

28 NOVEMBER 2020, Saturday



NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR retrieves olive ridley turtle



ZAMBOANGA. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently retrieves an Olive Ridley Turtle in Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur. A photo handout shows a personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources-Ramon Magsaysay measures the size of the turtle before it was sent back to its natural habitat. (SunStar Zamboanga)

November 27, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its personnel from the Community Environment and Natural Resources (Cernro) in Ramon Magsaysay, Zamboanga del Sur, has retrieved and released recently an olive ridley turtle in that province, a DENR official said Friday, November 27, 2020.

Rosevirico Tan, DENR regional information officer, said the olive ridley turtle was released back to its natural habitat in Lower Bayao village, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur.

Tan said the turtle was spotted by two concerned citizens along the coast of Lower Bayao and immediately reported their find to authorities.

Tan said upon initial inspection and examination, the turtle was found to be healthy and in good condition.

He said it weighed about 40 kilograms and has a length of 71 centimeters and width of 69 centimeters.

Tan said the olive ridley turtle was released back to its habitat after proper tagging and documentation by the Cenro-Ramon Magsaysay.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies the olive ridley turtle as vulnerable due to the decrease of its population.

The Olive Ridley Turtle, also known commonly as the Pacific ridley sea turtle, is a species of turtle in the family Cheloniidae. The species is the second smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world, according to the World Wildlife Fund India website. (SunStar Zamboanga)



3 MAYORS SANGKOT SA ILLEGAL LOGGING SA CAGAYAN! Binuking ng gobernador...

[NATIONALNEWSPROVINCIAL](#)

Last Updated Nov 27, 2020



Cagayan – Iginiit ni Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba na may tatlong (3) alkalde ang sangkot at protektor ng illegal logging, dahilan ng pagkakalbo ng kabundukan sa malaking bahagi ng lalawigan na sanhi ng malawakang pagbaha tuwing bubuhos ang ulan.

Ayon kay Mamba, ilan sa mga alkaldeng ito ang yumaman dahil sa pagbibigay proteksyon sa iligal na pamumutol ng puno sa kani-kanilang bayan.

Ilan din sa uniformed personnel ang sinasabing kasabwat sa iligal na gawain kung kaya't patuloy ang nararanasang pagkakalbo ng kabundukan, na isa sa dahilan ng nararanasang malawakang pagbaha sa lalawigan nitong nagdaang mga bagyo ng Rolly at Ulysses.

Malaking problema sa lalawigan ang kaliwa't kanang illegal logging na hindi mapigilan dahil sa umano'y protektado ng ilang opisyal ng gobyerno ang iligal na gawain.

Tumanggi ang gobernador na banggitin ang pangalan ng mga opisyal na sangkot sa iligal na gawain.

Magugunita na isiniwalat din ng Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) na ang bayan ng Peñablanca at Baggao ay nananatiling illegal logging hotspot zone sa probinsya. Kaugnay nito, hinimok ni Mamba ang lahat ng Cagayanos na pumili ng tamang tao at hindi magpasilaw sa pera kapalit ang boto na sana'y babago sa pangit na imahe ng mga bayan mula sa iligal na aktibidad. (Rey Velasco)



Cagayan cop shot, wounded in butt after anti-logging operation

By: [Villamor Visaya Jr.](#) - Correspondent / [@VillVisayaJrINQ](#)
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 07:05 PM November 27, 2020

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A deputy police chief who led an anti-illegal logging operation in Peñablanca town, Cagayan province was wounded in a gun attack on Thursday (Nov. 26).

The officer was identified as Lt. Randy Baccay, of the Penablanca police force.

Investigators said Baccay was on his way home after the anti-logging operation when one of the suspected poachers at the village of Minanga shot Baccay in the back.

The officer suffered a gunshot wound in the butt, said Col. Ariel Quilang, Cagayan provincial police chief.

Gov. Manuel Mamba condemned the shooting and ordered policemen to identify and arrest the assailant who had escaped after the attack.

Mamba said it was not the first time that a law enforcer had been attacked by poachers in the area.

Three government forest rangers had been killed in the province.

“There are protectors of illegal logging in the area that is why police officers have a hard time putting an end to tree cutting and poaching there,” Mamba said.

TSB

Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1365662/cagayan-cop-shot-wounded-in-butt-after-anti-logging-operation#ixzz6f2HGO9x5>

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Suspected illegal loggers ambush police team in Cagayan, one official wounded



Published 15 hours ago
on November 27, 2020 03:41 PM
By [John Roson](#)



The deputy police chief of Peñablanca, Cagayan, was shot and wounded when suspected illegal loggers ambushed his team Thursday night.

Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba and the Cagayan Valley regional police are offering a total of P300,000 to anyone who can help arrest the attackers, according to the provincial information office.

The incident occurred around 7 p.m. in Sitio Dalayat, Brgy. Minanga, of Peñablanca's "Lagum" area.

Citing a police report sent to Mamba, the PIO said Lt. Randy Baccay and his men were conducting an operation against illegal logging when a group of men fired at their patrol car.

The operation was carried out as part of efforts to stop illegal logging, which has become prevalent in Cagayan in recent years, the PIO said.

Recently, Mamba pointed at both illegal logging and illegal mining as contributing factors to the massive flood and landslides that hit Cagayan during typhoon "Ulysses."

According to the PIO, anti-illegal logging operations by the police have already resulted in the confiscation of thousands of board feet of illegally harvested wood in Lagum in the past few months.

The ambush was not the first violent incident related to illegal logging in the province, as three forest rangers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were killed several years ago, the PIO added.

Meanwhile, Baccay has been brought to the hospital where, according to police, he is in stable condition and has been awarded the PNP wounded personnel medal.

Members of the Peñablanca Police at Provincial Mobile Force Company have been deployed to hunt down those behind the ambush.



Villar seeks creation of Boracay Island Dev't Authority

Published November 27, 2020, 12:42 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Sen. Cynthia Villar is also pushing for the creation of a Boracay Island Development Authority to handle and sustain the government's rehabilitation and development programs for the island.



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

Villar recently filed Senate Bill No. 1914 as she cited the continued degradation of the environment due to the “weak” implementation of landmark environment laws by authorities and the people’s indifference.

“The Boracay Island, which is one of the best beaches in the world and considered a world-famous jewel of Philippine tourism, was not spared from environment degradation,” the chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Environment said in her bill.

“The apathetic concern for the environment amidst the thriving development on Boracay, along with the weak implementation of the environmental laws by authorities, eventually led to the polluted Boracay Island then,” she added.

In 2018, President Duterte called Boracay Island a “cesspool” due to poor waste and sewage management and overcrowding. He shut down the tourist destination for six months for its rehabilitation by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-led Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF).

Villar said that while measures have been implemented by the government, the creation of the Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) would be the long-term solutions to address the root causes of environmental degradation in the island.

She said Environment and Natural Secretary Roy Cimatu wrote to her to sponsor a bill that would create the BIDA, since the existence of BIATF will expire on May 8, 2021.



Villar seeks creation of Boracay Island Dev't Authority

“In its two years of existence and steadfast efforts in rehabilitating Boracay Island, the BIATF has had to undo the decades of mismanagement of the island’s resources, and rampant violation of environmental laws,” Villar said.

The proposed BIDA would be tasked to “accelerate the sustainable development and balanced growth of Boracay Island.” Among others, it shall formulate and implement eco-tourism, environmental protection, and social and infrastructure development strategies and regulate the entry of people, vehicles, and supplies and material to the island.

The BIDA would be an agency attached to the Office of the President, and shall include the DENR, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Tourism, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Justice, Department of Health, as well as the governor of Aklan, mayor of the Malay, Aklan where Boracay is located, and two representatives from the private sector.

A general manager shall be appointed by the President.

Aside from Villar, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon had also filed a similar bill proposing the creation of the BIDA.



Lahar-risk villages in Albay need to be relocated: Phivolcs

By Mar Serrano November 27, 2020, 2:55 pm



LEGAZPI CITY – The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) has recommended the relocation of thousands of families living in lahar and mudflow paths around Mayon Volcano after completing its lahar risk assessment mapping.

Paul Alanis, Phivolcs resident volcanologist, on Friday said recommended for relocations are residents of villages of Travesia (seven sub-villages), San Francisco (one sub-village), and San Rafael in Guinobatan; Tumpa (four sub-villages) in Camalig; Busay (three sub-villages) in Daraga; Bantayan (four sub-villages) and Quinastillohan (Purok 7) in Tabaco City.

Alanis, in an interview, added the recommendation was submitted to Albay Governor Al Francis Bichara for his consideration and appropriate action.

The agency risk assessment was to determine the magnitude of lahar and volcanic deposits after typhoons Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses struck Bicol, leaving several people dead in Albay and hundreds of houses, agriculture, and infrastructure destroyed due to flooding and lahar avalanche.

Cedric Daep, Albay Public Safety Emergency and Management Office (APSEMO) chief, said he had consulted with the mayors of the affected towns and other local chief executives.

He said the mayors were agreeable to the relocation plan, however, other town executives have added other villages prone to lahar but not included in the Phivolcs recommendation.

