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# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



## 2 die, 1 hurt in anti-illegal logging operations in Aurora, N. Samar; Cimatu condemns violence vs. defenders

Published September 29, 2020, 6:41 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu condemned two separate violent acts against a forester and policemen who were conducting operations against illegal logging activities in Aurora and Northern Samar.



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu (RTVM / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

“We vehemently denounce any kind of violent acts inflicted on our defenders of the environment, especially at a time when we are all dealing with an unprecedented public health crisis,” Cimatu said in a statement on Tuesday.

Cimatu is seeking swift justice for Forest Management Specialist II Danilo Pascasio, who is currently fighting for his life after being brutally attacked by an illegal logging suspect in Aurora province, as well as patrolmen Jessie Golondrina and Edwin Fernando Velarde, who both died while conducting an operation against three suspected timber poachers in Northern Samar.

Both incidents took place last Sept. 27 and 26 respectively.

Pascasio was shot several times in front of his house at Barangay Calabuanan in Baler town by a suspect identified as Dennis Ruzol.

Ruzol was arrested on Sept. 24, three days before the incident, for violating the country’s forestry law but managed to post bail on the same day.

Pascasio sustained nine bullet wounds, one of the bullets pierced in his liver and pancreas.

He immediately underwent an operation to remove the bullets from his body and is currently at the intensive care unit of a hospital in Cabanatuan City.

“To assault an environmental worker, who is just doing his job amid this COVID-19 pandemic, is utterly inhumane and unjust,” Cimatu said.

The police are now conducting manhunt operations against Ruzol.

In a report received by the DENR, according to Aurora Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Alfredo Collado, Pascasio played a major role in 11 anti-illegal timber poaching operations from June 6 to Sept. 24.

One operation resulted in the arrest and filing of charges against Ruzol and two others, and confiscation of 422 pieces or 4,865 board feet of illegally manufactured lumber, one elf truck, one van, two chainsaws, and a tricycle.



Meanwhile, Golondrina and Velarde were killed in a gunfight while securing a Masbate-bound pump boat carrying over 11,000 board feet of undocumented *lauan* timber they recovered from suspected illegal loggers in the coastal town of San Isidro in Northern Samar.

DENR-Eastern Visayas Regional Executive Director Tirso Parian said the two policemen were part of the composite team put together by the agency as part of its intensified campaign against illegal loggers in the area.

Parian said the incident was a result of an 11-day operation, which started on Sept. 17, in response to reports from concerned citizens about the shipment of unlawful forest products bound for Masbate and the presence of an illegal boat yard at Barangay Palanit.

Also in May, forester Fernando Polenio was shot dead by an unidentified assailant in Palo town in Leyte, while doing field work amid the coronavirus pandemic.

In 2019, four environmental workers were also killed while performing their duties.

Cimatu has been pushing for the creation of an Enforcement Bureau under the DENR to be more effective in stopping environmental crimes, such as illegal logging and smuggling of wildlife species.



## DENR slams violence against forest workers

posted September 29, 2020 at 11:10 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Tuesday denounced the violence committed against a forester and two police officers involved in anti-illegal logging operations in the provinces of Aurora and Northern Samar.

“We vehemently denounce any kind of violent acts inflicted on our defenders of the environment, especially at a time when we are all dealing with an unprecedented public health crisis,” Secretary Roy Cimatu said.

He said he wants swift justice for forest management specialist II Danilo Pascasio, who is now fighting for his life after being brutally attacked by an illegal logging suspect in Aurora, and Patrolmen Jessie Golondrina and Edwin Fernando Velarde, who both died while conducting an operation against three suspected timber poachers in Northern Samar.

Both incidents took place on Sept. 27.

Pascasio was repeatedly shot in front of his house in Barangay Calabuanan in Baler town by a certain Dennis Ruzol.

The suspect was arrested on Sept. 24 for violating the forestry law. He posted bail on the same day.

“To assault an environmental worker, who is just doing his job amid this coronavirus 2019 pandemic, is utterly inhumane and unjust,” Cimatu said.

Police are now conducting a manhunt operation against Ruzol.

According to Aurora provincial environment and natural resources officer Alfredo Collado, Pascasio played a major role in 11 anti-illegal timber poaching operations from June 6 to Sept. 24.

One operation resulted in the arrest and filing of charges against Ruzol and two others, and the confiscation of 422 pieces or 4,865 board feet of illegally manufactured lumber, one elf truck, one Kia Besta van, two chainsaws and a tricycle.

Golondrina and Velarde were killed in a gunfight while securing a Masbate-bound pump boat carrying over 11,000 board feet of undocumented ‘lauan’ timber they recovered from suspected illegal loggers in the coastal town of San Isidro in Northern Samar.

The deaths of forest and environmental workers prompted Cimatu to call for the immediate passage of a legislative measure creating the DENR Enforcement Bureau.



# DENR: Imported trash returned to South Korea, Misamis dumping ground cleared of toxic materials

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

September 29, 2020

The Philippines successfully shipped back around 6,400 metric tons of imported trash to South Korea, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Misamis Oriental where some of the mixed wastes were dumped has been cleared of toxic materials, he said, commending the Bureau of Customs in Region 10 for fast-tracking the effort.

“The BOC-10 deserves all the credit for acting swiftly and decisively on the matter—from discovering the garbage shipment in 2018 to sending it back completely to its country of origin in just two years,” DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda said in a statement.

“With the successful return of the garbage shipment to South Korea, Filipinos were spared from the health and environmental hazards posed by the smuggled waste and we have the BOC-10 to thank for that,” he added.

Antiporda issued the statement after receiving a memo from BOC-10 District Collector John Simon who confirmed that the process of returning the Korean waste had been completed last August 4.

Simon also reported that the 4.5-hectare area where around 5,000 metric tons of Korean garbage was previously dumped and buried is already cleared of the smuggled waste.

Antiporda commended Simon and his collection district for working tirelessly to ensure that the trash is shipped back to South Korea even amid the quarantine restrictions imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19.

“Despite COVID-19, the hardworking and dedicated BOC-10 district collector was able to facilitate the return of the smuggled waste and sent a message to the world that the Philippines is not a dumping ground of hazardous waste from other countries,” Antiporda said.

BOC-10 records showed the illegal waste imports were successfully returned to South Korea in six batches since January 2019.

It will be recalled that the garbage shipment was discovered by Simon’s office at the Mindanao Container Terminal (MCT) in 2018.



The shipment was consigned to South Korean company Verde Soko II Industrial Corp., which operates a waste recycling facility within the Phividec Industrial Estate in Tagoloan town.

At least three Korean nationals led by a certain Chul Soo Chu alias Charles Cho had been charged with violation of Republic Act (RA) 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act, and RA 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

In fact, the Misamis Oriental Regional Trial Court had already issued an arrest order against Cho and his co-accused, but they remain at large until now.

Records showed that a total of 321 containers filled with Korean waste arrived at the MCT between July and October 2018.

Upon inspection by the DENR, the shipment contained used dextrose tubes, used diapers, batteries, bulbs, and electronic equipment.

The agency also said the shipment was not covered by any DENR-issued importation clearance. The consignee, Verde Soko, was not even registered as an importer of recyclable materials, it added.

Under the DENR policy, registered importers are required to secure the necessary import clearances from the DENR at least 30 days before the actual importation.



## Basura ng Korea naibalik na; BOC-10 pinuri ng DENR



September 29, 2020 @ 5:34 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Pinapurihan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang Collection District 10 ng Bureau of Custom dahil sa matagumpay na pagpapabalik ng may 6,400 metric tons ng pinaghalong basura na stranded sa lalawigan ng Misamis Oriental, sa pinagmulan nito sa South Korea.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda, karapat-dapat lang na bigyan ng kredito ang BOC-10 sa mabilis na pag-aksyon nito mula sa pagkakatuksa sa garbage shipment noong 2018 hanggang sa pagbabalik nito sa South Korea sa loob lang ng dalawang taon.

Sinabi ni Antiporda na dahil sa matagumpay na pagkakabalik ng garbage shipment sa South Korea, nailayo ang mga Filipino sa panganib sa kalusugan at kapaligiran na dulot ng smuggled waste.

Nagpalabas ng pahayag si Antiporda matapos makatanggap ng memo mula kay BOC-10 District Collector John Simon makaraang kumpirmahin na nakumpleto na ang proseso ng pagbabalik sa Korea ng basura nitong nakalipas na Agosto 4.

Iniulat din ni Simon na ang 4.5-hectare area kung saan ang may 5,000 metric tons na Korean garbage ay pansamantalang inilagak ay malinis na ngayon sa smuggle na basura.

Kaugnay nito, binigyan ng komendasyon ni Antiporda si Simon at ang kanyang collection district dahil sa walang pagod na pagtatrabaho para tiyakin na ang naturang basura ay maibalik sa South Korea sa kabila ng mahigpit na quarantine restriction na ipinatutupad dahil sa banta ng Covid-19.

“Despite COVID-19, the hardworking and dedicated BOC-10 district collector was able to facilitate the return of the smuggled waste and sent a message to the world that the Philippines is not a dumping ground of hazardous waste from other countries,” ani Antiporda.

Sa record ng BOC-10 makikita na ang illegal waste import ay matagumpay na naibalik sa South Korea sa six batches simula Enero 2019.

Magugunitang ang naturang garbage shipment ay nakiskubre ng opisina ni Simon sa Mindanao Container Terminal noong 2018.



