning of existing forest lands for commercial or subsistence farming. The demand to open more lands exposes the country's natural cover for maintenance and sustenance of the people's.

*For archives of previous Crossroads essays, go to: <https://www.philstar.com/authors/1336383/gerardo-p-sicat>. Visit this site for more information, feedback and commentary: <http://econ.upd.edu.ph/qpsicat/>*

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/11/25/2059164/environment-and-disasters-too-much-water-or-not-enough-it>



# DENR: Illegal settlers' evac, key to stop Runruno tragedy

By Benjamin Moses M. Ebreo Published on November 24, 2020

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya, Nov. 24 (PIA) - Evacuation of illegal dwellers and settlers within the hazard-prone - areas in barangay Runruno in Quezon town needs to be done to prevent another landslide tragedy in the community, officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here said.

Edgar Martin, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) said they have intensified their composite checkpoint in the area to prevent dwellers from entering the communities which were long been considered as hazard-prone site.

He said they were able to confiscate chainsaws and recovered cut lumbers in the area used by illegal dwellers in putting-up their houses/shanties.

"The landslide that happened recently in barangay Runruno is solely a result of natural phenomenon where loosened, silky and sandy soil in an elevated position tends to erode and collapse. The continuous rains aggravated the hazard condition of the area," he said.

Martin, in a post-incident visit and meeting with municipal and barangay officials, including officials of the FCF Minerals Corporation which operates the gold-molybdenum project in Runruno said the site of the recent landslide that buried and killed 10 people and injured two others was not yet under the operation and excavation by the mining firm.

He said they were informed that 245 individuals/families have been previously compensated by the mining company in the past with more than P57.8 million to vacate their habitats.

"But despite these settlements, new and previous illegal dwellers continue to enter the geo-hazard area, building their shanties on a 45-degree gradient slope. In fact, most of the landslide fatalities came from Ifugao and Quirino provinces," Martin said.

## Evacuation, stoppage of entrants/ illegal dwellers

Martin also bared that a meeting with the municipal and barangay officials will be conducted this week as a preliminary step in the settlement of the evacuation process among illegal dwellers and enforcement of no housing - zone policy and implementation within the geo-hazard areas.

He said a multi sectoral dialogue and consultation will also be offered immediately with the affected dwellers, concerned government agencies and the mining company.

"One of the expected outcomes of the larger meeting will be the identification of proposed evacuation centers and other concerns of the illegal dwellers for a fair settlement. We hope to have a win-win solution to this problem," Martin said.

He added that barangay officials have been advising the illegal dwellers to vacate the area due to its geo-hazard condition but they refused.

The geo-hazard study, recommendation and advisory to vacate was earlier made by the DENR - Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau (MGB). (MDCT/BME/PIA 2-Nueva Vizcaya)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1059868>



## MGB-2 asks LGUs to relocate residents in high-risk areas

Published November 23, 2020, 2:20 PM

by [Liezle Basa Iñigo](#)

CAGAYAN—The Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Region 2 (MGB-2) has asked local government units to check their respective comprehensive land use, and disaster risk reduction and management plans.



PHOTO VIA LIEZLE INIGO/ MANILA BULLETIN

The appeal was made by MGB-2 Chief Geologist Felicitas Piligan after the series of landslides and floods experienced in the Cagayan Valley region due to successive typhoons which hit the country recently.

Piligan noted that there were several areas in region that they have assessed, and identified as high risks.

She also advised that the residents or settlers in these areas be immediately relocated.

Among the high risk areas identified by MGB-2 were those in Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and Cagayan provinces where deadly landslides occurred.

Piligan said she was hoping that the local government units will consider their recommendations to avoid another tragic incidence.

“One of the reasons for the landslides was the over saturation of the soils caused by the series of heavy downpour,” she said.



## ‘Nature, man’s greed caused flood, not dam’

posted November 25, 2020 at 01:20 am

by [Maricel Cruz and Rio N. Araja](#)

The head of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) said Tuesday the release of water from Magat Dam was not a major cause of the recent severe flooding in Cagayan and Isabela provinces.



*FLOOD PROBE. Speaker Lord Allan Velasco is shown on the big screen as he addresses the House Committee on Agriculture on Tuesday, as it began its probe into the cause of unprecedented flooding in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses. Velasco authored House Resolution 1348, which the committee also tackled, together with Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin Romualdez and Minority Leader Joseph Stephen “Caraps” Paduano. HOR Photo*

Legislators should investigate instead other causes, including illegal logging, mining, and quarrying on the slopes of the Sierra Madre, NIA Administrator Ricardo Visaya told the House committees on agriculture and food, and the North Luzon Quadrangle.

The joint committee hearing was called to look into the cause of the massive flooding in many areas in the Cagayan Valley region as Typhoon "Ulysses" rampaged through the area almost two weeks ago.

Meanwhile, the Palace on Tuesday told mayors to stop being involved in illegal logging and mining operations in their towns, warning that they will have blood on their hands if they pursue activities that have dire environmental consequences.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque made this statement after Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said there were cases in which mayors either directly or indirectly benefited from illegal mining and logging that made nearby communities more vulnerable to floods.

Also, floods brought about by Ulysses dumped debris equivalent to one-and-a-half years' worth of garbage, Marikina Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said Tuesday.

In an interview on the ANC news channel, Teodoro said the city has cleared nearly half of the debris and hoped to finish the clean-up by the end of November.

“The debris that we are collecting is equivalent to that of one and a half years of garbage we collected in the city. That’s 980,000 cubic meters of debris,” he said.

“After 11 days, we have accomplished 45 percent of the clearing operations, but still there’s still a lot. We are still clearing it,” he said.

From the effects of the recent flooding, the mayor said it would take 5 to 10 years for the city to recover.

Teodoro again called for the rehabilitation of the Marikina Watershed, which can reduce the risk of flooding.

Visaya presented a chart which showed that from Nov. 9 to 14 amid the typhoon, the peak water inflow at Magat Dam was 7,128 cubic meters per second but the dam released only 6,706 cubic meters per second.

The water level at Buntun Bridge, which measures the water level of Cagayan River, was 13.2 meters, he added.





The matrix alone would prove that the opening of the water gates of Magat Dam was not the major cause of the flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.

Visaya said the massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela could have been prevented had there been better implementation of anti-illegal logging, mining, and quarrying activities.

"We have to look into the other factors that could have contributed to the flooding of Cagayan. If only anti-illegal logging, mining, and quarrying activities were implemented properly, maybe we could have prevented the overflowing of the Cagayan River," he said.

Visaya earlier said that the gates of Magat Dam had to be opened amid heavy rains from the typhoon to prevent the dam from collapsing and triggering a bigger catastrophe.

Visaya added that those who may be affected by the release of water are warned ahead of time.

"Six hours before release, the warning stations are activated. As much as possible, no release is made after 5:00 pm. Although the target is no release after 3:00 p.m. We give lead time to all concerned, including government offices, local governments, radio stations, et cetera, six hours so they can react," he said. In addition, Visaya said there is redundancy in the warning system "and it is followed by a document that the affected LGUs sign.

As the hearing continued, the House committee on disaster resilience, chaired by Leyte Rep. Lucy Torres-Gomez adopted House Resolution 535, declaring a disaster and climate emergency.

The author of the resolution, Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, House ways and means committee chair, said the declaration will be "the necessary first of many steps to secure broader international climate justice and local resilience."

"We will eventually defeat COVID-19, as we have beaten all other pandemics. But the climate emergency will be here to stay. Unless we act now to make our communities safer, and to seek international climate justice, we will suffer the long-term consequences of this crisis," Salceda said.

Lawmakers led by Speaker Lord Allan Velasco on Tuesday cited the need to revisit protocols on releasing water in dams to prevent a repeat of devastating floods that inundated the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

In his opening statement, Velasco underscored the importance to review dam protocols and other preventive measures to mitigate the destructive power of tropical cyclones as brought about by climate change. The speaker pointed to climate change and the release of water from Magat Dam as potential causes for massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela during the typhoon.

He said water discharge from the dam worsened flooding in Cagayan and Isabela at the height of Ulysses. During the hearing, House Deputy Majority Leader Bernadette Herrera said "there doesn't seem to be one agency that can account for what truly caused the flooding, nor analyze forecasts and recommend measures to mitigate damage in the future."

Rules for releasing dam water are based on protocols set in 2006.

It was also stated during the hearing that the state weather bureau can predict only up to 50 percent accuracy the amount of rainfall that incoming storms bring.

Agriculture panel chair Quezon Rep. Mark Enverga said that there seemed to be several lapses in the coordination of concerned agencies within the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC) during the onslaught of Ulysses.

"We will need to take a closer look at the way the interagency council coordinates with the different departments because it is apparent that what they've done was not enough to prevent deaths and destruction from happening," Enverga said.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said Tuesday his department planned to immediately dredge the Cagayan River and strictly enforce the 20-meter easement rule to avoid a repeat of the massive flooding that submerged the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela.



"We will create a working group and conduct a joint meeting to come up with important engineering interventions along the Cagayan River," Cimatu said.

The working group will be composed of the governors of Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya, as well as the nearby Cordillera Administrative Region, he said.

Apart from the immediate dredging of the heavily silted Cagayan River, he said strict implementation of the easement rule along its riverbanks is a must.

"We have to follow the 20-meter easement. There should be no building or any structure within the easement zone," he said.



## SMC river dredging keeps floods away

posted November 24, 2020 at 10:40 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Malabon and Navotas, two of the most flood-prone areas in Metro Manila, reported no major flooding incidents despite the recent onslaught of two typhoons, primarily due to the government's installation of pumping stations, complemented by the continuous dredging of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system by San Miguel Corporation (SMC).

"Based on the feedback we received from representatives of the local governments of Malabon and Navotas, no major floods were reported. This is largely due to the pumping stations installed by the government, particularly the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) that easily channels flood waters out to the Tullahan River," Ang explained.

"At the Tullahan River, even with increased volume of water, there was also no river overflow. This is because we've already dredged and deepened the mouth of the river going to Manila Bay, to up to five meters," Ang added.

Ang noted that the positive development shows the importance of implementing multiple and complementing flood mitigation measures, and further strengthens the company's resolve to continue its efforts to clean up rivers.

"These recent calamities underscore the urgency and importance of all stakeholders coming together to work on multiple, long-term solutions to flooding, such as dredging rivers and taking care of, or re-planting forests," Ang said.