In preparation for the relocation plan, Daep said the province has tapped the support of the United Nation Development Program (UNDP) to assist the province to do a digitalized satellite mapping to determine the suitable areas where thousands of families would be relocated and define medium and low-risk lahar and flood control structures.

Daep said the UNDP project, which would take six months to complete, would start after a signing of a memorandum of understanding.



Lahar-risk villages in Albay need to be relocated: Phivolcs

Meanwhile, the province will coordinate with the National Housing Authority (NHA) and start scouting for ideal relocation sites.

Phivolcs assessment showed that as of March 2018, there are 65 million cubic meters of volcanic debris (lahar and rock boulders) emitted by Mayon Volcano in past eruptions still deposited at the volcano's slopes.

Phivolcs Lahar data indicate 171 villages around the volcano's slopes and river channel are high-risk areas for lahar and mudflows, 72 villages are prone to lava flow while 40 villages are threatened by pyroclastic blasts.

There are also houses in the 31 villages in the towns of Malilipot, Guinobatan, Camalig, Bacacay, and Sto. Domingo, and the cities of Legazpi and Tabaco situated within the six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ).

After the last volcanic eruption in 2018, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Bicol was tasked to do a survey for purposes of relocating the number of houses and individuals engage in farming inside the PDZ.

Daep said the office is still waiting for the DENR survey and recommendation. *(PNA)*



Pacquiao gets 'clean air champion' award, urges tree planting

By Marita Moaje November 27, 2020, 6:11 pm



ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPION. Senator Emmanuel Pacquiao (center) receives the Clean Air award given by environmental watchdog Clean Air Philippines Movement, Inc (CAPMI) at the Manila Hotel on Friday (Nov. 27, 2020). Pacquiao encouraged the public to plant more trees to mitigate the effects of climate change. *(Photo grabbed from Clean Air Philippines Facebook page)*

MANILA – Boxing champion and Senator Emmanuel ‘Manny’ Pacquiao is urging the public to plant more trees as part of measures to save the environment.

“Magtulong-tulong tayo upang maging malinis ang ating kapaligiran. Ipagpatuloy natin ang pagiging plantita at plantito. Magtanim tayo ng mga puno sa halip na ubusin ang oras sa mga bisyo (let us help one another to have a clean environment. Let us continue to be plantitos and plantitas. Let us plant more trees instead of wasting our time on vices),” Pacquiao said after receiving the 'Clean Air Champion' award from environmental watchdog Clean Air Philippines Movement, Inc. (CAPMI) in a ceremony at the Manila Hotel on Friday.

CAPMI said it chooses its yearly champion based on the merits done to advance their clean air advocacy and other environmental causes.

Past Clean Air awardees Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte and Department of Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade sent video messages for Pacquiao.

As a lawmaker, Pacquiao pushed for the full implementation of Republic Act No. 8749 otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999.

The law provides for a comprehensive air pollution control policy to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature and at the same time, promote and protect the global environment.

Pacquiao also encouraged the people to report to authorities even the simplest smoke-belching incidents that they may observe in their neighborhood.



Pacquiao gets 'clean air champion' award, urges tree planting

Planting more trees, Pacquiao said, is the answer to the current problem of serious flooding in some parts of the country that may be caused by frequent typhoons hitting the country, just like the recent typhoons “Rolly” and “Ulysses” which did not only destroy properties but also claimed several lives most especially in the provinces of Bicol, Quezon, Cagayan, and Isabela.

Aside from preventing soil erosion because of the capacity of trees to hold soil and water, they also cause the air to be cleaner and fresher.

President Rodrigo Duterte earlier said what the country is experiencing right now is the effect of climate change, calling on his Cabinet secretaries to act immediately on the problem to prevent the same from occurring in the future.

CAPMI president Dr. Leo Olarte strongly echoed and confirmed Duterte’s statement.

“President Duterte is correct. Climate change involves abnormal warming of our planet’s oceans. Typhoons are born in oceans and not on land. The warmer our oceans the stronger the global wind systems will be therefore super typhoons like Yolanda and Rolly arise. Anthropogenic or simply human-caused activities result in the unabated emissions of greenhouse gases that pollute the air we breathe. This leads to global warming that causes Climate Change,” Olarte said.

Other awardees of the event are the Philippine Medical Association (PMA), Beta Sigma Fraternity Medical Group (BSFMG), and the League of Data-privacy and Cyber-security Advocates of the Philippines, Inc. (LeaDCAP) for PMA Doctors on Boats and PMA DOCPH free online telemedicine docph.org.

For PMA Doctors on Boats, awardees are the DOTr -Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Department of National Defense (DND)- Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and the PNP Maritime Group.

The Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council (PBIDC) also received the award for the Climate Change and Poverty Mitigation category.

Studies conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) show that more than 80 percent of air pollution in the urban areas in the country comes from the unabated emissions from motor vehicles that form part of the greenhouse gases in our planet’s atmosphere.

These gases cause global warming eventually leading to climate change.

Aside from climate change, toxic motor vehicle emissions also cause deadly cardiovascular and respiratory diseases in humans. *(PNA)*



Pasig River Coordinating and Management Office - PRCMO

13 hrs · 🌐

TINGNAN: PRCMO IN ACTION SA ESTERO DE MAGDALENA

Walang patid ang cleanup operations ng PRCMO sa kahabaan ng #EsterodeMagdalena sa lungsod ng Maynila.

Narito ang sitwasyon sa ilang bahagi ng 1.3-kilometrong estero sa may Bambang Street, Soler Street at Recto Avenue kung saan umabot sa 115 sako na karamihan ay di-nabubulok na basura ang narekober ng ating River Warriors.

Patuloy po kaming sumasaludo at nagpapasalamat sa ating mga makabagong bayani ngayong panahon ng pagsubok. Kaya naman, sa darating na National Volunteer Month sa Disyembre ay patuloy po tayong makiisa sa pagpoprotekta ng ating mga katubigan at kalikasan.

Sa ating mga sarili ay pwede po tayo maging Warriors sa pamamagitan ng pag-volunteer at pagiging mabuting ehemplo sa ating mga komunidad sa tamang pagtatapon ng basura at pagpapanatili ng kalinisan sa ating kapaligiran.

Sama-sama ay ibigay po natin ang ating buong #PusoParaSallogPasig, Manila Bay, at mga tributaryo nito! ❤️

#PRCMO #DENR #PasigRiver





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Hinatuan Mining reforestation efforts flourishes the ‘Miyawaki’ way

The traditional methods used by miners and the Miyawaki principle may differ in some of its planting strategies but the results yield the same kind of natural forest stand.



Published 2 hours ago

on November 28, 2020 04:00 AM

By [TDT @tribunephil](#)



HMC's Eastern 1 rehabilitated area in Surigao is one example of how traditional methods used by miners and the Miyawaki Method may differ when it comes to planting strategies but still yield the same results in bringing forests back to life. / PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF HMC

During these times when environment conservation and preservation are hot topics, Hinatuan Mining Corporation (HMC) turned to employing the Miyawaki Method, conceptualized and pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, to grow plants and build forests 10 faster than what it usually takes in their areas of responsibility.

For mining companies such as HMC, the big challenge has always been growing trees in lateritic soil that are deficient in nutrients. While the Miyawaki Method is building forests on barren lands which is called “afforestation,” miners rehabilitate and strive to build forests on mineralized soil, which is called “reforestation.”

According to HMC's environment manager, Forrester Manuel Torres, the traditional approach of reforestation requires systematic spacing between crops and trees consistent with the ‘carrying capacity’ principle of ecology — where only a certain number of seedlings can be accommodated per hectare of land.

Opposite to that, the Miyawaki approach is dependent on natural regeneration with the main goal to achieve a more natural forest-like vibe with grasses, shrubs, and multiple sub-species added to the main trees, all randomly thrown together without specific patterns based on the principle of native planting.

“The traditional methods used by miners and the Miyawaki principle may differ in some of its planting strategies but the results yield the same kind of natural forest stand,” explains Torres.

“I have not heard of Miyawaki before we started the rehabilitation at Eastern 1. We simply called our program ‘high-density planting strategy,’ initially an experiment which turned out to have very similar goals to Miyawaki, which is to get the target area greener and leafier in half the expected time.



Masungi Georeserve

8 hrs · 🌐

MASUNGI FROM CUBAO 📷 Our beloved limestone spine as seen from Quezon City. After more than 20 years of protection, the limestone formation is intact in spite of the aggressive urban crawl. It is now surrounded by a thriving secondary forest that hundreds of wildlife and unique species call home. Our project to similarly restore some 3,000 hectares of surrounding degraded lands (Masungi Geopark), however, continues to face the same challenges we faced decades ago: quarrying, illegal logging, and land grabbing. Besides biodiversity, restoration of the Upper Marikina Watershed can have a huge impact to reducing flooding and landslides in downstream cities and communities such as Marikina, Pasig, and Quezon City.
[#SaveMasungi](#) [#SavetheUpperMarikinaWatershed](#)

Sign the petition: bit.ly/savemasungi





Illegal quarrying dahilan ng pagkasira ng dam sa Laguna

[NATIONALNEWSPROVINCIAL](#)

On Nov 27, 2020



LAGUNA – Illegal quarrying ang itinuturong dahilan ng pagkasira ng Sta. Cruz River Irrigation System (RIS-Diversion Dam) sa Barangay Calumpang, Liliw, Laguna.