Ang naturang shipment ay naka-consign sa South Korea company Verde Soko II Industrial Corp. na nag-o-operate ng waste recycling facility sa may Phividec Industrial Estate sa Tagoloan town.

Sinabi sa ulat na tatlong Korean national sa pangunguna ng isang Chul Soo Chu alyas Charles Cho ang kinasuhan dahil sa paglabag sa Republic Act (RA) 6969 o ang the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act at RA 10863 o ang Customs Modernization and Tariff Act. **SANTI CELARIO**





## Exclude issuance of environmental permits in grant of special powers to Duterte — Sen. Villar

Published September 29, 2020, 2:31 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar asked her colleagues in the Senate on Tuesday to exclude the issuance of [environmental permits](#) in the coverage of the proposed grant of special powers for President Duterte to further expedite government processes and transactions.



Sen. Cynthia Villar

(Senate of the Philippines / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Villar took exception to the inclusion of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) in Senate Bill No. 1844, which seeks to allow the President, during national emergencies, to streamline processes and also suspend or waive the need to secure permits and licenses.

At the hearing of the Senate Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation on the bill, Villar raised that the measure could be used to expedite reclamation projects.

“You know, the EMB of the DENR is in charge of releasing ECC (environment compliance certificates) to reclamation projects. I don't think the reclamation projects should be included in the facilitation of the Ease of Doing Business (EODB),” Villar said.

She particularly mentioned the reclamation plan along the coast of the Manila Bay, which she said would be harmful to the protected Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, and in turn, compromise the livelihood of over 300,000 fisherfolks and nearby cities in the Manila Bay.

She also recalled President Duterte vowing that no reclamation projects in Manila Bay will be allowed under his term.

Villar said that coming from a family of businessmen, she agrees that processes should be streamlined for businesses, but environment clearances “will require a lot of consultation and studies” and should not be a part of this effort.

“I really believe in the EODB in the Philippines because I come from a business family and we believe that we should be facilitated so we can employ people, we can pay taxes on our income, and so forth,” she said. “But if this bill will be passed into law without exception, eh ‘di lalong mag-iisue ng ECC ‘yong EMB (all the more that the EMB will issue ECCs), without consultation or without study.”

Villar also doubted that the President will be able to screen every transaction that will be expedited in the executive branch.

“If you centralize it with the President, hindi naman lahat ng issues alam ng President (he is not aware of every issue). Hindi niya kayang gawin lahat ‘yan (He cannot do all of it), so it will be delegated. I guess we have to make exceptions to this because there are issues that will affect the lives of so many people.”



“Not all EODB is good for everybody, kasi yung iba, talagang it will require a lot of consultation and studies because it will destroy the lives of so many people,” she added.

Senator Christopher Go agreed with Villar’s sentiments and said destructive projects should not be allowed despite the move to curb red tape and corruption in government.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, one of the authors of SB 1844, said they will consider Villar’s request.



File photo of Sen. Cynthia Villar presiding over a hearing.

## DENR's EMB should not be allowed to expedite issuance of ECCs — Villar

Published September 29, 2020 10:58pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

Senator Cynthia Villar on Tuesday said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) should not be covered by the bill aimed to expedite the issuance of government permits and licenses.

During the Senate hearing of the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation for Senate Bill No. 1844, Villar said the EMB is currently in charge of the issuance of environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for reclamation projects.

The EMB is a line agency of the DENR responsible for governing and supervising the exploration, development, utilization, and conservation of the country's natural resources.

“I don't think the reclamation project should be included in facilitating the ease of doing business,” she said.

“If this bill will be passed into law without exception eh di lalong mag-iissue ng ECC ‘yung EMB. Issue na nga nang issue ECC without consultation or without study, eh gagamitin niya pa itong batas na ito,” she added.

Chairing the Senate committee on environment, Villar said the reclamation of Manila Bay in Parañaque, Las Piñas, and Bacoor will destroy the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, a protected area which houses 35,000 hectares of mangrove and serves as a habitat for various bird species.

Its destruction would imperil the livelihood of 300,000 fisherfolks and cause flooding as high as eight meters in the residential areas surrounding Manila Bay, according to Villar.

“Yung aming city is the home of the middle class families in Metro Manila. Binili nila ang bahay nila, hinulugan nila ng 25 years... tapos mag-iissue ka ng ECC pababahain mo kami ng eight meters? Eh di nawalang lahat ang kabuhayan ng aking mga kababayan,” she added.



Villar also lamented that the issuance of ECCs for reclamation projects despite President Rodrigo Duterte’s position on the matter.

“The President has always said that there will be no reclamation of Manila Bay under his watch. He has said it many times. I just want to ask why this EMB is issuing ECC in the reclamation of Manila Bay continuously? It’s not following the President,” Villar said.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, one of the authors of the bill allowing the President to streamline the process of issuing permits and suspending requirements for such, took note of Villar’s manifestation.

“The ease of doing business doesn’t mean that you have to give a yes approval to all applications. It only means you have to answer, either a yes or a no. Either you give the permit or not within a particular time,” Zubiri said.

“If it is environmentally destructive then you should take a stand that this permit should not be given,” he added.

Zubiri said he will be sponsoring the bill to the plenary on Monday. -- **BAP, GMA News**



# Collecting wildlife plants illegal, DENR reminds 'plantitas'

By Marita Moaje September 29, 2020, 6:22 pm



MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) reminded “plantitos and plantitas” that collection of wildlife, whether animals or even plants, is illegal and is punishable by law.

In a Facebook post on Tuesday, the DENR-NCR said this is stated under Section 27 of Republic Act 9147, otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

The agency stated in its post that while they promote urban gardening and greening in the cities, there may be people or individuals who are unaware that such law exists, thus the reminder.

“Nais naming paalalahanan ang lahat na ang pagkolekta o pagkuha ng buhay-ilang (wildlife), halaman man o hayop, mula sa kanilang natural habitat ay ipinagbabawal (we want to remind everyone that collecting or harvesting of wildlife, may it be plants (flora) or animals (fauna) from its natural habitat is not allowed by law),” the post reads.

The DENR-NCR urged the public to report to proper authorities if they know anyone or any group who may be involved in such illegal acts.

“Maaring makulong ng hanggang apat na taon at pagmultahin ng hanggang PHP300,000 ang mga mapapatunayang iligal na nangongolekta ng halaman mula sa kabundukan at kagubatan (anyone who will be caught and proven to be violating this law may be jailed for up to four years and fined for up to PHP300,000 for collecting plants from the mountains or the forests),” the agency said.

Because of the pandemic, most parts of the country were placed under community quarantine.

Businesses and work were grounded to a halt and people were encouraged to stay at home to control the spread of Covid-19 virus.

People have resorted to different hobbies and rediscovered love for plants, which led to the labels “plantitos” and “plantitas”. (PNA)



# Sarangani Bay's coral ecosystem 'healthy, improving'

By Richelyn Gubalani [September 29, 2020, 3:15 pm](#)



CORAL TRANSPLANTATION.

Environment personnel from the provincial government of Sarangani and the municipality of Kiamba transplant coral fragments at a portion of the Tuka Marine Park on Aug. 17. The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office said Sarangani Bay's coral ecosystem is now considered as generally healthy and improving, thanks to its expanded coral conservation and protection program. (Photo courtesy of the provincial government)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Efforts to conserve and protect the critical coral reefs off Sarangani Bay has received a major boost as the area's coral ecosystem is now considered "healthy and improving."

Rolando Tuballes, head of the Sarangani Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO), said Tuesday their assessment showed the bay's coral cover and reef condition is "generally good" and showed huge improvement in the last decade.

He attributed the accomplishment to the continuing expanded rehabilitation program implemented by local government units, concerned agencies, and local stakeholders.

"Our coral ecosystem is in good condition and healthy. Proof of that is the thriving marine life in the bay," he said in a statement.

Tuballes said this can be seen in coral reefs situated near the province's coastal municipalities that had been declared as marine protected areas (MPA).

These are the reefs in barangay Kawas in Alabel town; Lot and Pananggalon in Poblacion, Malapatan; Colon and Kamanga in Maasim; Glan Padidu marine sanctuary in Glan; and Tuka in Kiamba.

The Tuka Reef, which is part of Tuka Marine Park in Kiamba, is the first and successful coral transplantation area in Sarangani.

In 2013, the Mindanao State University here conducted the first of a series of coral transplantation activities at the site through support from the Department of Science and Technology.

The provincial government, through the PENRO, has sustained the initiative since 2018. Last month, personnel from the PENRO and the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office conducted another round of coral transplantation in Tuka.

Michelle Polistico, PENRO environmental management specialist, said they were able to transplant around 1,400 loose fragments of branching corals during the two-week activity.

She said they collected the coral fragments that were severed due to human activities as well as from the impact of strong waves and transplanted them.



“The fragments may still grow and develop into new colonies,” she said.

Tuballes said they are currently working with the Protected Area Management Board, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, other local government units and stakeholders to further expand the coral conservation and protection programs.

He said they are also pushing for the declaration of more coral reef sites into MPAs.

The move is to ensure the protection of coral ecosystems that are still in good condition and eventually allow them to improve further, he said.

Tuballes said they have also intensified the law enforcement activities as well as information and education campaigns about the need to protect the corals in local communities.