The Tullahan-Tinajeros River Dredging project is a P1-billion corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative of SMC that aims to dredge the entire 27-kilometer stretch of the river system. Launched together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) early this year, it complements the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay and is seen to boost flood mitigation by increasing the river's capacity to handle floodwaters.

Ang reported that as of November 14, SMC had extracted some 60,532 metric tons of silt and solid waste from the Tullahan river, particularly from the section from Barangay Tanong in Malabon City, to the mouth of the river leading to Manila Bay in Navotas City. The area is within the first phase of the project.

On average, Ang said the company now removes some 600 metric tons of dredged soil and solid wastes daily from the initial 5.25 km. stretch from Navotas to Malabon City. In two years, SMC is looking to dredge a total of 1 million cubic meters from the Navotas-Malabon section alone.

"There are many factors that lead to flooding, some are natural-occurring, but many are man-made. We are not fully helpless against flooding, there are ways we can mitigate or minimize their impact," Ang said.

"The Tullahan is a major tributary to Manila Bay, and passes many provinces and cities. It's supposed to bring excess water from the La Mesa Dam to the Manila Bay. But over the decades, it has become shallow because of accumulated silt and debris, severely reducing water outflow to Manila Bay," Ang explained.

The increasing volume of water coming from upstream areas to low-lying areas in the northern part of Metro Manila has also not helped. Thus, major emphasis was put on widening and deepening the Tullahan river to increase its capacity to receive water and reduce the incidence of flash floods in nearby areas.

Ang added that following the directive of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), SMC has increased the depth of dredged areas in the Tullahan River to five meters. This is crucial since many parts of the river have been reduced to a depth of only one to two meters, mainly due to the accumulation of trash and the presence of illegal structures.

"Although we're already seeing improvements in the flood situation today, there's still a lot that needs to be done. At our current pace, we will hopefully cover the Navotas and Malabon area within two years. After that, we will move on to the Valenzuela and Caloocan parts of the Tullahan river," Ang said.

Recently, the local government units of Bulacan asked SMC to replicate the river dredging projects in tributaries belonging to the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System (MMORS). Bulacan is one of several Central Luzon provinces affected by heavy flooding due to Typhoon Ulysses.

For Bulacan, Ang said that the plan is to dredge, widen, and deepen the Alipit or Taliptip River, Sta. Maria River, and the Meycauayan River, to address the risk of upstream flooding. This is part of SMC's commitment to address flooding in the province, where it plans to build the P740-billion Manila International Airport, in Bulakan town.



SMC's flood mitigation strategy in Bulacan will also complement the Department of Public Works and Highways' Valenzuela-Obando-Meycauayan Area Drainage System Improvement Project.

Apart from dredging rivers, SMC has also started planting an initial 10,000 mangroves in Hagonoy, Bulacan, part of a massive initiative to plant close to 200,000 mangroves over 76 hectares of coastal areas in Bulacan and Central Luzon. This is to help mitigate tidal flooding.

"Flood mitigation is combination of many factors. Apart from the Tullahan River dredging and pumping system measures, we need the cooperation and help of all stakeholders to maintain the cleanliness and the depth of the river through solid waste management in their respective areas," he said.



## Malabon, Navotas spared due to flood mitigation measures: Ang

November 24, 2020 5 min read

**MANILA** – Malabon and Navotas, two of the most flood-prone areas in Metro Manila, reported no major flooding incidents despite the recent onslaught of two typhoons, primarily due to the government’s installation of pumping stations, complemented by the continuous dredging of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system by San Miguel Corporation (SMC).

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Source: [https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/24/malabon-navotas-spared-due-to-flood-mitigation-measures-ang/?fbclid=IwAR3miyYWDq5om8GBfIKIR0ushezCPeNxG0\\_txgWV6YznSIgQogiezoTH84g](https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/24/malabon-navotas-spared-due-to-flood-mitigation-measures-ang/?fbclid=IwAR3miyYWDq5om8GBfIKIR0ushezCPeNxG0_txgWV6YznSIgQogiezoTH84g)



## Gordon calls for desilting of Laguna De Bay to prevent flooding in MM, nearby provinces

November 24, 2020 3 min read

**Sen. Dick Gordon**

By Crispin Rizal

FOLLOWING the recent massive flooding inflicted by Typhoon Ulysses in Metro Manila and the province of Rizal, Senator Richard J. Gordon called for the desilting of Laguna De Bay to avoid a repeat of such similar incident in Metro Manila and nearby Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon).

Gordon pointed out that desilting the Laguna De Bay would increase the lake's holding capacity for rainwater and floodwater, which would spare surrounding communities from floods during the typhoon or rainy season.

"It's about time that we desilt Laguna De Bay. Kung ide-desilt, lalalim 'yan. Noong nananalanta ang bagyong Ulysses, umabot ng 13.6 above sea level na lagpas na sa maximum critical level nitong 12.50 meters kaya nakadagdag pa ito sa pagbaha," he said.

Gordon said the bay should be rehabilitated and cleared of fish pens so it could be developed into a tourism attraction and an alternate mode of transportation.

"Kasi unang una, napaka-polluted n'yan. Madumi d'yan so dapat ayusin na ang Laguna De Bay. Ang narinig ko mayroong \$30-Million assistance na ino-offer ang Hungary para sa rehabilitation ng Laguna Lake. Napakaganda ng offer na 'yan. I suppose na kay (Foreign Affairs) Sec. (Teodoro) Locsin na 'yan at sa kinauukulan kung tatanggapin nila," he said.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto said his government has proposed \$30-million assistance to the Philippine government for the rehabilitation and water treatment of Laguna Lake. He added a formal offer was made during his bilateral meeting with Locsin.

Hungary is known to have the expertise and capability in terms of water management and treatment. It has been credited for successfully improving water condition in Lake Balaton, a fresh water lake in the country's western region and the largest in Central Europe. Lake Balaton has since been transformed into a bustling tourist destination.

Laguna de Bay, which has a total surface area of 900 square kilometres, is the biggest lake and one of the most important inland bodies of water in the country. It is also the second biggest inland freshwater lake in Southeast Asia.

Over the years, efforts to rehabilitate Laguna Lake have been delayed due to legal challenges and setbacks. In 2012, former President Benigno Aquino junked an P18.7-billion rehabilitation deal entered into by his predecessor, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, with Belgian firm Baggerwerken Decloedt En Zoon (BDC) due to alleged irregularities. (AI/FCECILIO/MTVN)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2020/11/24/gordon-calls-for-desilting-of-laguna-de-bay-to-prevent-flooding-in-mm-nearby-provinces/?fbclid=IwAR01RfhD4ZnYBrPLjxV-Jc7m9EXVUa-LnPQOLagut0IeaTBbiky3eBHQTj4>



# Velasco seeks review of dam protocols

By Filane Mikee Cervantes November 24, 2020, 7:36 pm



House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco (File photo)

MANILA – Speaker Lord Allan Velasco on Tuesday emphasized the need to review dam protocols to prevent a repeat of devastating floods that swamped Isabela and Cagayan provinces during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

During the House hearing on the cause of the deadly “Ulysses” floods, Velasco pointed to climate change and the release of water from Magat Dam as potential causes for massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela during the typhoon.

“One of the causes na nakikita po natin dito (that we see here) is climate change. Because of the heating of water, *talagang pinapasok po tayo ng iba’t ibang typhoon sa ating bansa* (several typhoons enter the country),” Velasco said.

He noted that the water discharge from the dam worsened flooding situations in Cagayan and Isabela at the height of Ulysses.

“On top of that (climate change), *na-aggravate po ito nung pag-release ng water mula sa* (this was further aggravated by the release of water from) Magat Dam,” Velasco said.

House Deputy Majority Leader Bernadette Herrera, meanwhile, said outdated protocols have possibly contributed to the massive floods that killed at least 29 people in Cagayan Valley.

“We need to look at the current structural framework as it seems to me that we are merely acting on early warnings and not being proactive in times of critical danger,” said Herrera.

Herrera argued that there is no single agency that can account for what truly caused the flooding, nor analyze forecasts and recommend measures to mitigate damages in the future.

It was bared during the hearing that protocols for releasing waters from dams were based on protocols set in 2006.

It was also discovered that the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) can only predict up to 50 percent accuracy the amount of rainfall on incoming storms.

House agriculture panel chair Mark Enverga highlighted several lapses in the coordination of concerned agencies within the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC) during the onslaught of “Ulysses”.

“We will need to take a closer look at the way the interagency council coordinates with the different departments because it is apparent that what they’ve done was not enough to prevent deaths and destruction from happening,” Enverga said.

National Irrigation Administration chief Ricardo Visaya, however, maintained that the opening of the water gates of Magat Dam was not the major cause of the flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.

Source: <https://mabarlika.tv/2020/11/24/gordon-calls-for-desilting-of-laguna-de-bay-to->





Visaya presented a matrix showing that from Nov. 9 to 14 amid the typhoon, the peak water inflow at Magat Dam was at 7,128 cubic meters per second, but the dam released only at 6,706 cubic meters per second.

He said the water level at Buntun Bridge, which measures the water level of Cagayan River, was at 13.2 meters.

Visaya said it could already be concluded based on the matrix that the opening of the water gates of Magat Dam was not the major cause of the flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.

"Can we draw now a conclusion from this matrix? Yes. Is it really Magat Dam that provided or the major cause of the flooding in Cagayan? I don't think so," he said. "It's very clear that 'yung (the) contribution ng (of) Magat Dam sa (to the) flooding ng (in) Cagayan was not really the major cause."

The severe flooding, he added, could have been prevented with better implementation of anti-illegal logging, mining, and quarrying activities.

"We have to look into the other factors that could have contributed to the flooding of Cagayan. Kung ini-implement lang nang mabuti ang anti-illegal logging activities, 'yung sa (If we have only properly implemented anti-illegal activities, the) illegal mining, illegal quarrying, maybe we can prevent the flooding of Cagayan River," he said. (PNA)



# RISK MITIGATION | Minority lawmaker pushes for science-based solution to prevent future floods in Philippines

November 23, 2020 , 05:49 PM

(November 23, 2020) – The Philippines needs a science-based solution to address the perennial flooding in low-lying areas in the country’s rice granary regions as well as in the capital as a series of typhoons pummeled the main island of Luzon early this month, a minority senator said on Monday.