Ito ang maring pahayag ni National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Calabarzon Regional Director, Engr. Romeo Lopez, matapos magtungo ito sa lugar kasama ang kanyang mga tauhan at pamunuan ng mga magsasaka.

Ayon sa kanya, naitala ang unang pagkasira ng “old dam” noong 2006 kasunod ang malawakang pagbaha sa ika-apat na distrito ng lalawigan dahil sa pagbagsak ng river bed sanhi ng walang tigil na illegal quarrying operation ng mga residente sa lugar.

Karaniwan aniyang hinuhukay sa pamamagitan ng pala-pala at ibinebenta ng mga residente mula sa laylayan at itaas ng dam ang buhangin at mga grava na karaniwang ginagamit sa construction projects.

Dahil dito, matagal na naantala sa loob ng dalawang cropping season ang pagtanim ng palay ng maraming magsasaka sakop ng limang bayan na kinabibilangan ng Victoria, Liliw, Pila, Sta. Cruz at Magdalena matapos bumigay noon ang matandang dam mnang hagupitin ng bagyong Milenyo. Sa kabuuan, umaabot sa tatlong libong ektarya (3,000) ng palayan ang sinusuplayan ng libreng tubig ng NIA sa kasalukuyan mula sa itinayong makabagong RIS diversion dam.

May kabuuang bilang ng mahigit 1,500 magsasaka ang patuloy na nakikinabang sa ipinagkaloob na mga benepisyo ng NIA.

Samantala, hindi inaasahang naitalang muli ang pagkasira ng ginagawang Dam Protection Works sa lugar nitong nakaraang magkakasunod na bagyong Quinta, Rolly at Ulysses dahil sa tuloy-tuloy at mabilisang pagbabang muli ng river bed kungsaan ginugulan ng mga ito ng sa mahigit na P31 milyong pondo.

Bukod dito, ayon kay Lopez, naitala rin ang pagkasira ng maraming irrigation facilities (infrastructure projects) sa buong Calabarzon na umaabot sa halagang P96 milyon kabilang ang palayan na nasa P20 milyon.

Kaugnay nito, ang muling panawagan ng mga magsasaka at pamunuan ng NIA: “Itigil na ang ILLEGAL QUARRYING sa lugar dahil marami ang naapektuhan”. (Dick Garay)



Pagkasira ng dam sinisi sa illegal quarrying

[Friday, November 27, 2020](#) [Gil Aman](#)



Ang bahagi ng Sta. Cruz River Irrigation System na nasira dahil sa illegal quarrying na binisita ni NIA administration Manager Engr. Romy Lopez kasama ang grupo ng mga magsasaka. Kuha ni GIL AMAN

ISINISISI ng pamunuan ng National Irrigation Administration (NIA) ang pagkasira ng Sta Cruz River Irrigation System (RIS- Diversion Dam) sa umano'y patuloy na illegal quarrying operation sa Bgy. Calumpang, Liliw, Laguna.

Ito ang mariing ipinahayag ni National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Calabarzon Regional Director Engr. Romeo Lopez ng bisitahin ang lugar kasama ang kanyang mga tauhan at pamunuan ng mga magsasaka.

Nabatid na unang naitala ang pagkasira ng Old Dam noong 2006 kabilang ang malawakang pagbaha dahil sa pagbagsak ng river bed sanhi ng illegal quarrying sa lugar.

Karaniwan aniyang hinuhukay at ibinebenta ng mga residente mula sa laylayan at itaas ng dam ang buhangin at mga grava na karaniwang ginagamit sa mga construction projects.

Dahil dito, matagal na naantala sa loob ng dalawang cropping season ang pagtanim ng palay ng maraming magsasaka sakop ng limang bayan na kinabibilangan ng Victoria, Liliw, Pila, Sta. Cruz at bayan ng Magdalena matapos bumigay ang lumang Dam.

Ayon pa kay Engr. Lopez, umaabot sa 3,000 ektarya ng palayan ang sinusuplayan ng mga ito ng libreng tubig sa kasalukuyan mula sa itinayong makabagong RIS Dam.

May kabuuang bilang ng nasa mahigit na 1,500 na magsasaka ang patuloy na nakikinabang sa ipinagkaloob na mga benepisyo ng NIA.

Samantala, hindi inaasahang naitala ng muli ang pagkasira ng ginagawang Dam Protection Works sa lugar nitong nakaraang magkakasunod na bagyo dahil sa tuloy tuloy at mabilisang pagbabang muli ng river bed kung saan ginugulan ng mga ito ng umaabot sa mahigit na P31 milyong pisong pondo.

Bukod aniya dito ayon kay Lopez, naitala ang pagkasira ng maraming irrigation facilities (Infrastructure Projects) sa buong Calabarzon na umaabot sa halagang P96 milyong piso kabilang ang palayan na nasa halagang P20 milyon.

Hinggil dito ang muling panawagan ng mga magsasaka at pamunuan ng NIA ang pagpatigil ng illegal quarrying na matagal ng pinangangambahan ng mga ito ng epekto sa pagkasira.

Sonia Mendoza: Showing people how zero waste concept is done

By [Rizal Raoul Reyes](#)
November 28, 2020



Mendoza

There are many things one can look forward to in retirement. For Sonia Mendoza, chairman of Mother Earth Foundation (MEF), she looked forward to spending more time with her family and fully enjoying the sports she loves—tennis. After retiring as a laboratory manager of a multinational pharmaceutical company in 1984, Mendoza gained complete control over her time to enjoy bonding more with the family. She was also often seen at Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) indoor tennis courts. Then she joined club tournaments in Metro Manila and, sometimes, in nearby cities.

“I was a member of the PCA Seniors team that competed at the Mie Prefecture in Japan, sponsored by the Japan Senior Tennis Club,” Mendoza told the BusinessMirror in an e-mail interview.

New advocacy

Mendoza joined the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (COCAP) in 1995. At that time, COCAP was campaigning for clean air, as there was a plan to put up an incinerator plant in the country. This was her first involvement in environmental issues. She attended hearings with a group of ladies led by Odette Alcantara at the Senate and at the House of Representatives when incineration issues were taken up. She also joined rallies at the Luneta, campaigning for clean air and for the passage of the Philippine Clean Air Act that bans incineration.

In 1998, Mendoza and four other housewives decided to take action when the garbage collectors failed to collect garbage in their village for three weeks. With Luz Sabas and Dr. Metodio Palaypay serving as their gurus on proper waste management, they started a waste segregation campaign. “The biodegradable [*nabubulok*] waste was composted and the non-biodegradable [*di nabubulok*] ones were sold to the junk shops to be sent back to the factories for recycling,” Mendoza said.



Sonia Mendoza: Showing people how zero waste concept is done

In 1998, a group of five men and 10 women environmentalists founded the MEF, and registered it at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Since then, the MEF has been teaching communities, schools, offices, and various sectors of society how to do recycling and proper waste management.

“No village was too small or too far for MEF to visit so we can teach them about ecological solid waste management. We were invited to hold seminars or speak in Metro Manila, Batangas, Cavite, Tagaytay, Dipolog, Surigao, Northern Samar, Romblon, Quezon, Bicol, Bacolod, Butuan, Iligan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Baguio, Bataan, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, and Ilocos Sur,” she said.

Although there are so many environmental challenges in the country, Mendoza said the Philippines is fortunate to have one of the better laws on solid waste management, Republic Act 9003, which was signed into law in January 2001. The law calls for the decentralization of solid waste management and mandates segregation of waste at source, segregated collection, and the establishment of a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in every barangay or in a cluster of barangays. However, Mendoza lamented that “implementation of this 19-year-old law is pathetic. Up to now, only about 30 percent of the 42,000 barangays have operational MRFs.”

What really helped MEF in teaching communities to segregate waste was the fact that the members walked the talk. “We segregate our waste at source, i.e., in the house, and plastic, especially single-use plastics are our pet peeves,” Mendoza said.

Now that the barangay is not doing the collection of biodegradable waste in their village, Mendoza and other villagers decided to compost their food waste in their respective backyards and give the recyclables and residual waste to the garbage trucks, properly segregated. Moreover, they also use reusable bags made of cloth or indigenous materials when doing their shopping. Usually, Mendoza and her colleagues don’t accept plastic bags and paper bags in the wet market and in the supermarkets.

“During the pandemic, while we still use our reusable bags when we go shopping, plastic packaging increased because most of the goods are delivered in the villages and most of the goods are in plastic bags.” But she said that in their project sites, segregated collection is still being implemented and the MRFs continue to operate.

Promoting recycling and waste management

TO promote recycling and waste management, the MEF training module has two parts: Inner Ecology and Solid Waste Management.