“The best way to conserve and protect our coral ecosystem is to leave them alone and regulate human activities,” he added. (PNA)



# Corals, reefs in Sarangani Bay reported to be 'healthy, improving'

Published September 29, 2020, 11:16 AM

by [Nonoy Lacson](#)

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – The coral ecosystem in Sarangani Bay has remained “in good status, healthy, and is improving”, according to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Roland Tuballes.



The coral ecosystem in Sarangani Bay has remained “in good status, healthy, and is improving”. (Photo via Nonoy Lacson / MANILA BULLETIN)

“The coral cover and reef condition of Sarangani Bay is good,” Tuballes said.

He described the coral ecosystem status as “improving because of the management options employed by local government units, national agencies, to include the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources), and the concerted efforts of the communities.”

According to Tuballes, a good status implies “maganda yung coral ecosystem, buhay na buhay siya, and marami ang marine life that thrives in the coral ecosystem.”

Tuballes said this was because of the “programs and activities for marine protection, human interventions, and law enforcement.”

One human intervention was the coral transplantation done on August 5 to August 18 at the Tuka Marine Park and Beach Resort in Kiamba.

Tuka Marine Park saw the first and successful coral transplantation in Sarangani as a healthy coral ecosystem brings “ecological and economic benefits”.

“The coral ecosystem is the habitat and feeding ground of all marine life, so if it is diverse and intensified and it will bring economically productivity, especially on fisheries,” he said.

In a study, “coral reefs, considered as the rainforests of the sea is home to a variety of organisms, and serve as shelter, refuge, and feeding grounds of juvenile and adult fishes and invertebrates”.

Tuballes said declaring Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in some parts of Sarangani Bay was also an intervention that preserved the marine life.

“The main objective why you declare an area as a Marine Protected Area (MPA) is because that is the remaining coral ecosystem still intact,” he said.





It could be recalled that, in 2011, MV DoubleProsperity, a Panama-registered bulk carrier rammed the protected Bakud Reef off Kiamba.

The 224-meter-long cargo ship, manned mostly by Filipino crewmen, was on its way to India from Australia with about 66,000 tons of coal when it ran aground seven kilometers off the coast of Kiamba.

In 2012, Philippine authorities seized two Malaysian vessels for dumping coal waste into the Sarangani Bay.



# Philippine hawk eagle rescued in Catanduanes

Aileen Cerrudo • September 29, 2020



A Philippine hawk eagle was recently rescued and released in San Andres, Catanduanes, as reported by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Bicol.

A concerned citizen from Barangay Palta Big, Virac, Catanduanes found the hawk eagle after it was caught entangled in a net used in fencing domesticated chickens.

DENR Bicol  
19 hours ago

PHILIPPINE HAWK EAGLE RESCUED AND RELEASED IN CATANDUANES

A Philippine Hawk Eagle (*Nisaetus philippinensis*) was recently rescued and released by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Catanduanes under the leadership of PENR Officer Engr. Jerry R. Arena.

The eagle was turned over by a concerned citizen from Barangay Palta Big, Virac, Catanduanes. It was caught entangled in a net used in fencing domesticated chickens. Upon the examination of the P... [See More](#)

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The hawk eagle was turned over to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Catanduanes. Upon examination, the eagle measures 60 centimeters in length and weighs approximately 4.5 kilograms. Authorities released it to the wild after confirming it is in good condition.

The Philippine Hawk Eagle is categorized as vulnerable species under the DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2019-09. Authorities remind the public to immediately report and turnover any wildlife species without proper documents. **AAC**



# Crested Serpent Eagle rescued in Zamboanga del Norte town

September 29, 2020

PERSONNEL of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) have rescued a Crested Serpent Eagle in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte.

Community Environment and Natural Resources Office-Siocon Rey Jalandoni said the eagle was rescued Friday, September 25, at the roadside of Malambuhangin village, Siocon.

Jalandoni said the DPWH personnel were doing roadside clearing maintenance when they spotted the Crested Serpent Eagle.

He said the DPWH personnel, namely, Wilson Abañaz, Angelito Cerdenta, and Ariel Baliling, turned over the eagle to his office for proper disposition.

Initial assessment conducted by the Cenro Siocon Eagle Watch Team found the serpent eagle very weak, dehydrated, and with slight wounds at the feet and unable to fly, he added.

He said they sought the help of Alexis Val Tomboc, a veterinarian of the Department of Agriculture, who visited the Cenro Siocon office and dressed the wounds and handed medicine, which included electrolytes multivitamins powder, to treat the eagle.

The Eagle Watch Team is closely monitoring the condition of the eagle, which is temporarily kept at Jalandoni's office.

Jalandoni said the eagle will be released back to its natural habitat once it is healed. **(SunStar Zamboanga)**



# Malabon HS students win DENR poster-making contest

Published September 29, 2020, 3:12 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Five high school students from Malabon City have bested 240 other students with their creative poster on the safe management of electronic wastes (e-waste).



(EcoWaste Coalition / MANILA BULLETIN)

The entry of the students of Longos National High School (LNHS) was adjudged grand winner of a poster-making contest initiated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB).

It is part of the “Safe PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) and E-Waste Management Project” of the DENR-EMB, which aims to raise community awareness and support for the environmentally sound management of e-waste.

The Global Environment Facility and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization also support the project.

The entry from the LNHS team comprised of Ellimaykelle Fajardo, Justin Pan, Sophia Lorraine Santos, Andrew Tibong, and Jayvean Villanueva bested 47 other posters created by 240 senior high school students from participating schools located at the four project sites in Caloocan, Malabon and Manila Cities.

The virtual awarding held on Tuesday was witnessed by Dr. Ernest Joseph Cabrera of the Department of Education (DepEd-Malabon City) and LNHS principal Juanito Gayola.

“We thank the organizers for the opportunity given to our students and teachers to be sensitized about the negative effects of the improper disposal of broken, busted or obsolete electronics to our health and the environment. The knowledge acquired should discourage our homes, schools and communities from burning, dumping and improperly recycling e-waste that can result in harmful emissions and releases of chemical pollutants into the air, water and soil,” Gayola said.

Industrial development officer Carmela Centeno of UNIDO said, “the goal of the project is to formalize the informal waste sector in the chosen projects sites.”

“With this comes the continuous awareness raising to the communities that have predominantly built their lives in these areas that are heavily involved in this industry. These students consider it the norm seeing improper dismantling of e-waste along their streets and for some, in their backyards,” Centeno added.



Through these activities, they are now aware that they, even as young students, have a role in sustaining the environment from the harmful effects of e-waste, she said.

Aside from LNHS, students from three schools in Caloocan City (Bagong Silang High School, Benigno Aquino Jr. High School and Camarin High School) and two schools in Manila City (Dr. Juan G. Nolasco High School and Tondo High School) participated in the creative competition.

Before the students released their creative talents, workshops were first conducted to inform them about the growing problem with e-waste and the need for concerted action to address their threats to human health and the environment.

E-waste can contain loads of persistent organic pollutants like polybrominated diphenyl ethers in the plastic casings of computer and TV sets, lead and other heavy metals in the cathode ray tubes of old TVs, and other chemicals of concern that can pose serious health and environmental risks.

The entries were evaluated according to their relevance, creativity, composition and originality by a panel of judges composed of representatives from the DENR-EMB, UNIDO, EcoWaste Coalition, barangay, school faculty and the local informal waste sector.

The LNHS team got a cash award of P5,000. Each member of the team also received a desktop computer and a signed certificate of participation.



# De Lima raps Cimatu for closing 2 Cebu mining firms that supplied dolomite powder in Manila Bay project

Published September 29, 2020, 5:06 PM

by [Hannah Torregoza](#)

Opposition Senator Leila de Lima on Tuesday slammed Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu for suddenly ordering the closure and investigation into the two Cebu mining and processing firms that the government patronized for its “Boracay”-like Manila Bay project.

De Lima said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) chief’s order “would have been a hilarious joke” if only it was not for real, considering the harmful effects of the dolomite spillage on the coral reef, water and ambient air quality near the companies’ shiploading facility.

“Nakakatawa naman talaga ang DENR. Pagkatapos nilang isabog at ikalat ang dolomite sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay, saka pa lang nila ngayon ipapa-imbetiga kung sanhi nga ba ng pagkamatay ng mga bahura ang natatapong dolomite ng dalawang minahan sa Alcoy, Cebu (DENR’s move is comical. After scattering dolomite on the shores of Manila Bay, it was only now that they sought for an investigation if dolomite mining was really the cause of death of the coral reefs in these areas),” De Lima said in a statement.

“Parang napakalaking katangahan naman na iniutos nila ang pagtambak ng dolomite sa Manila Bay bago pa man nila masiguro kung ito nga ba ay hindi nakakasira ng bahura (It’s utter foolishness for them to order that dolomite sand be dumped on Manila Bay without even making sure that such activity will not damage the reefs),” she pointed out.

She said Cimatu should not only halt the operations of the two dolomite and processing firms, but also start directing a clean-up drive of the dolomite sand from Manila Bay that the agency dumped there “for the so-called Boracay feels.”

“The rehabilitation of Manila Bay includes the revival and regeneration of its coral and mangrove systems. If dolomite is harmful to coral life, then how can DENR still expect to revive corals in Manila Bay after dumping several tons of the material on it?” she pointed out.

“The incompetence, negligence, and utter lack of intelligence is simply appalling,” she lamented.