Senator Risa Hontiveros of Akbayan party-list wanted the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to spearhead campaigns to rehabilitate the country’s coastlines to mitigate the impact of climate change which causes stronger typhoons that could bring death and destruction in communities.

Last week, Hontiveros filed a bill encouraging a national coastal greenbelt program to address flooding concerns through a science-based approach, which includes the planting of a 100-meter mangrove strip in coastal areas, as well as other beach forest species.

“With at least 20 typhoons battering the Philippines in a year, it is imperative to think of innovative, sustainable and cost-efficient ways for us to be able to protect our safety, our properties and communities from devastating natural disasters,” Hontiveros said.

“Let us listen to science.”

The CCC, an office under the Office of the President, was established in 2009 through the Climate Change Act. This agency is tasked to spearhead efforts of the government related to climate change.

Based on her bill, the CCC shall prepare a National Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan (NCGAP), which shall assess and designate priority areas where reforestation and rehabilitation efforts must be created.

This will then serve as the basis of the Local Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan specifying the goals and targets aimed by each locality.

Similarly, the NCGAP shall contain various operational plans explaining how the specific proposal shall materialize. A national panel of technical experts shall also be tapped for guidance in this project.

“Nature-based solutions will not only help us reduce disaster risks. But they will also address our biodiversity crisis,” Hontiveros said.

“Maaagapan natin ang pagkawala ng milyun-milyong uri ng hayop, isda at mga halaman na ngayon ay nanganganib na tuluyang maglaho dahil sa pagkasira ng mga bakawan.”

Other key government agencies will implement the measure alongside the CCC, like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Interior and Local Government, as well as the National Housing Authority.

“The key implementing agencies shall report to Congress on their progress in meeting the quantitative and qualitative targets under the Action Plan for each fiscal year,” according to section 10 of the bill.

The budget for this program shall be sourced from the appropriations given to each agency mentioned. “Oras na para bigyang espasyo sa ating mga polisiya at batas ang pagtugon sa climate emergency,” Hontiveros said.

“Tapusin na natin ang pang-aabuso sa ating mga likas-yaman at simulan ang mga programang mag-aalaga at higit sa lahat, magpapalakas ng depensa laban sa mga kalamidad.”

*(Beatrice Puente/MM)*

Source: [https://news.tv5.com.ph/breaking/read/risk-mitigation-minority-lawmaker-pushes-for-science-based-solution-to-prevent-future-floods-in-philippines?fbclid=IwAR2OMJ-fhUka5\\_CQ3IHnfzUE\\_yZ-U2ra1kd0n9bHM8vrcKm0OWZWuKZzZyo](https://news.tv5.com.ph/breaking/read/risk-mitigation-minority-lawmaker-pushes-for-science-based-solution-to-prevent-future-floods-in-philippines?fbclid=IwAR2OMJ-fhUka5_CQ3IHnfzUE_yZ-U2ra1kd0n9bHM8vrcKm0OWZWuKZzZyo)



## Getting back our rivers and creeks

By Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza

November 24, 2020



Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza

**MAKE SENSE**

IT happened again...the wrath of nature bringing so much pain and suffering.

Typhoon Ulysses brought back the horrors of the massive flooding and devastation caused by Typhoon Ondoy in September 2009 in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Many experts—and even those living in areas that bore the brunt of both typhoons—are saying that Ulysses was worse than Ondoy.

I don't mean to be a pessimist but in all likelihood, we are doomed to repeat the deadly calamity, especially if the approach of the local governments and concerned national agencies to mitigate flooding will continue to be on a piecemeal basis.

Let's not overcomplicate matters.

There were improvements made in the drainage system, and the LGUs and national government—ably assisted by civic organizations—are constantly cleaning up the rivers and creeks.

But one important ingredient is missing, and it is right there in our decades-old laws, particularly Presidential Decree (PD) 1067, or what we call the Water Code of the Philippines, and the Civil Code.

Article 51 of PD 1067 states: “The banks of rivers and streams and the shores of the seas and lakes throughout their entire length and within a zone of 3 meters in urban areas, 20 meters in agricultural areas and 40 meters in forest areas, along their margins, are subject to the easement of public use in the interest of recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing and salvage. No person shall be allowed to stay in this zone longer than what is necessary for recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing or salvage or to build structures of any kind.”

Article 58 adds: “When a river or stream suddenly changes its course to traverse private lands, the owners of the affected lands may not compel the government to restore the river to its former bed; nor can they restrain the government from taking steps to revert the river or stream to its former course. The owners of the lands thus affected are not entitled to compensation for any damage sustained thereby.”

Relevant provisions of the Civil Code, particularly Articles 457 to 463, clearly do not allow manmade accretion or erosion that will lead to a private entity or person owning a portion of the bodies of water.

Taking into consideration all these, what should we do?

Let's recover our rivers and creeks!



Is this still possible? Of course! We have the legal grounds while the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, or NAMRIA, has all the cadastral surveys and other records that the government can use as solid reference materials in determining the boundaries that should be set for manmade structures near rivers and creeks.

Right now, with all the manmade accretion and erosion, the rivers and creeks are becoming narrower, with some even completely cut off from the river systems.

What good will the drainage system improvements, cleanup campaigns, and pumping stations do if the flow of waters is being impeded by manmade structures, most of which are for commercial and personal use?

Using the original titles, cadastral surveys and other records, the government should start measuring again the riverside and creekside properties. Those structures standing on areas that unduly encroached on river banks and creeks should be immediately dismantled and the owners penalized.

This will take political will and the current administration has an abundance of it.

Again, we have the legal basis, pertinent records, and strong government to launch this campaign to recover our rivers and creeks.

Let's do it now or we would just be literally shouting "encore" to Ondoy- and Ulysses-like catastrophes in the future.

*Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza is the chairman of the Federation of Philippine Industries and Fight Illicit Trade; a broad-based, multisectoral movement intended to protect consumers, safeguard government revenues and shield legitimate industries from the ill effects of smuggling.*



## DENR Leaves No One Behind

BY VILLAGE CONNECT ON NOVEMBER 24, 2020

### ***DENR Leaves No One Behind***



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Task Force Tayo ang Kalikasan Executive Director of Maria Matilda A. Gaddi (*2<sup>nd</sup> from left*) and Stakeholders Management and Conflict Resolution Division Chief Julie Gorospe-Ibuan (*3<sup>rd</sup> from left*) join students from the Philippine School for the Deaf (PSD) and the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) after the turnover of 100 hygiene kits to PSD and 100 bamboo tumblers to the NCDA and Chief Rizalio Sanchez, NCDA Information, Education, and Communication Division (*extreme left*).

The event was held in culmination of the 29<sup>th</sup> Deaf Awareness Week on November 18 pursuant to Proclamation No. 829, s. 1991.

The DENR, through its Persons with Disability (PWD) Desk has been actively supporting PWD groups to assure that they are not left behind amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and recent calamities, and they are partners in the fight for a better environment.



## Red collared dove rescued from dog



ZAMBOANGA. A concerned resident rescues and turns over a red collared dove, also known as red turtle dove, to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Zamboanga del Sur. A photo handout shows the dove was taken to the DENR Wildlife Rescue Center in Tukuran, where it will be rehabilitated before releasing it back to the wild. (SunStar Zamboanga)

November 23, 2020

A RED collared dove, locally known as tokmo, was rescued by a concerned resident in Pagadian City, the capital of Zamboanga del Sur province, an official said Monday, November 23.

Rosevirico Tan, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional information officer, said the dove was rescued last week by Elijah Selem, a resident of Dumagoc village, Pagadian City.

Tan said Selem informed them that he was walking when he saw a dog playing "with some object."

Selem said he immediately rescued the dove when he discovered that the dog was harming a bird.

Tan said the rescued bird had an injury in its left wing.

Selem turned over the injured bird to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office-Zamboanga del Sur.

Tan said the rescued fauna was then brought to the DENR Wildlife Rescue Center in Baclay, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur, where it will be rehabilitated before releasing it back to the wild.

The red collared dove, also known as red turtle dove, is a small pigeon. It is essentially a plain species, extending to Taiwan and the Philippines. (SunStar Zamboanga)

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1877785/Zamboanga/Local-News/Red-collared-dove-rescued-from-dog>



## Citizen rescues falcon amid typhoon



RESCUED FALCON. The rescued peregrine falcon in San Luis, Aurora, during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses in the province. (Contributed photo)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

November 23, 2020

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO -- A peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) was rescued in San Luis, Aurora province during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Jessabel Barti, a local resident of San Luis, immediately reported the rescue to the barangay council. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Community and Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) of Dingalan also immediately gave proper assistance.

Study shows that the peregrine falcon is a well-respected falconry bird because of its strong hunting ability, high trainability, and versatility. Known as the wandering falcon, a peregrine falcon thrives in a wide variety of habitats, from coasts to high mountains.

The falcon was put under the custody of Cenro for care and shelter. It was later released into the forests of Aurora Memorial National Park after the falcon was found to be in healthy condition.



## City Hall, partners to plant mangroves at new Esplanades



Photo by Iloilo City Government Beautification Program

November 23, 2020

THE Iloilo City Government is gathering the support of public and private sector to plant mangrove saplings along the stretch of new Esplanades at the banks of Iloilo River.

The greening initiative of Mayor Jerry Treñas aims to rev up rehabilitation efforts to protect the waterway at the heart of the city.

"We will partner with DENR, Global Business Power, More Power, La Filipina Uy Gongco, and Globe, among others, to plant mangroves along the new Esplanades. We will fill the riverbanks with mangroves to cushion the impacts of climate change," Treñas said.

"Our beautification program personnel and gardeners continuously landscape and maintain ornamental plants and flowers. Our workers also continue to conduct massive tree planting activities," he added.

Those who also signified to join and support the initiative are Phinma-University of Iloilo, Philippine National Police, University of the Philippines Visayas, SM, and media outlets in the city.

Organization and coordination meetings will be done next week to finalize everything.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources promotes sanctuary for fishes and other aquatic animals. **(PR)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1877772/ILOILO/Local-News/City-Hall-partners-to-plant-mangroves-at-new-Esplanades>





## TREE-PLANTING REQUIREMENT

# PUV franchise applicants should coordinate with LGUs, DENR —LTFRB

**Published** November 24, 2020 1:00pm

By JON VIKTOR D. CABUENAS, GMA News

Applicants for public utility vehicle (PUV) franchises will have to coordinate with their respective local government units (LGUs) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the new tree-planting requirement of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

LTFRB chairman Martin Delgra III on Tuesday said that the LGUs and the DENR will be designating the areas where the trees will be planted, as part of the [new requirements](#) mandated under Memorandum Circular 2020-076.