Inner Ecology answers the question “why”? Why do we have to take responsibility for the waste that we generate? What are the effects of mismanaging our waste, on health, and on the environment? The inputs from the trainees are heartwarming and inspiring. “We teach communities but we also learn from them,” Mendoza said.



Sonia Mendoza: Showing people how zero waste concept is done

The second part of the module answers the question “how”? This is where RA 9003 comes in, segregation at source, etc.

“The hierarchy of waste management is Reduce, Reuse, Recycle—also known as the 3 Rs. Now, they have added more Rs: Repair, Repurpose, Redesign,” she said.

Mendoza warned the public not to patronize false solutions such as eco-bricks, and cement co-processing using plastic waste as an alternative fuel, which are pipe solutions that do not address the root cause of the problem. “These will not stop the production of these problematic packaging. Instead, they give the plastic manufacturers good reason to continue their production. We need to turn off the faucet,” she said.

“There are stores now that offer alternative delivery systems, no extra packaging by having the consumers bring their own containers. MEF has started on this. We have one in Malabon, Batangas and Siquijor,” she added.

While MEF encourages recycling, Mendoza said their training emphasizes reduction or avoidance of waste. She said there’s a lot to be done, as only less than 9 percent of all plastic that has been manufactured has been recycled.

Partner communities

MEF partner communities are very supportive of their zero waste approach to waste management. Mendoza said the City of San Fernando, Pampanga (CSFP) is a zero-waste model city comprised of 35 barangays. MEF partnered with the city in 2012 and introduced the zero-waste program. San Fernando set the bar with more than 100 MRFs, way above the requirement of the law of one MRF per barangay. In 2012, the waste diversion rate of the city was 12 percent, meaning 12 percent of its total waste was diverted from the Clark Sanitary Landfill and the cost of waste disposal was P70 million per year.

After six months of implementing the zero waste project, the waste diversion rate increased to 53 percent. Now, the waste diversion rate is 80 percent, the highest in the country. Their cost of disposal to the landfill was down to P12 million, but it became P15 million due to the tipping fee increase.

“San Fernando is a Zero Waste model city up to the present and is acknowledged globally. We have partnered with the cities of Malabon, Navotas, Batangas, Tacloban, Taguig, and Siquijor and Nueva Vizcaya provinces,” Mendoza said.

Barangay Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City, Barangays Potrero, Dampalit, San Agustin, Concepcion, Hulong Dagat in Malabon City, Barangays Bagumbuhay North, Tanza 1, Tanza 2, Tangos North, North Bay Boulevard North in Navotas City are Zero Waste model barangays in Metro Manila. This means every household in these barangays do source segregation, have segregated collection, and the barangays have an operational MRF.



Sonia Mendoza: Showing people how zero waste concept is done

Tapping the youth

Mendoza said schools within the barangays are included in the zero-waste program and they have MRFs. We have three zero waste model schools—Holy Spirit Elementary School in Commonwealth, Quezon City, San Fernando Elementary School and St. Scholastica's.

MEF also conducts a Zero Waste Youth Camp annually and a Zero Waste Olympiad participated by public and private schools in CSFP. Student volunteers from UP Manila helped in the IEC and waste collection in our different project sites after giving them training on ecological solid waste management. "Education is very important in developing environmental awareness," Mendoza said.

Frustrations

MEF continues doing its work despite the lack of support from the national government and lack of political will to nationally implement a very important doable law.

"It's frustrating that instead of helping clean the environment, government agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Solid Waste Management Commission, Department of Health, Department of Trade and Industry, and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority are supporting harmful, expensive technologies such as Waste to Energy Incineration to cover up their inefficiency in implementing RA 9003," Mendoza said.

She said the gravest threat right now is the much touted Waste to Energy Incineration Bill that will repeal the ban on incineration of the Clean Air Act and will allow burning of all kinds of waste, which will revert their zero waste program back to square one. "However, we are hopeful that our partner LGUs led by their mayors will continue the Zero Waste program after experiencing the positive results in their cities."

A worthy cause

Despite the gargantuan challenges and frustrations they face, Mendoza said pursuing environmentalism is a worthy undertaking as it produces a healthy citizenry and helps conserve our finite resources for the future generation.

Mendoza said MEF finds joy in community organizing, creation of green jobs, seeing happy faces of the community waste workers, developing livelihood, and a self satisfaction that one is part of the solution.

Mendoza borrows a quote from Chief Seattle: "We do not inherit the Earth from our forefathers, we borrow it from our children."



Medical waste: Where does it go?



By [Amado S. Tolentino, JR.](#)
November 28, 2020

THESE are both troubled and troubling times. The fear of the coronavirus is omnipresent. There is almost no aspect of life that has not been warped by the pandemic and even when we wish to put it out of our minds, we are reminded of it in ways large and small. To cope, people engage in various activities — personal, family, community and even country-related.

Rare are those who question how things are done in order that when the new normal comes, there is a plan in place to effectively approach a contributory factor to, specifically, infectious and communicable disease control. One such factor is the matter of medical waste disposal

At no other time has public interest on the whereabouts of medical waste become prominent than in this time of pandemic brought about by Covid-19. Indeed, what is the final disposal method for personal protection equipment, disposable gloves, face masks, swabs, syringes? The concern revolves around exposure of health workers or frontliners, waste workers and the public in general when waste is improperly handled or finally disposed of in an environmentally unsound manner.

Referred to as health care waste in the Health Care Manual of the Department of Health (DoH) and medical waste in Philippine environmental legislation, they include all wastes produced as a result of diagnosis and treatment of human beings or animals. Medical wastes are produced not only by hospitals but also by laboratories, drug manufacturers, nursing homes, cosmetic ear piercing and tattoo parlors, medical schools, etc.

Medical waste includes: 1) infectious waste, which are suspected to contain pathogens (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi) in sufficient concentration or quantity to cause disease in susceptible hosts. Those are the outcome of surgeries or autopsies of patients with infectious diseases; waste from infected persons in isolation wards (e.g. excreta, dressings from infected or surgical wounds); 2) pathological waste consists of tissues, organs, body parts, human fetus, blood or body fluids, etc.; 3) sharps are needles, scalpels or any item that can cut or puncture wounds; and 4) pharmaceutical waste which include expired drugs that need to be properly disposed of.

A growing environmental challenge

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), medical wastes present health risks indirectly by releasing pathogens or toxic pollutants into the environment. Their disposal via landfill can lead to pollution of drinking, surface and groundwater. Treatment of medical wastes with disinfectants may release dangerous chemical substances to the environment. That is why discharge of sewage from hospitals like feces and urine should be disinfected before disposal in the sewage system, with chemicals, biological fluids or a combination of both.



Medical waste: Where does it go?

It is important for health care establishments to comply with sanitation standards imposed by law such as proper waste segregation to help minimize the risk of diseases and pollution to public health and the environment. Primarily at risk in the current global pandemic are the frontliners because of their immediate exposure to disease and infection.

Actually, hospitals in the Philippines are obliged to comply with proper waste management, i.e. waste segregation, storage, collection and transport, treatment and final disposal. There are also guidelines for liquid waste management.

Medical waste vis-à-vis Covid-19 pandemic

As early as Jan. 21, 2020, the Department of Health issued guidelines on preparedness and response to Covid-19 which emphasized that waste management and decontamination procedures must ensure that all materials used are disposed of appropriately. Disinfection of work areas and decontamination of possible spills of blood or infectious body fluids should follow validated procedures with chlorine-based solutions.

On March 26, 2020, the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued a memorandum to all EMB regional directors to use thermal treatment by incineration as a mode of disposal. The memorandum allows incineration for all Covid-19-related health care wastes collected during the period of enhanced community quarantine.

However, the 1991 Clean Air Act (Republic Act 8749) states, “Incineration, defined as the burning of municipal, bio-medical and hazardous wastes, which process emits poisonous and toxic fumes, is hereby prohibited” (Sec. 20). The reason behind the prohibition is because incineration creates the most toxic chemicals known to science — dioxins and furans — which remain in the environment for decades to hundreds of years. The two chemicals are linked to various types of cancer, reproductive disorders, birth defects, suppression of the immune system and other health problems.

Be that as it may, the DENR issued an advisory allowing the use of incinerators and crematoria for health care or medical wastes. Immediately, the NGO EcoWaste Coalition called on the DENR to revoke the advisory.

Obviously, the Philippines does not have the capacity to continuously monitor emissions of dioxins and furans. That means it is unlikely that emission limits for dioxins and furans will be enforced even without a pandemic.

On April 2, 2020, the DoH issued a department memorandum which says, among others, that all health facilities, community quarantine centers and temporary treatment and monitoring facilities must conform to the rules and regulations mandated by the EMB (DENR), to wit: 1) infectious wastes generated must be stored temporarily in designated locations, away from patients and public spaces; and 2) treated infectious wastes can be disposed of in a sanitary landfill but must not be mixed with municipal waste or non-hazardous wastes. Separate waste routes for transporting hazardous and non-hazardous wastes should be planned and used.



Medical waste: Where does it go?