“Only in this administration has ‘Imeldific’ beautification projects once again trumped informed decision-making of supposedly professional organizations like the DENR,” she added.

The Cebu provincial government had earlier issued a cease-and-desist order preventing the Dolomite Mining Corporation and the Philippine Mining Services Corporation from further extracting dolomite rocks for use in the controversial Manila Bay “white sand” lay over.

According to Cimatu, the stoppage will last pending the Environmental Management Bureau Region 7’s investigation and sampling on the ambient air quality and on the quality on waters near the companies’ foreshore loading facilities. [Hannah L. Torregoza]

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/29/de-lima-raps-cimatu-for-closing-2-cebu-mining-firms-that-supplied-dolomite-powder-in-manila-bay-project/>



## Group protests reopening of suspended mines

Published 1 day ago

on September 29, 2020 03:08 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



ATM said mining and river dredging should not be part of the economic stimulus for recovery. (ATM photo)

Environment and human rights groups trooped to the main office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Quezon City on Monday to protest the reopening of 13 cancelled and suspended mines.

The groups led by Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) said mining operations endanger the health of local residents in mining communities.

They added that DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu's decision to revoke the cancellation and suspension orders of 13 mining companies will worsen these conditions.

Jaybee Garganera, National Coordinator of ATM, reiterated their group's position that "the DENR's recommendation to re-open these mines should be rejected as DENR is unwilling to disclose the basis of this decision".

Garganera explained that mining and river dredging should not be part of the economic stimulus for recovery as a response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic that has severely affected the country's economy.

"Mining is part of the problem because it is directly linked to deforestation and climate change, which are both drivers to the evolution of new diseases and pandemics," he said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Philippine Movement for Climate Justice Energy Officer Larry Pascua, said a report from the International Council on Mining and Metals revealed that the global mining industry is a significant contributor of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

"Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries in terms of climate-related disasters. With COVID-19, the urgency of addressing this threat increased rapidly," Pascua said.

On the other hand, Sanlakas Secretary General Atty. Aaron Pedrosa, said economic activities that lower the resiliency of communities have no place in a pandemic.





“Mining for recovery is only counterproductive. Government have to hold these companies accountable of the livelihood and natural resources they destroyed,” Pedrosa said,.

“These mining companies continue to operate with impunity because the government lets them,” he added.

Other environment and human rights group who joined the protest action and call to end destructive mining and climate change, and to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases include Bantay Kita, AKBAYAN, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates, IDefend, Lilak, and Green Thumb Coalition, and Masbate-based organization Ang Aroroy Ay Alagaan.

The protest was a part of Mining Hell Week, an annual series of activities parallel to the International Mining Conference organized by the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines. It aims to represent and amplify the voices of mining-affected communities and marginalized sectors.

*p: wjg*



# Angat to reduce water allocation for domestic, irrigation uses

Published September 29, 2020, 10:09 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) will be reducing water allocations coming from Angat Dam for domestic and irrigation uses starting Oct. 1.



Angat Dam (MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

“Considering the level of the Angat Dam at around 3 meters below the minimum operating level of 180 meters and to manage relatively low level of the dam, the Board approved the allocation of 44 cubic meters per second (cms) for MWSS (Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System) and 25 cms for NIA (National Irrigation Administration) for the month of October,” NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David Jr. said on Tuesday.

The 44 cms allocation for domestic use and 25 cms for irrigation are slightly lower than the current allocations at 46 cms and 30 cms, respectively, David added.

Angat Dam supplies the domestic water requirements of at least 16.5 million consumers Metro Manila and some parts of Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, and Bulacan; irrigation needs of 28,000 hectares of agricultural land in Bulacan and Pampanga; and hydropower generation from its by-product water releases.

David assured that Metro Manila and nearby provinces will have sufficient water next month amid Angat Dam’s low water level.

He added that irrigation water may also only bring minimal effect on farms in Bulacan and Pampanga as it is already harvesting season in these provinces.

Based on the monitoring of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the water level in Angat Dam has slightly increased from 177.81 meters Monday to 177.94 meters on Tuesday.

However, its water level remains below the rule curve elevation at 185.7 meters.

PAGASA explained that the rule curve elevation is the minimum reservoir elevation needed to maintain by dam operators to ensure availability of water for irrigation, power generation, and domestic supply.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/29/angat-to-reduce-water-allocation-for-domestic-irrigation-uses/>



## Villar cites Las Piñas river as 'vital life artery'

Published September 29, 2020, 2:45 PM

by [Vanne Elaine Terrazola](#)

Senator Cynthia Villar has cited the Las Piñas-Zapote River and its vital significance to Las Piñas City.



Sen. Cynthia Villar

(Senate of the Philippines / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

In a statement following the celebration of the World Rivers Day, she called the river as a “life artery” for her bailiwick Las Piñas City and its people.

“While we no longer have a river as pristine as (it used to be) in the 70’s, back in the time when the river (was) teeming with fish, the river continues to provide for the city through livelihood projects that sprung out of our project to rehabilitate the Las Pinas-Zapote River,” Villar, also chairs the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, said.

The “Sagip Ilog” project was launched in 2002 to resuscitate the Las Piñas and Zapote Rivers thru the collection of garbage, plastics and water lilies in the river.

The water lilies collected from the river are also used as a material for weaving handicraft which also serves as a livelihood project for housewives in the city. Organic fertilizers are also made from the coconut husk thrown in to the river.

The Sagip Ilog project won for Villar, who was then Las Piñas City representative, and her husband, former Senate President Manny Villar the United Nations “Best Practices Award” in 2011.

Villar also initiated the construction of the Las Piñas River Drive, a five-phased, 20-kilometer road project with the twin objective of easing traffic congestion and reducing flooding in Las Piñas City during the rainy season.

“Through this new road, we are certain of a shorter and a more convenient travel time for the people of Las Piñas and for all those who travel to and from our city. This road infrastructure development makes Las Pinas more attractive to investors,” she said.

The road project, which follows the curve of the river bank, involved the resettlement of informal settlers and clean-up of the Las Piñas River.

“We hope that through our projects that transformed our once murky and dirty river to a useful water system, we are raising awareness on the need to better care for our water resources for it to continue to provide us with necessities of life,” Villar said.

World Rivers Day is celebrated every fourth Sunday of September to highlight the many values of rivers and also to encourage the improved stewardship of rivers around the world.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/29/villar-cites-las-pinas-river-as-vital-life-artery/>



Photos shows the newly-constructed road in Zapote River Drive, Las Piñas City last October 29, 2018  
Joven Cagande

## Villar: Las Piñas river is ‘life artery’

[Cecille Suerte Felipe](#), [Paolo Romero](#) (The Philippine Star) - September 30, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Las Piñas-Zapote River continues to play an important role as a “life artery for the people of Las Piñas and nearby cities,” Sen. Cynthia Villar said yesterday as she marked World Rivers Day.

Villar, who chairs the environment committee, said the rehabilitation of the river paved the way for social enterprises that provided livelihoods to residents.

“The river continues to provide for the city through livelihood projects that sprung out of our project to rehabilitate the Las Piñas-Zapote River,” the senator said.

In 2002 when Villar was still Las Piñas representative, the Sagip Ilog project was launched. It involved the daily collection of floating garbage, which continues up to this day.

The water lilies collected from the river were used for weaving handicrafts. The Las Piñas Weaving Center helped housewives earn an income.

The coconut husks thrown into the river were processed into coco nets for slope protection and coco peat, which is used as a potting mix and organic fertilizer.

The Sagip Ilog project won for Villar and her husband, former Senate president Manny Villar, the United Nations “Best Practices Award” in 2011 for protecting water resources and providing livelihood to Filipinos.



## Las Pinas-Zapote River life artery of the city – Villar

September 29, 2020 | Filed under: News | Posted by: Tempo Desk

BY VANNE TERRAZOLA

Senator Cynthia Villar has cited the Las Pinas-Zapote River as a “life artery” for the people of Las Pinas City.

In a statement following the celebration of the World Rivers Day, Villar said the rehabilitation of the Las Pinas-Zapote River paved the way to social enterprises that provided livelihood to residents.



ZAPOTE River (FB)

“While we no longer have a river as pristine as in the 70’s, back in the time when the river is teeming with fish, the river continues to provide for the city through livelihood projects that sprung out of our project to rehabilitate the Las Pinas-Zapote River,” Villar, also chairs the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, said.

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“We hope that through our projects that transformed our once murky and dirty river to a useful water system, we are raising awareness on the need to better care for our water resources for it to continue to provide us with necessities of life,” Villar said.

World Rivers Day is celebrated every fourth Sunday of September to highlight the many values of rivers and also to encourage the improved stewardship of rivers around the world. (Vanne Terrazola)

Source: <http://tempo.com.ph/2020/09/29/las-pinazapote-river-life-artery-of-the-city-villar/>



# Waste disposal system needed for DepEd printed learning materials, says Sen. Marcos

Published September 29, 2020, 2:55 PM

by [Mario Casayuran](#)

Senator Maria Imelda Josefa R. Marcos has put the Department of Education (DepEd), local government units (LGUs), and schools on notice to a creeping environmental problem, as printed self-learning modules would begin to pile up when classes resume next week.



Senator Imee R. Marcos

(Senate of the Philippines / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

“Imagine the multiplier effect with the number of modules for each subject, the number of subjects for each kid, the number of kids in each home, and the number of homes in each community, and you will end up with mountains of trash,” Marcos said.