"They will have to coordinate with the LGU kung saan sila naka-base or with the DENR for the purposes of securing the seedlings na itanim nila that will be designated by the LGU or DENR," he said during the Laging Handa briefing.

Starting December 1, the LTFRB will require all PUV franchise applicants to plant a tree per unit -- either new or for renewal -- for the next three months.

Covered under the memorandum are all applicants for new CPC with at least 10 units as well as all corporations and cooperatives applying for an extension of their CPC, regardless of the number of units.

The new policy came after Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade [suggested tree-planting](#) as a requirement for the issuance of a transport franchise in response to the massive flooding that hit Cagayan and Isabela provinces following the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Malacañang on Tuesday [supported the proposed policy](#), adding that it would also coordinate with the Department of Education so that students will likewise be required to plant trees. --**KBK, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/765399/puv-franchise-applicants-should-coordinate-with-lgus-denr-ltfrb/story/>



# ‘PUV franchise applicants, dapat makipag-ugnayan sa LGUs, DENR kaugnay sa tree-planting requirement’

By **Bombo Bam Orpilla** -November 24, 2020 | 7:53 PM

Binigyang-diin ng Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) na kinakailangan munang makipag-ugnayan ng mga applicants para sa public utility vehicle (PUV) franchises sa kani-kanilang local government units (LGUs) at sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa kanilang bagong tree-planting requirement.

Ayon kay LTFRB chairman Martin Delgra III, magtatalaga ng lugar ang mga LGUs at DENR kung saan maaaring makapagtanim ng puno ang mga aplikante, na bagong parte ng aplikasyon para sa prangkisa.

“They will have to coordinate with the LGU kung saan sila naka-base or with the DENR for the purposes of securing the seedlings na itatanim nila that will be designated by the LGU or DENR,” wika ni Delgra.

Simula Disyembre 1, oobligahin ng LTFRB ang lahat ng mga PUV franchise applicants na magtanim ng puno kada unit, mapa-bago man o renewal, para sa susunod na tatlong buwan.

Saklaw sa memorandum ang lahat ng mga aplikante ng bagong Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC), na mayroong hindi bababa sa 10 unit, maging ang mga korporasyon at kooperatiba na nag-a-apply para sa extension ng validity ng kanilang CPC, ilan man ang kanilang yunit.

Ipinatupad ang nasabing polisiya kasunod ng mungkahi ni Transportation Sec. Arthur Tugade na gawing requirement ang tree planting para sa pag-iisyu ng transport franchise bilang tugon sa malawakang pagbaha na nanalasa sa Cagayan at Isabela kasunod ng paghagupit ng Bagyong Ulysses.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/puv-franchise-applicants-dapat-makipag-ugnayan-sa-lgus-denr-kaugnay-sa-tree-planting-requirement/>



# Bill requiring tree planting for building permits hurdles House

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Nov 24, 2020 9:37:53 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, November 24) — The House of Representatives has passed on third and final reading a bill setting the planting of trees as a requirement for building permits.

In a plenary session on Tuesday, 238 lawmakers gave their green light to House Bill No. 7763, with zero negative votes and no abstentions.

The proposed “Green Measures Act” seeks to mandate the submission of a tree planting plan in the application for a building permit, on top of other requirements imposed by local government units.

“Any person, firm, corporation, department, office, bureau, agency or instrumentality of the government intending to construct, alter, repair, or convert any building or structure is required to set aside, and properly maintain in said property, areas adequate for planting trees and flora,” the bill states.

There should be one tree for every 500 square meters for commercial or industrial projects, and one tree for every 250 square meters for housing and development projects, according to the latest version of the bill posted on the House’s website.

Earlier, the lower chamber also approved bills [requiring parents to plant two trees for every child born to them, and graduating senior high school and college students to plant at least two trees each](#) as part of their civic duty.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government is also planning to launch a massive tree planting campaign next year – [targeting to plant 200 million trees](#) – in response to the devastating floods caused by recent typhoons.

It also said the Philippine National Police is now leading the crackdown against illegal logging and illegal mining in areas ravaged by tropical cyclones; the most recent was Typhoon Ulysses which left 73 people dead and billions of pesos worth of damage.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/11/24/tree-planting-building-permit-requirement-house-bill.html>



## BAGO MAGTANIM NG PUNO, UNAHING PABILISIN NG LTFRB ANG PAGPROSESO NG PRANGKISA, ATBP.



November 25, 2020 @ 12:15 AM 7 hours ago

INULAN ng batikos ang LTFRB sa bagong direktiba nito na magtanim muna ng puno bago makakuha ng prangkisa.

Tuloy ang akala ng iba ay naisa-ilalim na ng DENR ang LTFRB at wala na sa DOTr.

Pero kami sa Lawyers for Commuters Safety and Protection (LCSP) wala naman kaming nakikitang masama sa direktibang ganito ng LTFRB.

Marahil isa itong nakitang paraan ng mga kasalukuyang namumuno sa LTFRB na maaaring maiambag ng ahensya matapos na maranasan ng bansa ang epekto ng matitinding bagyo na nagdulot ng baha sa ilang parte ng Pilipinas.

Itinanong namin sa ilang operator kung handa silang mag tree-planting at wala naman daw problema.

Pero ang isang malaking statement nila – WALANG PROBLEMA NAMAN ANG MAGTANIM PERO PAKIBILISAN LANG NILA ANG PROSESO NG MGA PAPELES SA LTFRB.

Huwag naman nilang kalimutan ang mandatong trabaho nila!

Baka naman kasi kung sakaling magtanim nga ang mga nire-require na magtanim ay baka malalaki na ang mga puno at namunga na ay wala pa rin ang prangkisa na kanilang inaplayan.

Maganda naman ang layunin ng pagtanim ng puno pero baka maging kasingtagal ng paglaki ng mga puno ang proseso sa LTFRB.

Huwag naman itong maging mas malaking biro.

Pero bago sana magdagdag ng requirements ay tingnan muna kung ito ay makatutulong o mas makadaragdag lamang sa pasakit sa mga may transaksyon sa LTFRB.

May mga 'dropping' at 'substitution' na inaabot ng taon ang resolusyon kaya tuloy naluma na yung mga bagong sasakyan na dapat humalili sa phase out ay hindi pa nakabibyahe.

Ilan kayang application for new franchise ang nagkakalumot na at tinutubuan na ng kung ano-ano at 'di pa kumikilos – mga for resolution na mga kaso, at iba pa.



Kung ang pagtanim ng puno ang magpapabilis sa mga proseso sa LTFRN, ay walang problema!

Bakit hindi. Anong klaseng mga puno ba ang gusto nila at saan-saan itanim?

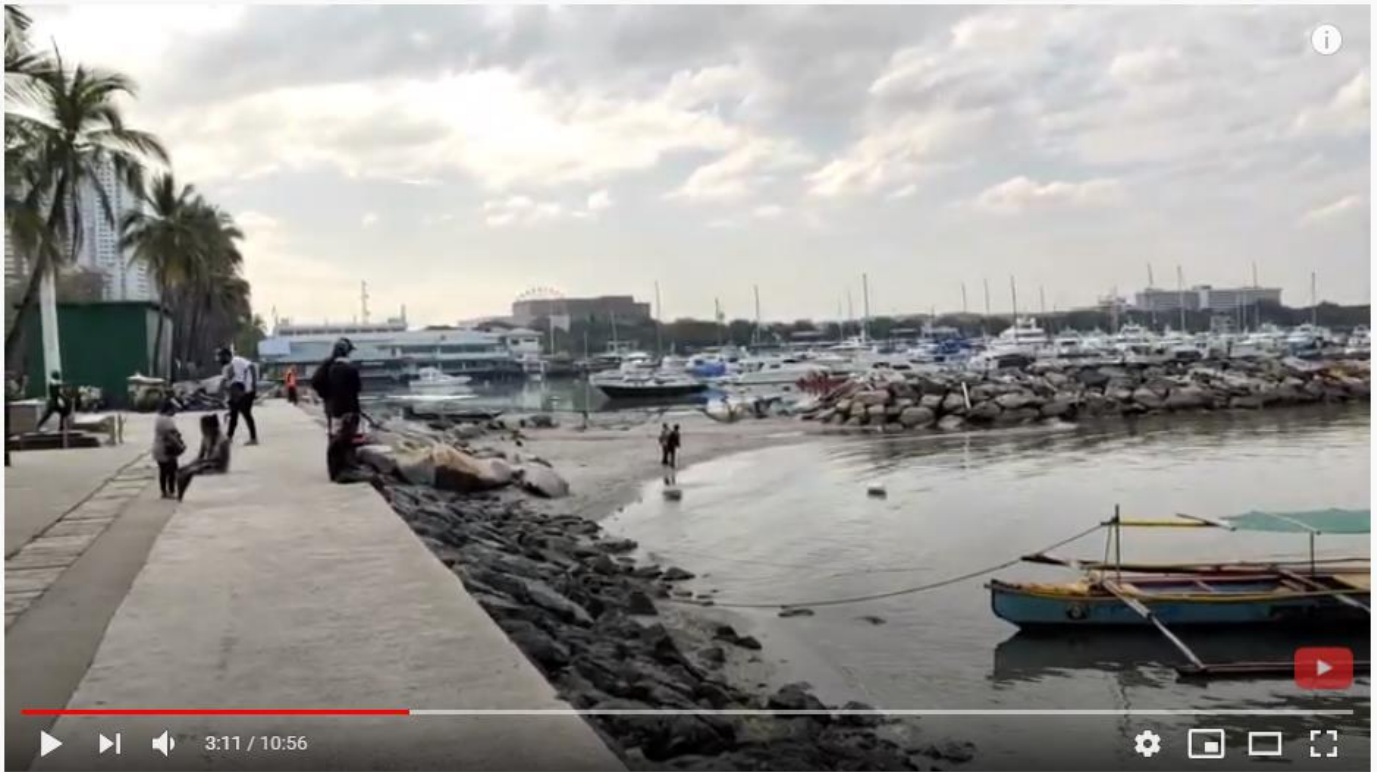
Siguradong makikiisa ang mga aplikante sa LTFRB kung magiging mas mabilis nga ang transaksyon nila 'pag nagtanim sila ng mga puno.