Of much relevance is the 1991 Local Government Code (RA 7160) which specifically provides that the Sangguniang Bayan and the Sangguniang Panlungsod shall regulate activities relative to the use of land, buildings and structure in order to promote the general welfare; and shall likewise regulate the disposal of clinical and other wastes from hospitals, clinics and other similar establishments (Secs 447,457).

In the corpus of Philippine environmental laws, the following are the other statutes relevant to medical waste: Sanitation Code (Presidential Decree 856); Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Management Act (RA 6969); Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (RA 9003); Clean Water Act (RA 7295); and the Hospital Licensure Act (RA 4226).

A commitment to environmental protection requires strict adherence to various environmental legislation so that the right of the people to a healthy environment can be actively pursued.

Conclusion

A saying people quote nowadays runs “A calamity is an opportunity.” Along the same vein, there are those who say the Covid-19 pandemic is a “once in a generation chance to set things straight.” So, why not set out simply and clearly how to effectively dispose of medical waste in an environmentally sound manner?

But really, in actual practice, where does our medical waste go?



PH posts 370 new Covid-19 recoveries, total reaches 387.6K

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz November 27, 2020, 5:40 pm



MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) on Friday reported 370 new recoveries from the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), bringing the country's total to 387,617 or 91 percent of all Covid-19 cases.

In its daily Covid-19 bulletin, the DOH reported 1,631 new cases, with active cases now at 30,047 or 7.1 percent of the country's total cases.

Quezon City reported the highest number of new cases with 116, followed by Rizal with 101, Davao City with 95, Laguna with 89, and the City of Manila with 65.

Of the active cases, it said 84.3 percent were showing mild symptoms, followed by the asymptomatic at 8.3 percent, those in critical condition at 4.7 percent, those with severe symptoms at 2.5 percent, and those with moderate symptoms at 0.26 percent.

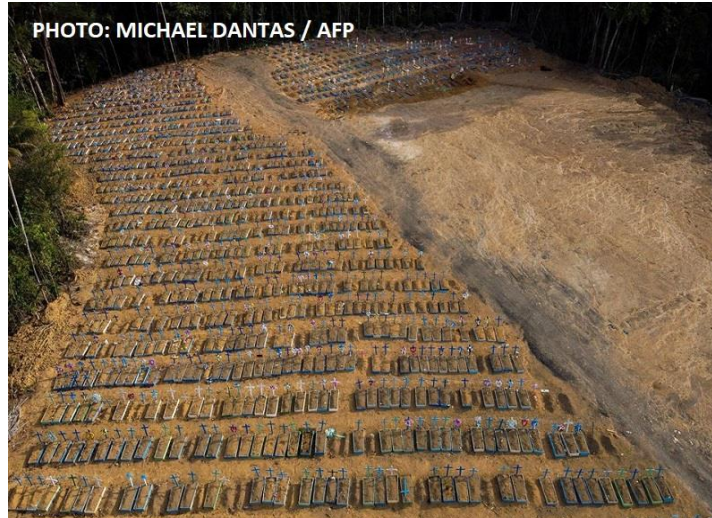
An additional 46 deaths were also reported, bringing the country's death toll to 8,255 or 1.29 percent of the country's total Covid-19 cases.

To date, 60 percent of the country's 1,900 beds at intensive care units are available, 61 percent of 13,500 isolation beds unoccupied, 70 percent of 5,900 ward beds unoccupied, and 81 percent of 2,000 ventilators are not in use. *(PNA)*



Nasawi sa buong mundo dahil sa COVID-19 nadagdagan ng mahigit 10,000 pa

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo November 27, 2020 - 12:12 PM



Umabot na sa 1,437,835 ang bilang ng mga nasawi sa COVID-19 sa buong mundo.

Sa huling datos na nakalap ng Radyo INQUIRER, pinakamaraming bilang ng nasawi sa US na umabot na sa 269,520.

Umabot naman na sa mahigit 171,000 ang bilang ng mga nasawi sa Brazil.

Ang death toll sa India ay mahigit 135,700 na.

Habang ang death toll sa Mexico ay umabot na sa mahigit 104,000 na.

Umabot naman na sa mahigit 42.3 million na ang bilang ng mga naka-recover na sa sakit.

Habang nasa mahigit 17.4 million pa ang aktibong kaso.

Narito ang bilang ng mga nasawi sa iba't ibang ng mga bansa:

USA – 269,555

Brazil – 171,497

India – 135,752

Mexico – 104,242

UK – 57,031

Italy – 52,850

France – 50,957

Iran – 46,689

Spain – 44,374

Argentina – 37,941

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/277358/nasawi-sa-buong-mundo-dahil-sa-covid-19-nadagdagan-ng-mahigit-10000-pa-4#ixzz6f25SHjUI>

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River in Albay overflows due to rains

Published November 28, 2020 2:22am



Non-stop rains caused a river in Malilipot, Albay to overflow slowing down movement of vehicles passing along the bridge, GMA's "Saksi" reported on Friday.

The province of Albay was recently battered by typhoons Rolly and Ulysses, which displaced thousands of families and destroyed properties and farm lands.

In Casiguran, Aurora, several houses experienced flooding also due to the downpour.

A low pressure area is causing the heavy rains in several areas in Luzon, state weather bureau PAGASA earlier said.—LDF, GMA News



PAGASA open to dam protocol updating

By Catherine Teves November 27, 2020, 7:23 pm



MANILA – The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) sees the need to review and update protocols governing dam operations nationwide.

Reviewing and updating the protocols -- through the dam oversight committee which government plans to create -- will make these attuned to the times, noted PAGASA Administrator Dr. Vicente Malano.

"Possibly with that committee, we can revisit the protocols, fix these and have harmony in terms of operating dams," he also said Friday during an online PAGASA forum.

Fixing the protocols must include defining agencies' roles in dam management, he said.

He also cited the need to assess the water-carrying capacity of dams and conditions in such facilities' in downstream areas as these most likely changed over the years.

Major flooding not seen in decades ravaged Region II (Cagayan Valley) this month when Typhoon Ulysses (Vamco) struck, raising concern about the management of Magat Dam.

Ulysses' rain helped increase Magat's water but its level rose, prompting the dam to release excess water.

According to experts, the excess water's release contributed to the flooding in Region II.

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) assured it followed the protocol in releasing Magat's water.

At a House committee meeting this week, NIA Administrator Ricardo Visaya said that then-president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo set in 2006 the policy about the release of water from Magat Dam.



PAGASA open to dam protocol updating

He noted that such a policy designated PAGASA as the agency that will decide on the release of Magat water.

The policy provides that PAGASA's decision will be based on its weather forecast to ensure water from Magat is within the absorptive capacity of the Cagayan River, he continued.

The Cagayan River is Region II's main waterway, which overflowed as Ulysses wreaked havoc, flooding communities there.

Malano hopes reviewing and updating protocols for dams will clarify and rationalize PAGASA's role in the management of these facilities.

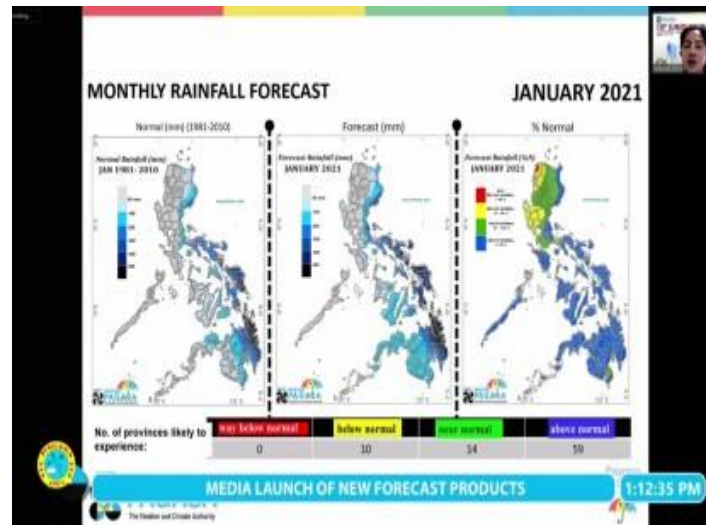
The government in 2012 spearheaded revisiting of dam protocols but PAGASA, National Power Corporation (Napocor), and the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) were the only agencies that signed the document on this, he noted.

Dam protocols of NIA and PAGASA at present are still based on the directive of Mrs. Arroyo, he added. *(PNA)*



More rains likely across PH 'til May 2021 as La Niña strengthens

By Ma. Cristina Arayata November 27, 2020, 7:20 pm



(Screenshot taken from PAGASA's Facebook page)

MANILA – The country may expect more rain until early next year due to the further strengthening of La Niña, according to Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) climate monitoring chief, Analiza Solis on Friday.

The further strengthening of La Niña from December 2020 to January 2021 may likely continue until May, she said, adding that the eastern part of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao are most likely to experience rains.

"There is an increased likelihood of above-normal rainfall conditions that could lead to adverse impacts such as heavy rainfall, floods, landslides in highly vulnerable areas," Solis noted.

The weather bureau forecast a few tropical cyclones that may hit or develop in the country in the next months.