Marcos, chairwoman of the Senate economic affairs committee, said a waste disposal system that facilitates the recycling of discarded paper must be organized not just in highly urbanized cities but also in areas that will have limited access to online classes and where printed modules will become the new learning norm.

“Since paper is totally biodegradable, a recycling plan must be put in place to reduce the need to dump discarded paper in landfills,” Marcos said.

“As it is, a good bulk of landfills is made up of waste paper. With our new methods of education, its toll on the environment cannot be underestimated,” she added.

Marcos cited that the growth of landfills has been a perennial problem that local government units are constantly looking to control.

“Homes tend to be less strict than schools in implementing waste segregation measures. With schools half closed, systematic waste segregation of used learning materials will be reduced,” she said.

A Department of Education (DepEd), local government unit (LGU) or school program to lend laptops or allow their purchase through installments could ease the shift of students with limited means to digital learning as well as reduce the use of paper, Marcos proposed.

“The accumulated cost of paper, ink and printing through semester after semester could add up to the cost of a mini laptop,” Marcos said.

Paper is also a fire hazard and the risk of accidents will tend to increase in homes where one or both parents need to work and kids have less supervision, she added.

Marcos proposed that mothers who have to quit work to become surrogate teachers to their children should be included in the government’s welfare subsidies and job creation programs.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/29/waste-disposal-system-needed-for-deped-printed-learning-materials-says-sen-marcos/>



## SMC to dredge 700k tons of garbage yearly

By [The Manila Times](#)

September 30, 2020

San Miguel Corporation is targeting to dredge a total of 700 thousand tons of garbage from the Tullahan River and Pasig River every year, as clean-up operations in Tullahan continue to remove 600 tons of garbage daily since resuming operations with the lifting of restrictions in June.

Along with the massive P1 billion Tullahan-Tinajeros dredging and clean-up project and planned Pasig River clean up, SMC is also looking to dredge major rivers and water tributaries in Bulacan that lead to Manila Bay.

This will further help government's flood mitigation initiatives, even as it prepares for the construction of the P734-billion Manila International Airport in Bulacan.

SMC President and Chief Operating Officer Ramon Ang lauded government's efforts to clean-up and rehabilitate Manila Bay, which entails removing silt, trash and other obstructions from tributaries that restrict the free flow of water and cause heavy flooding, particularly in northern Metro Manila and many parts of Central Luzon, including Bulacan.

Silt and trash that ultimately end up in Manila Bay have affected the marine ecosystem and traditional fishing grounds.

"Government has done a really good job cleaning up Manila Bay. Water quality has improved a lot. But we all need to pitch in and do our part to sustain these initial gains," Ang said.

Aside from MMORS, SMC also indicated the Malolos stream and the Tullahan River, the latter acting as a spillway for water coming from Angat and Ipo Dams..

As of Sept 14, more than 29,000 cubic meters or metric tons of dredged soil and solid waste were collected from the river.

"This a sustainable and long-term solution to the perennial flooding in Bulacan. It will be a major, coordinated effort between many stakeholders, local government units and residents," he said.

## Town in Camarines Norte boosts its ‘Plastic Bottle, Palit-Bigas’ program

Aileen Cerrudo • September 29, 2020



The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) of Barangay 5 in Daet, Camarines Norte launched ‘Plastic Bottle, Palit-Bigas’ program to help their fellow youths and other residents cope with the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Under the program, three plastic bottles filled with cut plastic materials can be exchanged for two kilos of rice with one canned sardines and instant noodles.

The town’s SK chairperson, Maria Monica Abanes said the program allows young people to engage in a more productive activity during quarantine.

“Siyempre sa pandemic ngayon, makakatulong po sa mga kabataan. Malilibang po sila tapos makakatulong din po sila sa kanilang magulang sa pang-araw-araw (*During this pandemic, [the program] can surely help the youth. It will be an activity for them and it can also help their parents to sustain their daily needs*),” she said.

The collected plastics will also be used to make eco-bricks. From August to September, around 400 bottles or eco-bricks have been made and over 175 families have benefitted from the said project.

“*Ito po yung tulong po namin sa environment kasi nagkaroon po kami ng proper waste disposal* (This is our way of helping the environment. We were able to promote proper waste disposal),” Abanes said. **AAC (with reports from Bryan Baldaraje)**





# Environment advocates call for PH climate emergency action plan

Published September 29, 2020, 2:58 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Environmental groups are calling for the establishment of a scientific and human rights body to lead the implementation of a climate emergency action plan in the country.

“What else is there to consider when there is both a scientific consensus and a human rights imperative to declare a climate emergency in the Philippines? President Duterte must cede the current ‘business as usual’ pathway of leadership to a scientific and human rights body to implement a climate emergency plan,” Kalikasan national coordinator Leon Dulce said as Malacañang expressed the possibility of declaring a climate emergency.

Greenpeace country director Lea Guerrero also welcomed Malacañang’s “openness” to declare a climate emergency.

“We believe that this declaration can provide a much-needed impetus for a whole of government and whole of society approach to cooperate and respond proactively to the biggest challenge faced by our country,” Guerrero said.

The advocates warned that the track record of President Duterte in the past four years, which saw the Philippines become a consistent global air and marine polluter and climate impact-vulnerable nation, cast a shadow of doubt over his political will to declare a climate emergency.

“We should look no further than the heroism of Filipino environmental defenders as a blueprint of leadership for confronting the climate emergency,” Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines executive director Lia Torres said.

Torres cited the awardees of the 6th Gawad Bayani ng Kalikasan, composed of five individuals and three organizations, that fought to protect more than three million hectares of climate-critical watersheds and seascapes.

Mitzi Jonelle Tan, international spokesperson of the leading climate strike group Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines said “the declaration of a climate emergency shouldn’t stop at just stating the obvious that there is one.”

“There are clear urgent action points such as the need for a moratorium on big mines, fossil fuels, and other climate disruptive projects,” Tan added.

In 2019, the groups also noted the signing of the World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency by 11,000 scientists across the world.

The experts particularly called for the replacement of fossil fuel energy sources with low-carbon renewables, protection of remaining primary forests, and cessation of the over extraction of natural resources, among others.

Chuck Baclagon, coordinator of the 350.org Pilipinas said President Duterte must heed the leadership of the people who have fought in the climate frontlines long before him.

He cited that the Philippine climate strike movement launched the “Planetary Emergency Initiative,” which presents a blueprint for a just and green transition away from the climate and pandemic crisis.

The Planetary Emergency Initiative manifesto was launched during a recent climate strike in the University of the Philippines. It was signed by 32 youth and national organizations, calling for a “green new leadership” that will pursue a 10-point climate and planetary health action agenda over the coming months.



“Greenpeace will be happy to assist Malacañang in crafting the declaration and to ensure that the declaration includes necessary measures to ensure that people’s needs in the face of the climate crisis are prioritized,” Guerrero added.

The group also believes that declaring a climate emergency is just a step to achieving climate justice for Filipinos, whose lives, homes, and livelihood are constantly at risk.

As the President recognizes the urgency needed in addressing climate crisis, he must ensure that the government’s actions must include not just demanding governments to strengthen their commitments to the Paris Agreement, but also holding fossil fuel companies, the world’s biggest climate polluters, accountable for climate impacts that cause harm to Filipinos,” Guerrero said.



Climate and environmental activists hold a climate strike in the University of the Philippines on Sept. 25, 2020.

AC Dimatatac

## Greenpeace willing to assist Palace in crafting climate emergency declaration

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - September 29, 2020 - 4:50pm

MANILA, Philippines — An environmental group said Tuesday it is willing to assist Malacañang in crafting a climate emergency declaration that would ensure that the government acts on the worsening climate crisis.

Greenpeace Philippines welcomed the Palace statement that President Rodrigo Duterte would look into the suggestion to declare climate emergency, which would ensure that climate change and its impacts on the lives of Filipinos is a top government priority.

“We believe this declaration can provide a much-needed impetus for a whole of government and whole of society approach to cooperate and respond proactively to the biggest challenge face by our country,” Lea Guerrero, Greenpeace country director, said.

“Declaring climate emergency is just a step to achieving climate justice for Filipinos, whose lives, homes and livelihoods are constantly at risk,” Guerrero said.

The group urged the president to make sure that the government’s actions do not stop at just demanding government to honor their commitments to the Paris Agreement but also holding fossil fuel companies—“the world’s biggest climate polluters”—accountable for the climate impacts that affect the lives of Filipinos.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said Monday that addressing climate change is on the top of Duterte’s agenda.

### ‘Scientific, human rights leadership’

In a separate statement, environmental and climate activists called for the creation of a scientific and human rights body that would lead the implementation of the climate emergency declaration.

They said Duterte’s track record casts a shadow of doubt on his political will to declare a climate emergency.



“What else is there to consider when there is both a scientific consensus and a human rights imperative to declare climate change emergency in the Philippines? President Duterte must cede the current ‘business as usual’ pathway of leadership to a scientific and human rights body in implementing a climate emergency action plan,” Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment, said.

Mitzi Jonelle Tan of Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines called for a moratorium on big mines, fossil fuels and other climate destructive projects.

The country’s climate strike movement launched a manifesto for a planetary emergency initiative,” which calls for a “green new leadership” that will undertake a just and green recovery plan, protect and support environmental defenders, accelerate the transition to clean energy, subsidize climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, and strengthen environmental and climate education.