Pero kung hindi naman ay huwag na!

At baka sama ng loob lang ang maitanim sa bagong direktiba ng ahensya.

Hindi biro ito.

Sana linawin ng ahensya ang mga prayoridad nito at maging mas sensitibo naman sa pangangailangan ng mamamayan.



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# House OKs Green Measures Act

By Divina Nova Joy Dela Cruz

November 25, 2020

The House of Representatives on Tuesday approved on third and final reading the Green Measures Act, which mandates the submission of a tree planting plan as a requirement in the application for building permits.

House Bill 7763 was passed with 238 lawmakers voting in the affirmative.

The bill seeks to promote planting of more trees to mitigate the effects of climate change and to preserve the environment.

Under the bill, all applicants for building permits of residential, commercial, industrial, and public building development projects are required to submit a Tree Planting Plan (TPP), in addition to other requirements imposed by the local government units.

It requires any person, firm, corporation, department, office, bureau, agency or any government instrumentality intending to construct, alter, repair, or convert any building or structure to set aside and maintain trees and flora within the property.

Under the bill, the TPP must include planting trees with a ratio of 1 tree for every 500 square meters of commercial or industrial project or 1 tree for every 250 for housing and development projects.

The bill also encourages planting of indigenous trees or “non-vigorously growing endemic ornamental plants” or fruit-bearing trees for residential lots.



# House panel approves climate emergency declaration

By Filane Mikee Cervantes **November 24, 2020, 5:02 pm**



File photo

MANILA – A House of Representatives’ panel on Tuesday approved a resolution declaring a disaster and climate emergency.

The House Committee on Disaster Resilience approved House Resolution No. 535, which seeks a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and whole-of-nation policy response to anticipate, halt, reduce, reverse, address, and adapt to its impacts, consequences, and causes.

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, the author of the resolution, said the declaration will be “the necessary first of many steps” to secure broader international climate justice and local resilience.

“We will eventually defeat Covid-19, as we have beaten all other pandemics. But the climate emergency will be here to stay. Unless we act now to make our communities safer, and to seek international climate justice, we will suffer the long-term consequences of this crisis,” Salceda said.

Salceda said that by declaring a climate emergency, the Philippines can leverage its position as an emerging market and a potent labor source for new industrialization to pursue an official foreign policy of international climate justice.

He also said the country can also use its domestic policies as moral leverage in pursuing financial claims for rehabilitation and climate-proofing

“The Philippines is doing its best to cooperate in the global push to reduce reliance on emissions-heavy fossil fuels and other non-renewable sources. We can pursue climate-related concessions from the world’s biggest polluters,” he said.

Salceda said the climate emergency declaration will make all national and local appropriations “climate and disaster responsive”.

“The implication is that all government expenditures must now have resilience and disaster preparedness in mind,” Salceda said. “We have to recognize the climate crisis now. Climate change will be with us for a long while. It will be our loyal enemy for generations. It does not serve us to deny its existence.” (PNA)



# House panel approves disaster and climate emergency declaration

Published November 24, 2020, 3:56 PM

by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

The House Committee on Disaster Resilience gave in Tuesday (Nov. 29) to the call of Albay 2nd District Rep. Jose Maria Sarte Salceda to declare a disaster and climate emergency to seek “broader international climate justice and local resilience.”

In a virtual hearing, the House panel, chaired by Leyte Rep. Lucy Torres-Gomez approved Salceda’s House Resolution No. 535, which seeks to declare 2020 as a Disaster and Climate Emergency awareness year.



MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO

“We will eventually defeat COVID-19, as we have beaten all other pandemics. But the climate emergency will be here to stay. Unless we act now to make our communities safer, and to seek international climate justice, we will suffer the long-term consequences of this crisis,” Salceda said before the panel’s adoption of his resolution.

Salceda, chairperson of the House Ways and Means Committee and co-chairperson of the House Defeat COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee’s Economic Stimulus and Recovery Cluster, thanked his colleagues for passing his resolution, even as he described his proposed declaration of a disaster and climate emergency as “the necessary first of many steps to secure broader international climate justice and local resilience.”

He said a whole-of-governemnt, whole-of-society, and whole-of nation policy response is needed to halt, reduce, reverse, address, and adapt to the impacts, consequences, and causes of a disaster and climate change emergency that is being experienced by the Philippines.

“By declaring a climate emergency, the Philippines can leverage its position as an emerging market and a potent labor source for new industrialization to pursue an official foreign policy of international climate justice,” he said in defending his resolution.

“The country can also use its domestic policies as moral leverage in pursuing financial claims for rehabilitation and climate-proofing. The Philippines is doing its best to cooperate in the global push to reduce reliance on emissions-heavy fossil fuels and other non-renewable sources,” Salceda added.

During the hearing, he said the declaration of a climate emergency will strengthen the country’s leverage to seek concessions from heavily industrialized economies.



“Small island countries are already pursuing legal action on the matter of climate reparations. The Philippines should consider making amicable manifestations, if not outright joining such suits,” Salceda said.

“On our own, however, we must take concrete steps to ensure that while we pursue climate justice, we will be able to protect our own communities,” he added.

Salceda said his resolution calls for “climate and disaster responsive”-national and local governmental budget allocations and expenditures.

“The implication is that all government expenditures must now have resilience and disaster preparedness in mind,” Salceda said.

“And, I know it works. When I was Governor of Albay, our entire budget was directed, in one way or another, towards climate and disaster resilience. Health, education, and social spending, for which we received national and international attention, for pioneering our version of universal health care and universal free college tuition in state schools, were all ultimately towards disaster preparedness,” the former Albay governor said.

HR No. 535 urges the House of Representatives to ensure the full integration and convergence of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts through the passage of the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) bill as an urgent policy response.

Under the resolution, the Lower Chamber is expected to conduct continuous inquiries on the measures being implemented by all concerned national agencies to address the impact of disasters and climate change on the fundamental rights of Filipinos. (Charissa Luci-Atienza)  
###



# House panel OKs reso declaring a ‘disaster and climate emergency’ in Philippines

**Published** November 24, 2020 5:25pm

By ERWIN COLCOL, GMA News

The House Committee on Disaster Resilience on Tuesday approved a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to declare a Disaster and Climate Emergency in the country amid calamities the Philippines experienced over the past years.

During its meeting, the panel approved House Resolution 535, filed by Albay Representative Joey Salceda, which urges a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and whole-of-nation policy response to address and adapt to the impacts of natural disasters.

The resolution noted that while agencies such as the Climate Change Commission and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council have been established many years ago, "our country is still grappling with institutional issues on climate and disaster governance."

The country recently faced a number of natural disasters, including the Taal Volcano eruption in January this year and the recent strong typhoons that swept and submerged many areas in Luzon.

"There is an urgent need to address this problem to ensure climate justice for current and future generations of Filipinos and ensure their survival in the face of projected adverse impacts of climate change and disasters," the resolution read.

Under the measure, the House resolves to:

- Declare 2020 as a Disaster and Climate Emergency awareness year;
- Conduct continuous inquiries in aid of legislation and in relation to its oversight functions, on measures being implemented by all concerned national agencies to address the impacts of disasters and climate change on the fundamental rights of Filipinos;
- Ensure the full integration and convergence of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts through the passage of the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) bill; and
- Enjoin a whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, and whole-of-society mobilization on disaster and climate emergency.

Panel chair Lucy Torres-Gomez on Tuesday also renewed her call for the passage of the DDR bill following the devastation brought by Typhoon Ulysses in several parts of Luzon.

"We have to provide a solution that is commensurate to the problem. We, therefore, need to elevate our solution to a department level, under the leadership of a cabinet member," she said.

"Our responsibility as leaders and lawmakers is to face reality and see it as it is. It is clear enough that we need the Department of Disaster Resilience. We need to set aside politics and make this change happen," she added.

The House already approved the DDR bill on third reading last September. —**LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/765443/house-panel-oks-reso-declaring-a-disaster-and-climate-emergency-in-philippines/story/>

# House committee approves resolution seeking to declare a climate emergency

By [Crissy Dimatulac, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Nov 24, 2020 9:36:34 PM



After overwhelming support from different agencies, the House Committee on Disaster Resilience approved a measure, seeking to declare a disaster and climate emergency. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, November 24) — After overwhelming support from different agencies, the House Committee on Disaster Resilience approved a measure, seeking to declare a disaster and climate emergency.

House Resolution No. 535 "seeks a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and whole-of-nation policy response to anticipate, halt, reduce, reverse, address, and adapt to the impacts, consequences, and causes of natural disasters."

The resolution was filed by Albay Representative Joey Salceda following a string of typhoons that hit the country, causing massive flooding in different areas.

"We will eventually defeat COVID-19, as we have beaten all other pandemics. But the climate emergency will be here to stay," Salceda said. "Unless we act now to make our communities safer, and to seek international climate justice, we will suffer the long-term consequences of this crisis."

The declaration aims to highlight the role of local government units in leading transformation and adaptation to climate change and disaster resilience initiatives, along with business communities, individuals and other stakeholders.

"By declaring a climate emergency, the Philippines can leverage its position as an emerging market and a potent labor source for new industrialization to pursue an official foreign policy of international climate justice," Salceda said, defending his resolution.

According to weather bureau PAGASA, the Philippines ranked third among countries who are most exposed and at risk to natural hazards.

In only a year, the country faces an average of 20 tropical cyclones which bring strong winds, excessive rainfall and thunderstorms, floods, landslides, storm surges and even tornadoes.

Under the Resolution, the House of Representatives is expected to conduct a series of inquiries on the measures being implemented by all concerned national agencies to address the impact of disasters and climate change on the fundamental right of Filipinos.

Likewise, the Department of Disaster Resilience bill is now pending in the Senate as an urgent policy response.

During the same hearing, the Committee on Disaster Resilience has also approved the substitute bill seeking the establishment of mandatory evacuation centers.



The bill provides the minimum requirements for every evacuation center such as its location, amenities, accessibility, among others.

The appropriation for the construction and maintenance of these evacuation centers will be sourced from a portion of the general appropriations of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

According to the DPWH, there are already 317 evacuation centers since 2016, 82 of which were transformed into a health facility due to demands brought by COVID-19.