"There may be no typhoons, but the northeast monsoon will also trigger rains," she said.

Based on Solis' presentation, PAGASA is expecting one or two tropical cyclones in December 2020, and zero or at least one tropical cyclone each month from January to May 2021.

Chief of PAGASA's weather division, Esperanza Cayanan, said PAGASA has forecast two low pressure areas (LPA) to form near or within the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) from November 26 to December 2.

These LPAs, Cayanan said, have a low chance to develop into a tropical cyclone.

"The first LPA will directly exit PAR after formation, while the second LPA will likely move towards the Philippine landmass. So there is no active tropical cyclone threat during this forecast period," she said.



More rains likely across PH 'til May 2021 as La Niña strengthens

From December 3 to December 9, Cayanan said the LPA is still unlikely to develop into a tropical cyclone and is forecast to traverse the Visayas - southern Luzon area.

"Another LPA may form in the Western Pacific. It may enter PAR, but less likely to develop into a tropical cyclone," she said.

The third LPA may make landfall in Samar - southern Luzon area and may traverse the Visayas while moving towards the West Philippine Sea.

While there is no tropical cyclone threat in the forecast period, Cayanan noted that changes in the forecast will be closely monitored. (*PNA*)



UN body says drought to worsen poverty

November 27, 2020 | 7:34 pm



Drought threatens food security and poverty in Southeast Asian countries including the Philippines because it damages agricultural land and hurts the incomes of small farmers the most, according to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Drought in much of Southeast Asia has been a recurring natural hazard and is expected to worsen in the coming years, with the poorest communities expected to suffer more, ESCAP said in a report published on Friday.

It noted that from 2015 to 2020, the region experienced the most severe droughts in decades that affected more than 210 million people at some point.

The Philippines was among the countries that posted the highest overall drought risks — a combination of exposure, vulnerability and the magnitude of the hazard — in October 2015 and in February this year.

“Projected changes in drought risk threaten to further exacerbate food insecurity by damaging agricultural land, planted crops and livestock health, and delaying planting seasons,” according to the report.

“These challenges are particularly disruptive for small-scale farmers, who have less capacity to cope with even small economic shocks, compared with large-scale commercial farming,” it added.

Because water is scarce during the drought season, small farmers take longer to collect water and have less time for other productive activities, ESCAP said. “This tempers the availability of food produced, that could push prices up, as well as disrupt agricultural livelihoods which would lead to lower revenues for the farmers.”

It said southern Philippines is among areas in the region suffering the most from frequent drought, along with Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia.

The most affected region in the country in terms of food security is Mindanao, which incurred damage worth more than \$6.73 million to 5,730 hectares of rice and 15,416 hectares of corn.



UN body says drought to worsen poverty

“Worst affected were the poorest farmers, who had little savings to cope due to their exposure to repeated armed conflict and natural hazard,” ESCAP said.

In some provinces, more than 70% of farmers reported damage to crops and food shortages, with more than 60% of households forced to sell their assets, it added.

It found that some areas in the Philippines marked as drought hotspots also reported high poverty rates. These include the regions of Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao and Caraga.

Aside from its impact on health and livelihoods, disruptions caused by droughts to the agriculture sector result in losses to economic output.

“Food security across Southeast Asia is threatened both by the ongoing drought and the COVID-19 pandemic,” ESCAP said. “The two disasters are converging at a critical time in agricultural crop calendars, during the harvesting and planting seasons.”

ESCAP said governments should start developing national drought plans to mitigate its impact. “A strategic approach to drought risk management must be a coherent effort across the whole of society, and must include long term, proactive measures that incorporate climate change projections to mitigate intensifying drought risk,” it said. — **Beatrice M. Laforga**



NDRRMC holds nationwide simultaneous earthquake drill online

Published November 27, 2020 5:52pm
By MA. ANGELICA GARCIA, GMA News

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) on Friday held the 4th nationwide simultaneous earthquake drill online amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Rida Reyes' report on Balitanghali, the earthquake drill, which was conducted by the NDRRMC through the Office of Civil Defense, was meant to instill preparedness among the public amid the health crisis.

The drill began with the pressing of a button to signal the duck, cover and hold procedure.

Several government agencies and local government units participated in the earthquake drill.

The NDRRMC said the threat of earthquakes remained present despite the national health emergency. -NB, GMA News

Senate OKs proposed P4.506 trillion 2021 national budget

By Senate PRIBPublished on November 27, 2020

PASAY CITY, Nov. 27 -- The Senate with 22 affirmative votes, no negative and no abstention, passed on third and final reading the proposed P4.506 trillion national budget.

During its hybrid plenary session Thursday, November 26, 2020, the Senate approved House Bill No. 7727 or the General Appropriations Act of 2021, which includes funding to strengthen government's COVID- 19 response, provide assistance to victims of calamities, and support economic recovery.

Sen. Sonny Angara, chairman of the Committee on Finance, acknowledged the contribution of his colleagues in shaping the final version of the budget bill.



The Senate approved House Bill No. 7727 or the General Appropriations Act of 2021, which includes funding to strengthen government's COVID- 19 response, provide assistance to victims of calamities, and support economic recovery.

Sen. Sonny Angara, chairman of the Committee on Finance, acknowledged the contribution of his colleagues in shaping the final version of the budget bill. Photo fom Senate PRIB.

“I thank the leadership, our colleagues, of course, our staff for eventhough we were recently bombarded with serious challenges including typhoons, floods, power outages, connectivity problems, and of course, the existing global pandemic, the Senate was still able to scrutinize the 2021 general appropriations bill and stay on schedule towards its timely enactment,” Angara said.

The Senate also designated Senators Sonny Angara, Pia S. Cayetano, Cynthia A. Villar, Panfilo M. Lacson Joel Villanueva, Win Gatchalian, Richard J. Gordon, Christopher Lawrence T. Go, Imee R. Marcos, Risa Hontiveros, Grace Poe and Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan to form the Senate panel in the bicameral conference committee with Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao, Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay and Ramon Bong Revilla Jr. as alternates.



Senate OKs proposed P4.506 trillion 2021 national budget

Under the Senate version of the budget bill, P 8 billion under the Department of Health-Office of the Secretary and P54 billion under unprogrammed appropriation were set aside for the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines, mass immunization, and for the storage, transportation and distribution of vaccines. The budget of the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine was also increased.

Also, a significant increase went to the allocation for DOH regional hospitals and other healthcare institutions particularly to allow them to increase their bed capacity and to upgrade equipment and facilities.

Allocation for calamities and disaster response was also augmented with the funding for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund at P21 billion.

The Senate also increased teachers' allowance from P3,500 to P5,000.

“The amendments we propose demonstrate that we are doubling down on our commitment to respond more effectively to the pandemic, our motivation to help more of our people struck by calamity and our single-minded focus on restarting the economy.

Ultimately, what we have is an improved version, where funds are poured into the programs, activities and projects that deserve it the most,” Angara said. (Senate PRIB)



Higaonon, Manobo tribes to benefit from Mt. Mayapay road project

Published November 27, 2020, 8:38 AM

by [Mike Crismundo](#)

BUTUAN CITY – The Higaonon and Manobo tribes are going to benefit the most from a road completed by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in the famed Mount Mayapay here.



Shown in photo is the completed road going to the Mount Mayapay in Butuan City, Agusan del Norte. (DPWH 13 via Mike U. Crismundo/Manila Bulletin)

The tribes are expected to boost their agriculture productivity, as well as the area's tourism potential, as the newly paved 1.36-kilometer, two lane road from the junction of Buenavista-Bunaguit Road in Agusan del Norte leading to the foot of Mt. Mayapay offers a safer, faster and scenic route for travelers.

“When you reach the top of the mountain, you can see the beautiful city of Butuan that faces the Butuan Bay, a good for view of our tourists,” DPWH 13 Regional Director Engr. Pol M. Delos Santo told The Manila Bulletin on Wednesday.

The first phase of the road improvement project involves concreting of 607.5 meters beginning at NRJ Buenavista-Bunaguit Road.

After its completion in January 2020, construction works on the remaining 752.5 meters resumed in February, and was completed recently.

“Significantly, local residents who mostly belonged to the Higaonon and Manobo tribes living in Mt. Mayapay as their ancestral domain, now have a more convenient access to basic government services and commodities giving them an opportunity for economic development and an improved way of life,” DPWH Secretary Mark Villar also said.

With an allocation of P29.3 million, the road project started on August 2019 under the Tourism Road Infrastructure Program with the Department of Tourism (DOT) to improve access and connectivity to tourism sites.



Higaonon, Manobo tribes to benefit from Mt. Mayapay road project

Delos Santos said that the completed project greatly benefits farmers in the area relying on corn, chicken, and swine production for their livelihood.

In another development, the DPWH is undertaking the construction of a flood control dike that will protect the long stretch of a tertiary road leading to the town proper of Magallanes, in Agusan Del Norte.

Delos Santos said the construction of flood control infrastructure has always been one of the priority projects considered by Villar in areas that were more susceptible to overflowing of river and flooding.