“President Duterte must heed the leadership of the people who have fought in the climate frontlines long before him,” Chuck Baclagon, coordinator of climate action group 350.org Pilipinas, said.



# Environmental advocates oppose waste-to-energy incinerators proposal

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 29 2020 11:08 PM

MANILA - Environmental groups on Tuesday denounced moves in Congress to legalize garbage incineration, saying waste-to-energy plants are harmful to public health and environment.

Dr. Jorge Emmanuel, adjunct professor of environmental science and engineering at the Silliman University, said all incinerators release toxic materials.

Among the toxic substances that are emitted by waste-to-energy incinerators are carbon monoxide, which is associated with headache, dizziness and heart disease, and hydrogen chloride, which affects the lungs.

Emmanuel, in an online forum, said dioxin and furans are considered the worst toxic substances from the incinerators.

The effects of dioxins and furans include cancers such as leukemia and can also cause reproductive disorders for men.

For women, these toxins cause ovarian dysfunction and reduced fertility, he said. It can also cause birth defects and reduced learning ability among children.

Emmanuel said dioxins and furans remain in the environment for a long time.

"So whatever dioxins and furans are created today by putting in incinerators are going to remain in the environment for several generations," he added.

Emmanuel also noted the Philippines has limited capacity to monitor such toxic substances.

"At least 50 studies around the world confirm that people living within 2, 4, 5, 7.5 to 10 kilometers of incinerators have higher rates of leukemia, sarcoma, lymphoma, lung, pleural, stomach, liver, kidney, ovarian, colorectal, gall bladder and other cancers," he said.

"People who work in incinerator plants have higher cancer deaths."

Meanwhile, women living near incinerators of up to 4 kilometers during their pregnancy have higher miscarriages and birth defects, among others.

"Waste incinerators currently release an average 1 ton of carbon dioxide for every ton of waste incinerated," said Lee Bell, policy advisor for the International Pollution Elimination Network.

"Some 368 million tons of waste are incinerated globally per year equating to annual emissions of around 368 million tons of carbon dioxide."

Experts hope that by showing the effects of incineration, lawmakers will look into other solutions in dealing with waste at the local level that do not require burning. - **Report from Bettina Magsaysay, ABS-CBN News**

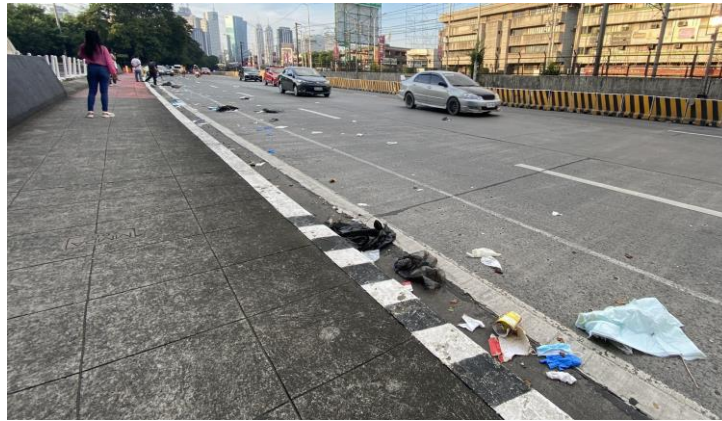


CONCEPT NEWS CENTRAL

# Nagsorry, Cardinal Santos umiiwas maimbestigahan?

Published 21 hours ago on September 29, 2020 08:56 AM

By [TDI](#) [@tribunephil](#)



Nagkalat ang mask at iba pang medical wastes sa EDSA matapos mabuksan ang anim na garbage bags ng medical wastes mula Cardinal Santos hospital. W. Commons

Sorry na lang?

Humingi ng paumanhin ang Cardinal Santos Medical Center matapos mabuyangyang sa Epifanio delos Santos Avenue o EDSA ang medical wastes nito na nasa anim na garbage bag.

Magsasagawa umano ng imbestigasyon ang ospital bagamat ito mismo ay iniimbestigahan ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority at Philippine National Police .

Hindi basta basura ang medical wastes dahil ito ay naglalaman ng bacteria, viruses at harmful chemicals na maaaring magresulta sa pagkakasakit o maging pagkamatay ng mae-expose.

Ang medical wastes ay natagpuang nakahambalang sa northbound lane ng EDSA malapit sa White Plains Avenue.

“We have initiated an internal investigation to determine what happened and if there was negligence on the part of our third-party provider contracted for the collection and disposal of our waste material,” anang CSMC.

Nang buksan ang garbage bags, ang mga ito ay naglalaman ng masks, gloves, personal protective equipment at iba pang medical wastes.

Ang mga PPE ay kasalukuyang ginagamit sa mga ospital bilang proteksyon ng mga frontliners sa nakahahawang coronavirus disease 2019.

“We regret the inconvenience this unfortunate incident has caused the public. Please be assured of our commitment to address the issues in coordination with the authorities and other concerned parties...,” anang CSMC.

*p/jd*

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/29/nagsorry-cardinal-santos-umiiwas-maimbestigahan/>



# Antipolo crematorium spews black smoke, scares residents

Published September 29, 2020 10:13pm



Video link: <https://youtu.be/hollR7abhSs>

Some residents of Antipolo City were alarmed by thick black smoke that spewed nearly every day by a crematorium that burned bodies of COVID-19 patients.

According to Emil Sumangil's report on "24 Oras" on Tuesday, one netizen's video of the smoke went viral among Antipolo residents.

"Akala ko kasi may nasusunog sa sobrang itim ng usok so gumilid ako sa kalye at tiningnan ko. Aba, chimney. On that side, I thought it was a factory or anything... pagsakay ko sasakyan at lumampas ako, no'ng tumapat ako, ay hindi pala factory," alias "Jake" said.

"No'ng nag-post ako may mga nag-PM sa akin na tagaroon at sinabi na tuloy tuloy daw 'yun at 'yun din ang nagiging problema nila. Ramdam ko 'yung hirap ng mga nando'n sa tabi," he added.

Residents said that while the smoke had no odor, they noticed it coming out of a chimney almost daily.

"Kung sa akin, mali. Ang kaso, wala namang nagrereklamo. Alam na po ni mayor 'yan... nirereklamo na 'yan ng mga tao pero walang nangyari kaya ng tao parang wala na. Kasi magreklamo ka, baka ikaw pa pag-initan," Editha Mayores said.

The Antipolo Environment and Waste Management Office conducted a surprise inspection of the crematorium of Heaven's Gate Memorial Parks and Chapel and found violations of an ordinance on pollution.

"Nag-issue tayo ng notice of violation and then for the violation ng ordinance ng Antipolo City about the pollution. So kailangan i-comply nila and then we will check lahat lahat kung ano pang puwede nilang gawin para hindi na maulit ito," office head Violeta Sabulao-Faiyaz said.



The crematorium management said the chimney emitted thick, black smoke because COVID-19 fatalities are cremated along with the blankets and pillows they used.

“Pag nagke-cremate po kami, hindi na po namin binubuksan ‘yung cadaver para po sa safety ng mga cremator po natin kaya po siguro meron pong usok na lumabas,” supervisor Jun Bumanglag said.

The Antipolo government slapped a 5,000-peso fine on the crematorium and warned that further violations may lead to closure.

“Yang usok na lumalabas ay hindi naman siya talaga masyadong hazard sa health ng tao kung ang temperature ay more than 1,000 degrees centigrade. So ‘pag mataaas ‘yun, hindi siya masyadong ano kasi naka-crack niya talaga ‘yung lahat ng mga dapat sunugin,” Sabulao-Faiyaz said.

“Tataasan po namin ‘yung chimney tapos napansin ko po kasi nawala ‘yung cover namin do’n sa ibabaw para po hindi buo ‘yung paglabas ng usok so lalagyan po namin ng cover para in case man na may lumabas pa pong usok, magi-spread siya,” Bumanglag vowed.—  
**Julia Mari Ornedo/LDF, GMA News**





**GMA News** 12h · 🌐

TINGNAN: Napadpad sa baybayin ng Brgy. Maya sa bayan ng Daanbantayan sa Cebu ang isang malaking isda na tinatawag ng mga residente na "sunfish."

Ayon kay YouScooper John Reco Estrera, nakita ng mga residente ang isda kaninang bandang 8 a.m. sa baybayin ng nasabing lugar. Sinubukan nila itong ibalik sa malalim na bahagi ng dagat pero nanghihina na ang isda kaya ito ibinalik sa pampang at kalaunan namatay.

Nasa kustodiya na ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources ang nasabing isda.

👤: John Reco Estrera

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The metropolis and several other areas would remain under general community quarantine until Oct. 31, as decided by the government and recommended by the Metro Manila Council.

Manila PIO/Released

## Mayors, experts want steady COVID-19 decline before MGCQ

[Janvic Mateo](#), [Neil Jayson Servallos](#) (The Philippine Star) - September 30, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Metro Manila mayors and experts are amenable to a shift to the lowest quarantine level only if they see a sustained decline in the number of COVID-19 cases in the region.

The metropolis and several other areas would remain under general community quarantine (GCQ) until Oct. 31, as decided by the government and recommended by the Metro Manila Council.

San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, who sits in the council with 16 other mayors of the region, yesterday said they saw a sharp decline of COVID-19 cases despite the reopening of businesses and more people being allowed outdoors.