**Hey!**

# PH A VICTIM OF CLIMATE CHANGE

“

The Philippines is not an instigator of climate change. Rather, **our country is a victim of climate change - years and years of climate injustice brought about by bigger, richer, and more developed nations that were able to pursue rapid industrialization with reckless abandon.** This has left a country like ours at a delicate crossroads of balancing the need to fulfill our energy requirements without sacrificing the future of the coming generations.”



**Sec. Alfonso G. Cusi**  
Department of Energy



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# House pursues regulation of environmental engineering practice

Published November 24, 2020, 2:47 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Deputy Speaker and Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez underscored during a virtual hearing of the House Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation Tuesday the renewed significance of regulating the practice of environmental engineering in the Philippines.



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

“Environmental engineering is very close to my heart because this is for the environment. We all need (this) for our country especially with what happened recently in the calamities that befell our nation,” Rodriguez said during the panel’s deliberation on measures proposing the “Environmental Engineering Law of the Philippines.”

He was referring to the destructive flashfloods triggered by strong typhoons earlier this month. The floods were said to have been aggravated by greatly reduced forest cover.

Discussed by the panel were House Bill (HB) Nos.2844, 5008, and 6636. Rodriguez, who authored and filed HB No.2844 way back on July 25, 2019, noted that the three bills on deck were quite similar with each other.

“To disregard (environmental sustainability) would allow man limitless access to the environment and natural resources tending to its abuse without being mindful of what may be left for those in the future,” Rodriguez wrote in the explanatory note of his bill.

The particular measure defines environmental engineering “as a professional engineering work to protect or improve air, land, and water resources in order to provide a clean and healthful environment.”

“The practice of environmental engineering is not a new venture in the field of engineering. Instead, it has been in existence for more than four decades and the Philippines is among the few countries which have not yet embraced the promise of professionalizing its practice,” the Deputy Speaker noted.

“Thus, this bill seeks to professionalize the practice of environmental engineering in the Philippines to advance the cause of a balanced and healthful environment in the midst of industrial and economic growth. Its practice allows for capitalists and investors to explore avenues of economic growth without posing serious detrimental effects to the environment and thus harmonizing progress with environmental sustainability,” he added.

The proposed environmental engineering law covers the examination, registration, and licensure of environmental engineering practitioners; regulation, supervision, and control of the practice of environmental engineering; development, upgrading, and updating of the curriculum of environmental engineering; and the development and improvement of the professional competence and practice of environmental engineering practitioners.



It also seeks to cover the creation of relevant positions for environmental engineers, environmental engineering technologists, environmental engineering technicians and other positions that require the knowledge and services of environmental engineering practitioners in the government bureaucracy as well as in the private sector.

Although the bills were well-received by the panel members, committee chairman and Iligan Rep. Frederick Siao scheduled one more hearing on the subject later this month in order properly incorporate the amendments proposed by the attending resource persons.

Rodriguez himself requested this as he cited nuances between the different sectors under environmental engineering that must be addressed. "We are willing to hear them," he said.

Siao bared at the beginning of the hearing that a similar bill had been approved by the House of Representatives during the previous 17th Congress. However, the measure was not acted upon by the Senate.



# Villar asks Senate to probe denuded forests, silted rivers after massive flooding

Published November 24, 2020, 8:59 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar on Tuesday filed a resolution seeking a legislative inquiry on the state of the country's forests, watersheds, and rivers following the severe and widespread flooding in Luzon due to the recent onslaught of typhoons.



Sen. Cynthia Villar (Senate of the Philippines / MANILA BULLETIN)

Villar, chairwoman of the Senate environment and natural resources committee, said the denuded forests and the reported heavy siltation on rivers and tributaries have "largely contributed to the immense flooding" in the region, specifically after Typhoon "Ulysses."

In her proposed Resolution No. 581, she noted several statutes mandating the protection of the country's forests, watersheds and river systems and the preservation of biodiversity to prevent environment-related risks.

"Science has taught us that forests and the watersheds should be kept healthy and protected and that deforestation should be avoided so that abundant forest trees could help forest soil absorb and retain rainwater, thereby naturally regulating the release of rainwater from hills and mountains and serving as natural protection to the adverse impacts of natural disasters, such as heavy rainfalls during typhoons and extreme flooding," Villar said.

She said deforestation caused by illegal logging, quarrying, unregulated and open-pit mining, and slash-and-burn agriculture, among others, "continues to threaten the forest cover of the country, thereby resulting to a reduced protection from the effects of natural disasters."

She cited for instance the deforestation of the Sierra Madre Mountain Range, which was supposed to protect Luzon from oncoming typhoons.

"The muddy quality of the water that flooded Cagayan and Marikina alike is an indication that the surrounding forests and watersheds are already so denuded such that they do not anymore retain soil water and prevent erosion," Villar said.

"The apparent silted condition of the rivers and tributaries in the flooded areas did little in containing the rainwater that flowed from the mountains and so may have contributed to the rapid rise of the flood waters as well," she added.

Villar said the Senate inquiry would help strengthen the conservation of the country's forest cover and waterways to mitigate, if not prevent, the devastating effects of natural disasters.

The joint hearing of the Senate committees on public works, environment, agriculture and national defense on the recent flooding in Luzon due to the typhoons is set on Wednesday, November 25.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/24/villar-asks-senate-to-probe-denuded-forests-silted-rivers-after-massive-flooding/>



# Tone-toneladang basura nahakot sa Marikina at San Mateo

By [Ludy Bermudo](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - November 25, 2020 - 12:00am



Sinabi ni Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Danilo Lim na patuloy lang ang clearing operations hanggang sa malinis at ligtas na ang mga lugar na apektado ng bagyo.

Walter Bollozos

MANILA, Philippines — Mahigit sa 3,104 metro kubiko ng basura o katumbas na 841.34 tonelada ng basura ang nakolekta sa mga lugar sa Marikina City at San Mateo, Rizal na sinalanta ng bagyong Ulysses hanggang noong Linggo.

Sinabi ni Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Danilo Lim na patuloy lang ang clearing operations hanggang sa malinis at ligtas na ang mga lugar na apektado ng bagyo.

Hindi bababa sa 150 tauhan, dump truck at pay loader ang ipinadala ng MMDA sa mga nasabing lugar upang tulungan ang mga lokal na pamahalaan doon.

“Our personnel shall continue rendering assistance to affected residents until local government units’ rehabilitation works are completed. We are always ready to help in restoring normalcy in the affected communities,” ani Lim.

Kabilang sa areas of operation ang Barangays Malanday, Sto. Niño at Tañong, partikular sa Provident Village, sa Marikina habang sa San Mateo, Rizal naman ay ang mga Barangay Guitnang Bayan, Banaba, at Sta. Ana.

Ayon kay Francis Martinez, MMDA Metroparkways Clearing Group head, aabutin pa ng ilang lingo bago tuluyang malinis mula sa putik at basura ang mga nasabing lugar.

Ang lalo pang pagdami ng basura ay dulot na rin ng mga nasirang appliances, furniture, equipment, damit at iba pang nalubog ng husto sa putik at baha.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2020/11/25/2059284/toneladang-basura-nahakot-sa-marikina-san-mateo/amp/>



# 10 Boracay residents, foreigners jailed for violating environmental laws

By: [Nestor Burgos Jr. - @inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 04:49 PM November 24, 2020

ILOILO CITY -- About 10 residents of Boracay Island, including foreigners, were detained on Monday in an operation led by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against alleged violators of environmental laws.

Lawyer Czar Eric Nuque, chief of the NBI's Environmental Crime Division, told the INQUIRER that the residents and property owners were detained and undergoing inquest proceedings before formal charges for violation of forestry, water, and zoning laws and codes are filed.

Nuque said the operation of the NBI with the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force was based on a follow-up investigation on owners of properties occupying government or public land.

"We conducted en flagrante delicto (in the act of committing an offense or crime) arrest involving residents and other nationalities," he said.

Aside from forestry and water codes, also allegedly violated by the detained is the 30-meter beach easement.

"They have been repeatedly warned, and sent notices of violations for several years, but they chose to ignore. This is their day of reckoning," Nuque said.

LZB



## Puzzle pieces

“Right now, local governments have carte blanche on land use, and sometimes, on a bigger scale, this could be detrimental to the environment.

Published 6 hours ago on November 25, 2020 12:20 AM

By [Dinah S. Ventura](#) @tribunephil\_din



Why does it seem like government has been catatonic for so long when it comes to the flood problem in the country?

Every major typhoon that brought massive floods has resulted in ever quicker, ever more organized action, yes — but not enough long-term solutions.

The unfunny thing is experts have long been providing possible answers — detailed studies leading to recommendations that would effectively address the capacity of floodways to handle the amount of rainfall that comes several times every year.

Possibly the best action that had ever been done about the flood problem was the construction of the Manggahan Floodway, but even that is apparently only half of the solution.

You see (and this is how urban planner Jun Palafox Jr. explains it in his column in another broadsheet), when the Metro Manila Transport, Land Use and Development Planning Project was published in 1976, the World Bank-funded assessment of flood mitigation and disaster risk measures proposed the simultaneous construction of the Manggahan Floodway and the Parañaque Spillway.

But, “As of today, only the Manggahan Floodway exists, and Laguna Lake’s single discharge channel to Manila Bay is the Napindan Pasig River Channel, which has a capacity of only 600 cubic meters per second,” he said.

In other words, the amount of water flowing through the floodway during major typhoons gets too much for it to safely course to the sea, for they spill over to nearby towns and cities, bringing floods that can rise to rooftop levels.

To sum it up so well, Palafox writes, “Without the Parañaque Spillway, I have always described Laguna Lake as a bathtub without a drain and with 21 faucets running.”

For some reason, only the Manggahan part was done, a half-baked answer to problems that were once again unearthed by typhoons “Rolly” and “Ulysses” in 2020.

Which brings us back to the crux of this matter.

Why has the flood problem persisted? Other countries have been able to solve similar problems.



One thing we know is that government has identified various reasons for the floods. In the case of the recent typhoons, some officials said it was likely the successive rainfall which saturated the soil and made it unable to hold the water as well as it could have. They also point to the usual suspects — climate change, mining and deforestation — as well as Magat Dam's water release.

The urban planning experts, meantime, raised their calls for change in this realm, too, and meanwhile, local government officials of affected communities can only struggle to scrape up the mud in the aftermath of every storm.