Last year, DPWH Agusan del Norte District Engineering Office (DEO) implemented the construction of a 455-linear meter dike with concrete revetment along Pandanon-Magallanes Road, completed last May 2020, and 120.4 linear meters continued this year under the Regular Infrastructure Program.

In addition, another concrete dike with a length of 400.3 linear meters is being constructed across the 2019 dike project not only to protect the road from scouring due to high rise of water and strong river current, but most importantly protecting the residents living nearby.

The flood control project is now under close supervision of Agusan del Norte DEO District Engineer Edmund V. Opinion.

The town of Magallanes in Agusan del Norte is surrounded with mountains and bounded by the two rivers, Baug and Agusan River.

The elevation of the area is below sea level, the town center is in the river delta, and the people living along the coastal areas are always endangered by the threats of rising water from the rivers and flashfloods during heavy rains and typhoons.

The ongoing project is targeted to be fully completed by February 2021.



PARUSANG BITAY IBALIK NA



November 27, 2020 @ 12:40 PM 18 hours ago

HINDI inaalís ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang parusang bitay bilang sandata laban sa mga gumagawa ng mga matitinding krimen, kabilang na ang droga at korapsyon.

At maya't maya, habilin niya sa mga sandatahang lakas ng pamahalaan gaya ng mga pulis, militar, jailguard, miyembro ng National Bureau of Investigation at iba pa na kung nakataya na ang buhay ng mga ito sa kanilang pagpapatupad ng tungkulin sa batas, ito ang panahon na gumamit sila ng pamatay na aksyon.

“Huwag kayong matakot na pumatay pero dapat naaayon sa batas,” malinaw niyang paliwanag at isa sa pinakapanahon ng ganitong aksyon kung nasa panganib na ang buhay ng mga alagad ng batas.

Ito'y lalo na sa mga kasong droga na talaga namang puno ng karahasan at pagpatay, aminin man o hindi ng mga human rights group.

Kung iisipin nga naman, may mga pagpatay, maging ng mga ordinaryong mamamayan batay sa katulad na mga ligal na batayan.

‘Yun bang === pagtatanggol ng sarili, pagtatanggol ng kamag-anak at pagtatanggol ng ibang tao na kamatayan ang sasapitin ang kanilang ipinagtanggol kung hindi nila mapatay ang papatay sa kanila.

BITAY BILANG PARUSA AT KATARUNGAN

Bukod sa droga at krimen, may iba pang krimen gaya ng mga malakihang pagnanakaw sa kaban ng bayan o pagsasamantala sa iba na kung tawagin ay pandarambong o plunder.

Nagaganap ang plunder kung aabot at mahigit sa P50 milyon ang pagnanakaw sa kaban ng bayan o pagsasamantala sa iba.



PARUSANG BITAY IBALIK NA

Nagbubunga ang pandarambong ng pagkakait ng buhay at lumilikha ng krimen mula sa mga nagugutom, ng paglala hanggang kamatayan sa mga maysakit, ng pagbagsak ng ekonomiya ng buong bayan at marami pang iba.

Ang Republic Act 7080 ang batas sa plunder at inamyendahan ito ng RA 7659 na nagsasabing hindi P75M ang halaga ng pagnanakaw at pagsasamantala kundi P50M at may parusang reclusion perpetua o 20 taon at 1 araw na pagkakulong hanggang 40 taon hanggang kamatayan.

Itong RA 7659, mga Bro, ang nasabing mga parusa sa iba't ibang karima-rimarim na krimen at kabilang dito ang droga at pandarambong.

Ipinasa ang mga batas hindi lang bilang parusa sa mga karima-rimarim na krimen kundi bilang isang anyo ng katarungan at pamigil sa krimen.

Lamang, ang parusang kamatayan ay sinibak noong panahon ni ex-Pang. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo sa pamamagitan ng RA 9346.

Pinanatili na lamang ng RA 9346 ang mga parusang reclusion perpetua at life imprisonment o habambuhay na pagkakakulong bilang pinakamalupit na parusa sa kahit anong karumal-dumal na krimen, maging droga man o pandarambong.

TULOY ANG LIGAYA

Dahil sa pagkakasibak ng parusang bitay na lethal injection ang paraan, nagtuloy-tuloy ang ligaya ng mga druglord at mandarambong hanggang ngayon.

Kaya naman, kahit nakakulong na ang mga druglord, tuloy ang kanilang operasyon gaya sa Bilibid.

Tuloy rin ang operasyon ng mga korap sa Kongreso na ngayo'y pumapalag sa akusasyong ng Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission.

Pumapalag din ang iba pang mga korap sa ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan gaya ng mga nasa PhilHealth at iba pa.

Upang masawata ang lahat ng ito, nariryan ang pagsusulong ni Pang. Duterte ng parusang bitay at muling binanggit niya ito nitong pinakahuling State of the Nation Address niya.

Ngayon naman, hindi ba kayo magtaka kung bakit hindi inaaksyunan ng nakararami sa Kongreso, sa Senado at Kamara ang panukalang ito?

Meron naman silang interes pero laban lang sa mga sangkot sa droga subalit nang may maglakad na para isama ang pandarambong, nagsitahimik ang higit na nakararami.

Ano sa palagay ninyo ang dahilan ng mga senador at kongresista sa pagharang sa panukalang parusang bitay?



PARUSANG BITAY IBALIK NA

GOBYERNO, KRIMINAL TITINO

Ang pantay at mabilis na paggawad ng katarungan sa ilalim ng batas sa bitay ay makapagpapatino mismo sa gobyerno at maging sa mga ordinaryong taong utak-kriminal sa linya ng sinasabing heinous crimes, kasama na ang droga at pandarambong.

Kapag titino ang gobyerno, maipatutupad nito nang tunay ang tadhana ng Konstitusyon na paglilingkod at pagtatanggol sa taumbayan ang pangunahing tungkulin ng pamahalaan.

Lilikha naman ng takot sa kamatayan ang sinomang mandarambong, druglord at iba pang mahahagip ng parusang bitay at mabisa itong pamigil sa paggawa ng mga matitinding krimen.

Hindi na kasi sila mag-e-enjoy habambuhay sa Bilibid at ipagpatuloy ang kanilang paggawa ng krimen kahit sila'y nakakulong.

Bago isawsaw naman ng mga kriminal ang kanilang kamay sa krimen na sakop ng parusang bitay, mag-iisip muna sila kung gagawin nila iyon o hindi.

WALANG BAHID NA KATARUNGAN

Upang maging epektibo ang parusang ito, dapat mabilis ang paglilitis at paggagawad nito at hindi aabutin nang siyam-siyam.

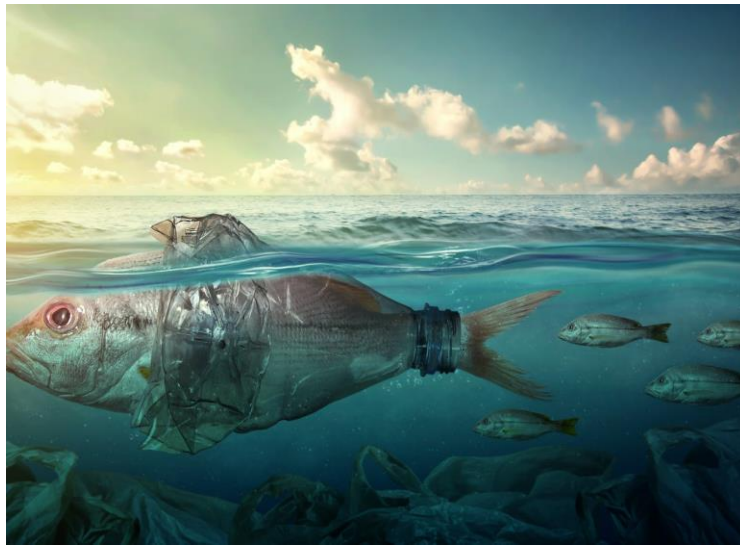
Gayunman, dapat talagang mapatunayang wala ni katiting na pagdududa ang desisyon ng korte bago igawad ang parusa at katarungan.

Ang mga gumagawa ng mga hokus-pokus o pambababoy sa anomang anyo o sa anomang antas ukol dito mula sa pagbibintang, pag-aaresto at paglilitis hanggang sa paggagawad at pagpapatupad ng parusa ay dapat ding mapatawan ng agaran at karampatang parusa.

Dito magmumula ang tunay na pagmamalasakit sa pagitan ng mga mamamayan at pamahalaan na magtitiyak ng pagbabago at pag-unlad ng buong bayan.

Why clean up efforts won't solve the plastic pollution crisis in the world's seas

A model simulating a device touted to clear plastic from the 'Great Pacific garbage patch' shows that it would collect much less than 1 per cent of the ocean's plastic pollution by 2150.



An artist's rendition of fish swimming in plastic litter in an ocean. Image: [chaiyapruerk](#), [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

By **Isabella Backman**, [Mongabay.com](#)

Nov. 27, 2020

[The Ocean Cleanup](#) is a highly touted nonprofit with the ambitious goal of cleaning up 90 percent of the ocean's plastic. In reality, the initiative's impact on the world's floating debris would be minimal, researchers reported recently in [Science of the Total Environment](#).