For them to agree to a shift to modified GCQ (MGCQ) status, however, he said what they “want to see is a stable decline in the numbers so that if and when we see that indeed, the numbers continue to go down, then we can now re-allow some industries or businesses to reopen.”

“We are seeing that the interventions that we in Metro Manila are doing, they are working... We felt this is not the right time to shift,” he said in a television interview yesterday, noting that mayors are cautious to prevent a rise in cases.

This, as experts monitored a minor spike in COVID-19 cases following the short-lived implementation of eased social distancing requirements in public transportation this month.

Nicanor Austriaco, visiting professor of biology at the University of Santo Tomas and member of the OCTA Research team, noted the spike of cases recorded on Sept. 17-18, several days after eased social distancing requirements in trains and buses in Metro Manila.

“For three days, we had shorter social distancing and you can actually see a spike of several hundred cases in those three days,” Austriaco said in an interview with “The Chiefs” aired on One News/TV5 on Monday.

“We relaxed for three or four days, and you can actually see a very small spike of several hundred cases about four or five days after that, which is what you would expect as the increase in mobility will lead to (more) infection,” he added.



The Department of Transportation reduced social distancing requirements in public transportation starting Sept. 14, but the government suspended it three days later after experts raised concerns that it could lead to a spike in cases.

President Duterte later decided to scrap the policy.

Data showed an increase in mobility coinciding the time when the social distancing requirements in public transportation were reduced, according to Austriaco.

“It was about a 10-percent increase in mobility and that ... resulted five days later into 300 or 400 more cases than expected,” he said, as he warned against similar policies that could lead to rise in infections.

“The danger is if we change too much too quickly, we would not be able to see the effects until it’s too late,” he added.

In the same program, University of the Philippines (UP) mathematics professor Guido David, who is also a member of the OCTA Research team, cited studies showing high risks among activities that involve mass gathering.

Aside from activities such as going to concerts and cinemas, he said reduced social distancing in public transportation would also enable crowding in public places.

“By decreasing social distancing, you’re also crowding your buses and trains and that could lead to more transmission,” he said.

UP political science professor Ranjit Singh Rye said the plan to allow provincial bus operations has to be carefully monitored as it may result in more transmission.

“Yes, we have gone down significantly over the last month or so, but the case load is still high. The virus is still here and if we’re not careful, we might be transporting carriers all over the country through provincial bus lines,” Rye said.

He added that policymakers should also be careful in reopening the tourism industry in the country.

Rye expressed support for the continued implementation of GCQ in Metro Manila, saying they are not seeing numbers that would convince them that the quarantine restrictions can already be loosened.

### **‘There is hope’**

While Metro Manila remains the country’s pandemic epicenter, there is still hope that quarantine measures in the capital region would be eased, Malacañang said yesterday.

The government’s pandemic task force decided to retain Metro Manila’s quarantine classification despite calls by some business groups to relax restrictions to reopen the economy.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, however, said Metro Manila may still be downgraded to MGCQ if its COVID-19 numbers improve.

“There is hope as reported by UP OCTA Group. Our (case) growth rate is on a downward trend and the attack rate is also going down, so there’s always hope,” Roque said at a press briefing.



The Palace spokesman said the two-week case growth rate in Metro Manila is at 45 percent, which is considered medium risk. The average attack rate, meanwhile, is at 5.8 per 100,000.

Roque said Metro Manila mayors agree that certain measures can be relaxed even if the capital region remains under GCQ.

“Mayors of Metro Manila support the view that while we are under GCQ, more sectors of the economy can reopen,” he said.

“We need to live with COVID and in spite of COVID, so we have to take care of our (health) so we can work,” he added.

The latest report by the OCTA Research showed that the number of new COVID-19 cases per day in the Philippines went down to 2,988 this month from 4,300 in August. The country’s reproduction number, meanwhile, dropped to 0.82 this month from 1.14 in August.

New COVID-19 cases per day in Metro Manila decreased to 1,200 in September from 2,676 last month. Reproduction rate in the capital region, meanwhile, went down to 0.74 this month from 1.14 in August.

Metro Manila’s positivity rate, meanwhile, went down to 10 percent this month from 16 percent in August. The occupancy rate for all COVID-19 beds in Metro Manila is at 57 percent while that for COVID-19 intensive care unit beds is at 65 percent, the report said.

### **Voter registration**

Meanwhile, as talks about suspending the 2022 elections have surfaced, Zamora said those within the age brackets under strict stay-at-home orders need to wait until Metro Manila shifts to MGCQ before being able to register to vote.

Under the guidelines released by the government in June, persons 21 years old and below and 60 years old and above are still “required to remain in their residences at all times” even in areas under MGCQ.

“The voter registration will disallow those who are 18 to 21 to register at this point. I guess once we reach a point that we will shift to MGCQ, that will be the time they can go out and register. But everyone who is within the age that can go out can do so already,” he added.

Voter registration resumed this month, except in areas under enhanced community quarantine and modified ECQ, prompting local chief executives to mull asking the Commission on Elections to defer registration to January 2021.

As of Monday, Department of Health figures showed Metro Manila has 21,279 active cases, 2,629 deaths and 138,369 recoveries – a total of 162,277 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

### **Aggressive implementation**

The government will aggressively implement quarantine protocols in Metro Manila where people infected with COVID-19 are immediately isolated from the community, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said yesterday.

Año made the statement after Duterte extended the GCQ in Metro Manila until Oct. 31.

He said the only way for cases in Metro Manila to go down is through the strict implementation of Oplan Kalinga, where people with COVID-19 who are on home quarantine are extracted from the community and placed in quarantine facilities managed by the government.



“We should be aggressive in putting in isolation facilities those who are positive,” Año said in Filipino in an interview over Teleradyo.

Close contacts of COVID-19 patients will be placed on lockdown and are not allowed to leave their homes until they test negative for the virus.

Año had earlier said they would strictly implement the no home quarantine policy for COVID-19 patients, except for those with existing comorbidities.

“This is the way that we see to stop the chain of transmission,” he said.

Under GCQ guidelines, residents of Metro Manila can fly to Boracay island starting Oct. 1 provided they test negative for COVID-19.

Año said tourists are required to wear face masks in public places in Boracay except when they go swimming.

“You might drown if you’re wearing face mask,” he added.

Parties, organized sports activities and other group events in Boracay are still prohibited in compliance with minimum health standards, according to the interior and local government chief.

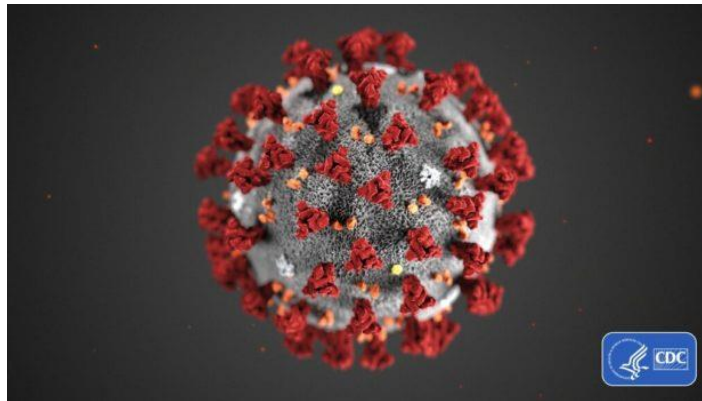
Restobars are open for dine-in services, where customers are only allowed to have two bottles of liquor. – **Alexis Romero, Emmanuel Tupas**



# 2,025 new COVID-19 cases bring PH total to 309,303

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 04:19 PM September 29, 2020



This illustration provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in January 2020 shows the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Image: CDC via AP, File

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines' number of COVID-19 cases shot up to 309,303 after 2,025 new infections were recorded, according to the latest data released by the Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday.

Of the total cases, 50,925 are considered active cases, of which 86.5 percent are mild, 8.8 percent are asymptomatic, 3.3 percent are critical and 1.4 percent are severe.

Metro Manila continues to be the top in terms of having newly-announced cases with 628, followed by Cavite with 279, Negros Occidental with 218, Laguna with 108, and Bulacan with 102.

The latest data also showed that the health department reported 290 new recoveries, bringing the total to 252,930.

Meanwhile, the country's [COVID-19](#) death toll also rose to 5,448 after 68 new fatalities were logged.

The DOH noted that 10 duplicates, of which four were recoveries and one death, were removed from the total case count.

Further, there were also 21 cases previously tagged as recoveries but were reclassified as deaths after final validation.

JPV



## Reopening of Boracay to more markets

By The Manila Times

September 30, 2020

Boracay Island will further open its doors to more local tourists on October 1, thus signaling the continued resurgence of domestic tourism nationwide.

This development came as a result of a special meeting convened by the principals of the Boracay Inter-agency Task Force (BIATF) led by its Chairperson Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Co-Vice Chairpersons, Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año and Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, with the Province of Aklan Governor Florencio Miraflores on September 22.

“The reopening of Boracay to new market sources signals a gathering momentum for domestic tourism all over the country. We are pleased that the BIATF and the LGUs of the Province of Aklan and Municipality of Malay have agreed to put health and safety as the priority as we carefully and safely welcome more guests to the island,” Secretary Puyat said.