It makes one think, could there perhaps be too many brilliant ideas but not one unifying force to see them through?

A good observation made recently by one of the sources for a story in this paper is this: "The problem is 'kanya-kanya.' We do not have an integrated land use planning in the watershed," Environment Undersecretary Renato Solidum Jr.

said, referring to the proposed National Land Use Act (NaLUA) which seeks to do away with the disarray in plans and solutions when it comes to "how land resources shall be allocated, used and managed to ensure its sustainable and efficient use."

Right now, local governments have carte blanche on land use, and sometimes, on a bigger scale, this could be detrimental to the environment.

According to a report in this paper, "The NaLUA was identified as a legislative agenda in the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 to support strategies in ensuring ecological integrity, clean and healthy environment, as well as in building safe and secure communities."

Such a comprehensive plan may as well guide our officials on a bigger scale — that of the flood problem that continues to inundate us, simply because we tend to work with cutouts, rather like putting together the puzzle pieces to create a beautiful whole.



## Beyond liberalizing tax incentives under Bayanihan 2

By Atty. Lino Ernie M. Guevara

November 23, 2020

The government's invigorated legislative response against Covid-19, Republic Act 11494 or more popularly known as "Bayanihan to Recover as One Act" (Bayanihan 2), echoed one of the more important provisions of its precursor, Bayanihan 1 (RA 11469). Section 4(cc) of RA 11494 liberalizes once again the grant of duty and tax incentives to manufacturers and importers dealing with essential goods or critical equipment needed to contain the cataclysmic effects of this pandemic.

Bayanihan 2 took effect immediately upon its publication on September 15, 2020. But the law also specifically provided that its Section 4(cc) "shall be deemed to be in effect since Republic Act 11469 expired," that is, on June 25, 2020. RA 11469's effectivity is until the next adjournment of the Eighteenth Congress or on December 19, 2020, the same being expressly provided by law.

So, what goods are covered by and could benefit from these incentives?

The list is a bit long. First, the covered Covid-19 goods refer to those essential goods related to the containment or mitigation of the pandemic. These goods include personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns, masks, goggles, and face shields; surgical equipment and supplies; laboratory equipment and its reagents; medical equipment and devices; support and maintenance for laboratory and medical equipment; surgical equipment and supplies; medical supplies, tools, and consumables such as alcohol, sanitizers, tissue, thermometers, hand soap, detergent, sodium hypochlorite, cleaning materials, povidone iodine, common medicines (e.g., paracetamol tablet and suspension, mefenamic acid, vitamins tablet and suspension, hyoscine tablet and suspension, oral rehydration solution, and cetirizine tablet and suspension); testing kits, and such other supplies or equipment as may be determined by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Secondly, the incentives shall likewise be granted to equipment for waste management, including, but not limited to, waste segregation, storage, collection, sorting, treatment and disposal services. Note that the said equipment and technologies and services should be approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DOH or other concerned regulatory agencies.

Lastly, goods covered also include inputs, raw materials and equipment necessary for the manufacture or production of those essential goods referred to above related to the containment or mitigation of Covid-19. Understandably, these goods are vital components in order to undertake the production of those goods previously enumerated.

Since these involve incentives, the law specifically provides that the exemption from such duties and taxes for the manufacture or importation of critical equipment or essential goods shall be determined by the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue. The BOC issued a Customs Administrative Order for these importations under Section 4 (cc) of RA 11494. For its part, the BIR issued Revenue Regulations (RR) 28-2020 dated October 15, 2020 to implement said tax provisions of RA 11494, the salient points of which are outlined below.

In general, the covered period for the importation would be from June 25, 2020 (i.e., upon the lapse of Bayanihan 1's effectivity) up to December 19, 2020 (i.e., end of Bayanihan 2). The importation of those sets of goods enumerated above shall be exempt from Value-Added Tax (VAT), excise tax and other fees, subject to certain conditions (i.e., approval and certification by the concerned government agencies such as DOH, DTI and DENR). It is critical to take note of the effectivity or the specific period covered when such exemption applies. In the event that VAT has been paid on qualified shipments/importations within the period of June 25, 2020 up to September 14, 2020, the same shall be refunded pursuant to Section 204(C) of the Tax Code (i.e., refund of taxes erroneously received). However, the input tax on the imported items should not have been reported and claimed as input tax credit in the monthly and/or quarterly VAT returns. The same shall not be allowed as input tax credit pursuant to Section 110 of the Tax Code for purposes of computing the taxpayer's VAT payable for the said period.





Remember that in order to qualify for exemption from import duties, taxes and other fees and ensuring the PPE supply at competitive prices, the taxpayer availing of the exemption must present a certification from DTI that the equipment and supplies being imported are not locally available or of insufficient quality and preference.

Unlike in other importations, the importations herein shall not be subject to the issuance of Authority to Release Imported Goods under Revenue Memorandum Order 35-2002, as amended. It may be released by the Bureau of Customs without need of such ATRIG. The BIR may, however, conduct post investigation/audit on these importations released by the BOC without ATRIG under this regulation.

As mentioned, inputs, raw materials and equipment necessary for the manufacture of essential goods of medical grade related to the containment and mitigation of Covid-19 enumerated above, as determined by the Food and Drug Administration-Department of Health, whether locally sourced or imported by the registered manufacturer, shall also be exempt from VAT. To avail of the exemption, the supplier of inputs, raw materials and equipment should submit the certified true copy of the "License to Operate" as issued to the manufacturer-buyer by the FDA-DOH, authorizing the manufacture of such essential goods of medical grade. Also required would be a Sworn Declaration from the manufacturer-buyer that the items shall be used for the manufacture of essential goods of medical grade related to the mitigation of Covid-19.

Lastly, donations of these imported articles to or for the use of the National Government or any entity created by any of its agencies not conducted for profit, or to any political subdivision of the Government are likewise exempt from donor's tax and subject to the ordinary rules of deductibility under existing rules and issuances.

What happens then when sales of those covered goods occur?

The sale of finished goods or products categorized above as essential, whether locally manufactured or imported, is subject to value-added tax. On the other hand, the sale of inputs, raw materials and equipment to a non-holder of "License to Operate" issued by the FDA-DOH is likewise subject to VAT.

Reiterating said tax incentive provision under Bayanihan 2 continues to give a welcome respite to businesses that are striving to stay afloat amid the devastation of this pandemic. Incentivizing the manufacturing sector that has consistently been fueling the country's economic growth could help boost their chances of continuing their operations while at the same time aiding the government to ensure the critical supply of these essential Covid-19 goods. But given the continuing economic uncertainty, the government should look beyond short-term fix or stopgap measures mainly being offered now. A more comprehensive and sustainable solution should be formulated and already implemented not only to assist business to recover but one that gets us back on track to regain the lost momentum in our country's economic growth.

*The author is a Special Counsel of Du-Baladad and Associates Law Offices (BDB Law), a member-firm of WTS Global.*

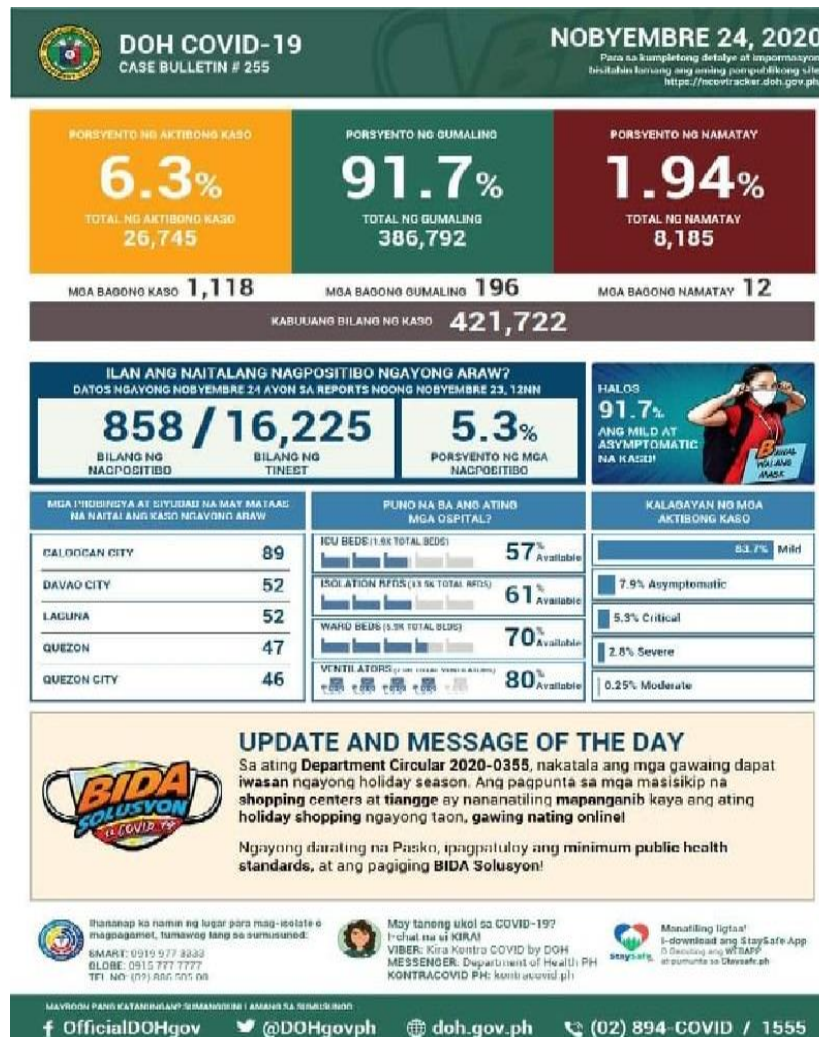
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Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/11/23/beyond-liberalizing-tax-incentives-under-bayanihan-2/>



# BREAKING: Kaso ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, nasa 421,722 na

By Angellic Jordan November 24, 2020 - 04:08 PM



Mahigit 1,000 muli ang panibagong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) bandang araw ng Martes (November 24), umabot na sa 421,722 ang confirmed cases ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 26,745 o 6.3 porsyento ang aktibong kaso.

Sinabi ng kagawaran na 1,118 ang bagong napaulat na kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

83.7 porsyento sa active COVID-19 cases ang mild; 7.9 porsyento ang asymptomatic; 0.25 porsyento ang moderate; 2.8 porsyento ang severe habang 5.3 porsyento ang nasa kritikal na kondisyon.