"I think the general public was believing that we had a solution to the plastic problem," said Sönke Hohn, a marine biologist at the Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research in Bremen, Germany, at the time of the study and lead author. "Our research showed that we are far away from having solved this problem if we don't keep changing our behaviour."



Why clean up efforts won't solve the plastic pollution crisis in the world's seas

Will this solar-powered device clean the world's most polluted rivers?

Each year, 5 million to 13 million metric tonnes (11 billion to 28 billion pounds) of plastic wash into the ocean. The amount is expected to triple over the next century. Not only does this pose a danger to marine life, which can get entangled in plastic or ingest it, but it's also a risk to human health through eating contaminated seafood.

Our message is not that it's useless to clean it up. Cleaning up our mess, which we have to clean, is not going to be easy, is not going to be fast, and is not going to be cheap.

Agostino Merico, physicist, Leibniz Centre

The Ocean Cleanup is one of the most prominent initiatives for confronting this rapidly growing ocean waste. Its cleanup device, according to marine biogeochemist Matthias Egger from the nonprofit, works like a "giant Pac-Man," sweeping up the debris using a screen attached to a floating barrier. The organisation claims that it can use this device to clear the Great Pacific garbage patch—a vast gyre of plastic litter—of half its trash in five years.

To understand if the device could meet this goal, Hohn and his colleagues developed a mathematical model to simulate scooping plastic from the ocean. The team studied several scenarios: business as usual with no manual removal; one cleanup device; and a flotilla of 200 cleanup devices.

Results showed that one device would only remove a small fraction of 1 per cent of the plastic by 2150. Even with 200 cleanup devices spread around the ocean working continuously for 120 years, the impact was still extremely modest. The model was the first to quantify the device's ability to remove accumulated plastic from the ocean.

"The Ocean Cleanup is not going to solve the actual problem," said Christine Figgner, a marine conservation biologist at the Costa Rican Alliance for Sea Turtle Conservation and Science, who was not involved in the study. "We need to solve the problem from all possible angles.

However, Egger disputes the study's methods. Because the model assumes that plastic is spread evenly across the ocean, he believes Hohn's team has underestimated the capability of the device.

"There are ocean garbage patches, which we focus on, and concentrations [of debris] there are up to 10,000 times higher than in surrounding waters," Egger told Mongabay. The Great Pacific garbage patch, he explained, only covers about 0.4 per cent of the total ocean's surface, but it may contain up to 30 to 50 per cent of the world's marine plastic.

Nevertheless, scientists on both sides agreed that removing the debris is only part of the solution. Figgner, a vocal ocean advocate, sparked a global anti-straw movement in 2015 after a video went viral of her team removing a plastic straw from the nose of a sea turtle.

"We need to realise that corporations are mainly responsible for our plastic tides," Figgner said. "If we stop buying from certain corporations and products, I think we will see more and more alternatives, maybe even from the same companies, because they will see that people are demanding something else."



Why clean up efforts won't solve the plastic pollution crisis in the world's seas

Agostino Merico, a physicist also at the Leibniz Centre and senior author of the study, stressed that the team's objective was not to dismiss the efforts of the Ocean Cleanup.

"Our message is not that it's useless to clean it up," Merico told Mongabay. "Cleaning up our mess, which we have to clean, is not going to be easy, is not going to be fast, and is not going to be cheap."

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Climate crisis ‘nowhere near the finish line’



Published 6 hours ago
on November 28, 2020 01:00 AM
By [TDT @tribuneph](#)



Young girls wait by a shallow well during a humanitarian mission in drought-affected Garbahaarey, a town in southern Somalia. / Photograph courtesy of UN

Pointing to its “pioneering legislation and policies,” the United Nations (UN) chief hailed the 27-member European Union (EU) as a “a leader on climate action” that had shown that it was possible to cut emissions while achieving economic growth.

Secretary-General António Guterres applauded the bloc’s climate action in a virtual address to the European Council on Foreign Relations, while emphasizing that “we are still nowhere near the finish line... and still running behind in the race against time.”

The UN chief began on an upbeat note, informing that by early 2021, states responsible for more than 65 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions and more than 70 percent of the world economy will have made “ambitious commitments to carbon neutrality.”

“The European Union, Japan and the Republic of Korea have pledged carbon neutrality by 2050, along with more than 110 other countries,” he elaborated. “China says it will do so before 2060.”

However, the world’s top diplomat stressed the need for “every country, city, financial institution and company” to adopt plans for transitioning to net zero emissions by 2050.

And he called for them to be ready before November 2021, when the next UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) is scheduled to be held in Scotland, and highlighted the importance of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) required under the 2015 Paris Agreement and long-term strategies towards carbon neutrality.

He maintained that the G20 wealthiest nations, which are responsible for more than 80 percent of climate pollution, must show the way and recognized the EU as leading on net zero emissions within the group.



Climate crisis ‘nowhere near the finish line’

“I urge you to continue to lead with concrete and ambitious near-term commitments,” said the UN chief, advocating for EU members NDC to reflect at least a 55 percent emission reduction by 2030.

He said that the Climate Ambition Summit, which the UN is co-hosting with the United Kingdom and France on the five-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement next month, represents “a clear opportunity” for the EU to present its more ambitious climate plan.

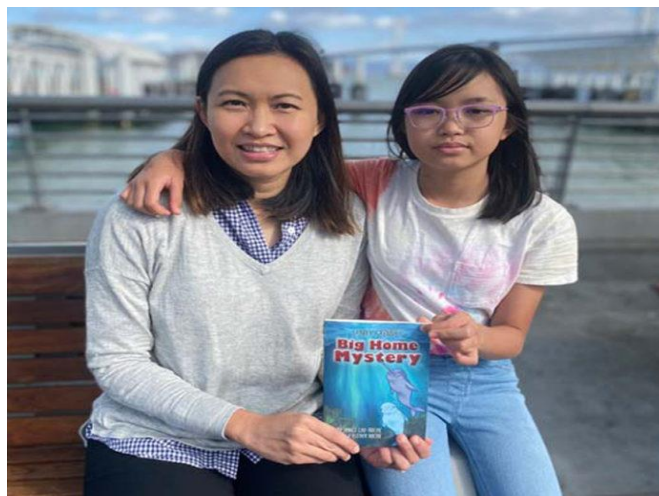
“Enhanced ambition from the G20 also means aligning economic plans and COVID-19 recovery measures with the Sustainable Development Goals,” he added. “It is essential that the European Union accelerates its transition toward clean energy.”



Mom, daughter tandem tackle climate change through their book

By [Rizal Raoul Reyes](#)

November 28, 2020



Janice Lao-Noche and daughter Esther

ENVIRONMENTAL scientist and development economist Janice Lao-Noche, with her 10-year-old daughter Esther, will hold an online launch on November 29, Sunday, of *Sparky & Benny and the Big Home Mystery*, a book about climate change seen through the eyes of two young whales who are finding out they are slowly losing their homes.

Janice said the book has a very personal touch for children, parents and educators as it explains what climate change is all about, and why it is personal to everyone. Moreover, it is also about a story of hope, providing children a template on ways they can help make a real difference on climate change. The book is published by US-based Wise Ink.

“This book is our love letter to nature and to the world, because real love means telling them the truth—but also showing them what is possible,” Janice said. “[It] ends with hope, that if we take action today and do it together, we can solve the greatest threat we face as humanity: climate change.”

Experts around the world have given positive reviews about the book:

Dr. Sally Uren, CEO, Forum for the Future (United Kingdom): “It’s just brilliant...What is most wonderful about this book is...it shows us that while our humanity has created this crisis, it will be our humanity that helps solve it.”

Dr. Elondra Napper, science educator (United States): “A powerful, practically written book that will change the way you think about climate change...”

Carola Wijdoogen, cofounder of Sustainability University Foundation (Netherlands): “A unique and fun book that addresses the most important part of the problem [and solution!]: The human element.”



Mom, daughter tandem tackle climate change through their book

Joanna Hotung, director of KG Group (Hong Kong): “Sensitive, compelling story of two sea friends incorporates adventure, bravery, and teamwork to deliver a powerful tale featuring adults short of a plan, and kids striving to end the impending destruction of their ocean home.”

Lynn Pinugu, CEO, She Talks Asia (Philippines): “Equally informative and heartwarming....May this moving story compel every reader to do their part.”

Anna Oposa of Save Philippine Seas: “The book blends reality and fantasy: two whales on a journey to learn about the impacts of climate change on their home. It’s not every day that we read about [ways] climate change affects our oceans; it’s a story that needs to be told more. With this book, children and youth can learn to make small yet meaningful lifestyle changes, and inspire their folks to do the same.”

A multi-awarded sustainability expert, Janice has won international acclaim for her work in sustainability. This includes one at the age of 30, when she codeveloped a mathematical and economic model for reducing carbon emissions in the international aviation sector.

Esther, a sixth grader, student-athlete and young coder, wants to be a marine veterinarian when she grows up.