Nasa 12 naman ang napaulat na nasawi.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 8,185 o 1.94 porsyento ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa.

Ayon pa sa DOH, 196 naman ang gumaling pa sa COVID-19.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 386,792 o 91.7 porsyento ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/276753/breaking-kaso-ng-covid-19-sa-pilipinas-nasa-421722-na>



# Gov't lays out strategy for COVID-19 mass immunization

By PIA-NCR Published on November 24, 2020



**National Task Force Against COVID-19 chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. reports to President Duterte during a meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) in Davao City on Monday. ARMAN BAYLON/ PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO**

QUEZON CITY, Nov. 24 (PIA) -- The government will prioritize inoculating areas with high caseloads of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as the country gears towards mass immunization against the fast-spreading virus, a government official said on Monday.

In his report to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, National Task Force Against COVID-19 chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. said they adhere to the President's directive to prioritize the poor and government frontliners in conducting mass vaccination.

"At ang gagawin nga po nating strategy, dalawa pong strategy po ang gagawin po natin para po maka-recover tayo at ma-contain kaagad natin ang ating pandemic, gagawin po natin geographical," Galvez told President Duterte during a meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) in Davao City.

The first strategy is deploying the vaccine in the epicenter of COVID-19 such as National Capital Region (NCR), Davao City, Cebu, and Bacolod.

"And then from geographical magiging sectoral. Meaning, kung sino 'yung priority natin 'no, for example sa Manila, 'yung urban poor uunahin po natin 'yon; 'yung mga vulnerable uunahin po natin doon; 'yung mga sundalong naka-assign sa NCR uunahin po natin at saka po 'yung mga essential workers," Galvez said.

"Iyon po mayroon pong impact 'yon kaagad sa ating economy at may impact kaagad na ma-contain po kaagad. So ang strategy po natin, Mr. President, po is geographical, priority ang NCR, priority ang Davao dahil ang Davao po ngayon umaakyat din, priority 'yung Cebu, priority po 'yung mga Bacolod, 'yung mga tinamaan po ng mabibigat ng COVID," he added.

Immunizing areas with high number of COVID-19 infections will help the government in its assessment on the efficacy of the vaccines, according to Galvez.

So far, several vaccine developers are set to conduct clinical trials in the Philippines. These include Sinovac, Hansen, Johnson & Johnson, Gamaleya, AstraZeneca, and CanSino.



After the President's approval, Galvez said the government can now proceed with Advance Market Commitment and start negotiating with big pharmaceutical companies such as China's Sinovac, AstraZeneca, and Pfizer.

Galvez also told President Duterte that the government can secure advance commitment with Astra Zeneca for 20 million doses this month.

The government is looking at multilateral financing institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to finance vaccine procurements.

Local banks such as Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines are also possible fund sources for the government.

As of November 23, 2020, the country recorded a total of 420,614 COVID-19 infections with 1,799 new cases coming from NCR (465), Region IV-A (443), Region III (224), Region VI (105) and the remaining regions (562). PND



# Biden names John Kerry as special climate envoy

November 24, 2020, 8:56 am



John Kerry, former US Secretary of State, leaves Elysee Palace after the 'Tech for Good' summit at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France on May 23, 2018 (Anadolu photo)

ANKARA – US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday named John Kerry, the former state secretary, as special presidential envoy for climate to lead the country's fight against climate change.

Kerry will be the first official dedicated to climate change that will sit on the National Security Council (NSC) and his role will not require Senate confirmation.

It reflects "the president-elect's commitment to addressing climate change as an urgent national security issue," the Biden transition team said in a statement where they announced Kerry's appointment with other key picks for foreign policy and national security.

"Secretary Kerry elevated environmental challenges as diplomatic priorities, from oceans to hydrofluorocarbons. He was a key architect of the Paris Climate Accord, and signed the historic agreement to reduce carbon emissions with his granddaughter on his lap."

"America will soon have a government that treats the climate crisis as the urgent national security threat it is. I'm proud to partner with the president-elect, our allies, and the young leaders of the climate movement to take on this crisis as the President's Climate Envoy," Kerry said on Twitter.

Kerry, 76, was leading the US' participation in the Paris agreement on climate change between 2013-2017 when he served as state secretary of former President Barack Obama.

The US formally withdrew from the agreement on Nov. 4, a day after the 2020 elections, after starting the process last year under President Donald Trump.

Biden has repeatedly said climate change will be among his top agenda items as president, eyeing to return to Paris Agreement. (Anadolu)



# Carbon pricing rises as world's weapon of choice in climate fight

November 24, 2020 10:42 PM by [DZRH News Online](#)



*FILE PHOTO: Steam rises from the Niederaussem lignite power plant, in Niederaussem, Germany, January 16, 2020.  
REUTERS/Wolfgang Rattay/File Photo*

By Susanna Twidale and Kate Abnett

LONDON/BRUSSELS (Reuters) – Can you put a price on pollution? Some of the world's biggest economies are doing just that as they wrestle with how to make good on grand pledges to tame planet-warming emissions.

Matters are coming to a head.

China, Japan and South Korea have all followed the European Union in pledging to cut emissions to “net zero” in recent weeks, where they release only as much as they remove from the air. U.S. President-elect Joe Biden made the same promise in his election campaign.

Next year they are set to lay out the first practical measures to meet these targets, as part of commitments under the Paris climate accord, and putting a price on carbon will be front and centre, experts told Reuters.

“Each country will have to come up with its own path to reaching net zero, but the expectation is carbon pricing is going to be a very important part,” said Wendy Hughes, Carbon Markets and Innovation Manager at the World Bank.

The principle is simple: a carbon price establishes how much companies need to pay for their emissions. The higher the price, the greater the incentive to pollute less and invest in low-carbon technology.

Governments can force these payments through a carbon tax – a levy companies must pay when they pollute – or through an emissions-trading system (ETS).

An ETS sets a maximum cap on the amount of emissions that a sector, or group of sectors, can produce. It creates “carbon permits” for those emissions, which companies can buy for each tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> they emit.

Many countries, from Europe and South Korea, to China and Kazakhstan have already launched schemes, of various scope. See FACTBOX:

More than fifth of global emissions are covered by 46 national carbon-pricing schemes operating today or in the planning stage, as well as 32 regional systems within countries, according to the World Bank.

The biggest of those – the EU carbon market – is preparing for a major overhaul.

Since the European system was launched in 2005, emissions from participating power plants and factories have dropped by 35% – a sharper drop than seen in sectors not covered by the scheme. See TIMELINE:



“The ETS has proven its efficiency,” said Frans Timmermans, head of EU climate policy. “The ETS shows how carbon pricing is a strong driver for immediate change in energy consumption.”

#### PRICE BALANCING ACT

In the power sector, the scheme helped make coal plants uneconomic, compared with less-polluting gas plants or renewables.

But the trick for these markets is to get the carbon price right. If it's too low, there's little incentive for companies to rein in emissions; too high, and risk knee-capping industry.

The EU, seeking steeper emissions reductions to meet its new 2030 climate targets, will propose to expand and reform its ETS from next year.

The changes would involve including more sectors, such as shipping, and curbing the free permits given to EU industry to help it compete with overseas companies that don't pay carbon costs.

The carbon price – currently at around 27 euros price per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> – needs to hit levels that push industry toward investing in emissions-cutting technologies like hydrogen, analysts say.

“The carbon price has to reach high enough to enable the European Union to reach net zero by 2050,” said Mark Lewis, Chief Sustainability Strategist at BNP Paribas.

“On this basis, I think around 90 euros a tonne is a reasonable expectation by 2030,” he said.

#### GUARDING AGAINST SHOCKS

Other major economies are catching on. China, now the world's top greenhouse gas emitter, plans to launch its own national ETS, possibly as early as next year. That system would become the world's largest, and is expected to cover several billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from power plants each year.

Experts say China's preparations for launching its ETS have sped up since President Xi Jinping's announcement in September that China would become carbon neutral by 2060.

“There is a sense of urgency that hasn't been seen for quite a long time,” said Beijing-based lawyer Shawn He, who assists companies with carbon compliance.

The EU has worked with the country on developing carbon-pricing policies for more than a decade, both on the pilot regional markets China is now running and on a national scheme.

Jos Delbeke, a former senior EU climate policymaker who led the development of the bloc's trading scheme, said his advice to China had been to build a system that could gradually be reformed over time and could withstand economic shocks.

The EU learned that lesson after the 2008 financial crisis, when factors including a lack of flexible rules meant the market could not respond to a recession-induced drop in emissions, and became plagued by an oversupply of cheap permits.

The price of carbon permits didn't recover until 2018, when the EU said it would introduce a “market-stability reserve” from 2019 which removed excess permits from the system.

China's pilot schemes have already looked at using a similar reserve system, according to Huw Slater, senior carbon consultant with consultancy firm ICF in Beijing.

“It is a little early at the national stage to know whether they will do a similar thing, but it is quite possible.”

#### CARBON ACROSS BORDERS

Establishing a single, global price on carbon remains a distant prospect, however.



“The idea of a global carbon price was built on the assumption there would be dozens of linked trading systems. That hasn’t happened,” said David Hone, chief climate adviser at oil major Shell, which uses an internal carbon price to help meet its own sustainability goals.

Internal carbon prices also help to protect investments from any future carbon–pricing policies.

Talks at the U.N. have failed for two years to agree a common set of rules for international carbon markets.

The lack of global coordination has led the EU to start drafting a carbon border-tax policy – a levy on imports into Europe of polluting goods like steel and cement. The aim is to protect European industry from cheaper imports from regions with lax climate policies.

In the United States, Biden has pledged to do the same, with a \$2 trillion plan to cut emissions.

Making access to some of the world’s biggest markets conditional on paying a CO2 price should prod countries with weak climate policies “to begin figuring out how they are going to move in a low-carbon direction to remain competitive”, said the World Bank’s Hughes.

“It is possible to create linkages across domestic trading systems,” she added. “In the longer term, a global carbon price is desirable ... the fact we don’t see one immediately doesn’t mean it’s not moving in the right direction.”

(Reporting by Susanna Twidale in London, Kate Abnett in Brussels, additional reporting by David Stanway in Beijing; Editing by Veronica Brown, Katie Daigle and Pravin Char)