Meanwhile, minimum health and safety guidelines (HSG) already in place, and in accordance with Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) and national government mandates, will be subjected to continued enhancement. The Province of Aklan had earlier rolled out stringent protocols in receiving guests from Western Visayas as well as strict guidelines in handling COVID-19 related emergencies.

A Covid-19 Laboratory is now operational at the Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital in Kalibo, Aklan, which forms a part of the network of facilities and services needed in a safe environment for host communities, business stakeholders, and tourists.

Since the island’s reopening to travelers from Western Visayas last June 16, the DoT has already issued Certificates of Authority to Operate (CAO) to 199 hotels and resorts representing 4,416 rooms.



## Phivolcs tutok sa 4 na nag-aalburutong bulkan



September 29, 2020 @ 7:20 PM 10 hours ago

Manila, Philippines-Tuloy ang monitoring ng Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology ang apat na bulkan na nagpapakita ng abnormalidad, kahit pa tinapyasan ang kanilang panukalang budget para sa susunod na taon.

Ito ang inihayag ni Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum sa pagdinig ng Senado sa panukalang 2021 budget ng Department of Science and Technology.

Kabilang sa mga ito ang Taal sa Batangas, Mayon sa Albay, Bulusan sa Sorsogon at Kanlaon sa Negros Island.

Pinayuhan ni Solidum ang mga residente na umiwas sa danger zone sa sandaling itaas sa alert level 1 ang apat na nabanggit na bulkan.

Samantala, sinabi ni Solidum na hindi maapektuhan ang ginagawa nilang pagbabantay sa mga bulkan kahit tapyasan pa ang kanilang budget.

Nabatid na naglaan ang gobyerno ng mahigit P462M para sa Phivolcs sa ilalim ng panukalang 2021 budget na mas mababa nag P133M kaysa sa nakaraang taon.

Aniya, maapektuhan ng naturang kaltas sa kanilang budget ang mga proyektong naglalayong palakasin ang 'tsunami awareness' at katatagan sa komunidad. **RNT**





## Phivolcs monitoring 4 volcanoes with 'abnormal' conditions

Jaehwa Bernardo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 29 2020 03:29 PM



Fishermen return to Taal Lake in Agoncillio, Batangas on January 30, 2020, days after residents were allowed to return within the 7-kilometer danger zone during window hours due to the downgrading of Taal Volcano's alert level. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Tuesday it was monitoring 4 volcanoes in the country for their "abnormal" conditions, even as the agency faced budget cuts under its proposed budget for next year.

The volcanoes include Taal in Batangas, Mayon in Albay, Bulusan in Sorsogon, and Kanlaon in Negros Island, Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum said during the Senate hearing of the Department of Science and Technology's (DOST) proposed 2021 budget.

"At Alert Level 1, all the 4 mentioned volcanoes earlier can actually have a steam-driven explosion... people then should not go inside their danger zones," said Solidum.

Taal has seen a decrease in activity since its steam-driven eruption last January but Phivolcs has seen a "slight change" in the past weeks, said Solidum.

"Nakita namin na namamaga ulit so we have to continuously monitor it," he said.

(We saw that it was inflating again so we have to continuously monitor it.)

"Mayon Volcano also is slightly again inflating from its base," Solidum added.

Taal's steam-driven eruption last January triggered an ash fall that reached parts of Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

The unrest also displaced hundreds of residents in the provinces of Batangas, Quezon, Laguna, and Cavite.

### Budget cuts

But Solidum said the proposed budget cuts of Phivolcs would not affect the monitoring of the volcanoes.

"It will not affect the current monitoring of those [volcanoes]. The main issue is we will slow down in terms of modernizing or putting up more stations," Solidum said.

Government allotted over P462 million for Phivolcs under the proposed 2021 budget, down by P133 million from the previous year.

Solidum also said the budget cuts would affect projects aimed at "strengthening the tsunami awareness and resilience of communities."

Earthquakes and volcanic activity are not uncommon in the Philippines due to its position on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," where tectonic plates collide deep below the Earth's surface.

Source: [https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/29/20/phivolcs-monitoring-4-volcanoes-with-abnormal-conditions?fbclid=IwAR2t7Cx\\_zljb6ok0q4r5CKn2eYRW3KChUxoTiXy25xLs98LRnMgvJ6B5IH8](https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/29/20/phivolcs-monitoring-4-volcanoes-with-abnormal-conditions?fbclid=IwAR2t7Cx_zljb6ok0q4r5CKn2eYRW3KChUxoTiXy25xLs98LRnMgvJ6B5IH8)

# Can global brands avoid 'greenwash' with new forest-saving plan?

After failing to end deforestation in supply chains by 2020, a coalition of multinationals will develop a roadmap for each commodity, but green groups say time is running short.



A worker holds a palm oil fruit bunch at a factory in Tanjung Karang, Malaysia. Image: Reuters/Lim Huey Teng

[Thomson Reuters Foundation](#)

Sept. 29, 2020

A new push by global household brands to combat tropical forest loss must do better at reducing deforestation across whole supply chains if it is to succeed where earlier efforts failed, environmentalists warned.

High-profile members of the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) this week launched the [“Forest Positive Coalition of Action”](#), vowing to speed up work to stop key commodity supply chains causing further loss of forests, in a bid to curb climate change.

But the launch was met with scepticism by many green groups after the Paris-based CGF struggled to meet a 2020 target set a decade ago to purchase only sustainably produced commodities, including palm oil, soy, beef, paper and pulp.

“We’ve seen ten years of inaction, half-measures and greenwashing from the CGF, while human rights defenders and frontline communities have been putting their lives on the line to defend forests,” said Brihannala Morgan, a senior campaigner at US-based environmental group Rainforest Action Network.

“We have an increasingly narrow window of time to take real action,” she added in a statement.

In 2019, tropical rainforests - whose preservation is considered crucial to limiting planetary heating - disappeared at a rate of one football pitch every six seconds, according to data from online monitoring service Global Forest Watch.

Green groups blame the production of palm oil, the world’s most widely used edible oil, and other agricultural commodities for much of the destruction, as forests are cleared for plantations, ranches and farms.

The 17 consumer brands, retailers and manufacturers making up the new forest coalition - which have a collective market value of \$1.8 trillion - include Carrefour, Walmart, General Mills, Mars, Nestle, Unilever and PepsiCo.

Led by their chief executive officers, the group will aim to fast-track efforts to remove deforestation from supply chains, and create best-practice plans for each commodity.

Environmentalists say conserving existing forests and restoring damaged ones reduces the risk of flooding, reins in global warming by storing more carbon and protects biodiversity.

“The executives of these CGF companies live on the same planet as the rest of us, and we all face the same climate emergency,” said Morgan.

Jeff Conant, forests programme director at Friends of the Earth US, said agribusiness and consumer brands had been making “empty promises for a decade while continuing to profit from the destruction”, as wildfires and storms batter a warming world.

“Unless we see real action, we can expect that whatever the CGF says about being ‘forest positive’ is pure, utter greenwash,” he added.

Evolution not revolution

The CGF, a member-funded organisation, seeks solutions to major challenges that companies cannot tackle alone, including deforestation and forced labour.

Late last year, the group said that while progress had been made with its non-binding commitment to halt deforestation by 2020, an overemphasis on green certification had not led to sustainability becoming the norm across entire supply chains.

Many companies have invested in ways to ensure their materials can be certified as sustainable, including technologies - like radar, phone apps and satellite imagery - to detect problems when they arise and tackle them as quickly as possible.

Some have imposed rules on suppliers and stopped working with those that have cleared forests, while others have teamed up with green groups to help small farmers improve practices.

But mapping and tracking supply chains from the farmer to the plate is challenging, especially as many commodities are produced by small growers in isolated rural areas.

Didier Bergeret, director of social sustainability at the CGF, said the forum would not set fresh deadlines for now, but companies that wanted to make fast progress would lead, with others able to join later.

“I’m not even saying it’s revolutionary - rather the contrary - it’s just an evolution of the way we are doing things, trying to make sure that we learned our lessons,” he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The commodity “roadmaps” being developed will have performance indicators and follow global sustainable development goals, with input from environmental and other civil society groups, he added.

Regular meetings will be held to check on progress, including workshops for CGF company CEOs, he said, with the aim of implementing the roadmaps over the next two to three years.

Failing to achieve the 2020 goal “doesn’t prevent us from continuing to believe action is needed”, Bergeret said.

The hope is that the new framework will be “effective in fixing what went wrong last time, while still capitalising on what was good”, he added.



By joining the coalition, each firm commits to implementing the steps in the roadmaps - for [palm oil](#), soy, paper, pulp and fibre-based packaging - within their own supply chains, he said.

The CGF said its members would work with suppliers, traders and governments, in both producer and importing nations, to encourage them to put in place measures to conserve forests.

“We believe forest protection is a driver of economic growth, not a sacrifice to growth,” Mars Chief Executive Grant Reid said in a statement. “(It) provides healthy ecosystems and supports productive landscapes and resilient communities.”

*This story was published with permission from [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#), the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, resilience, women’s rights, trafficking and property rights. Visit <http://news.trust.org/climate>.*



A member of the Afro-Mexican community fishes in the Pacific Ocean in Punta Maldonado, Cuajinicuilapa, Guerrero state, Mexico, on September 11, 2020, amid the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

## Warming oceans more 'stable' and that's bad, scientists warn

[Kelly Macnamara](#) (Agence France-Presse) - September 29, 2020 - 9:20am

PARIS, France — Global warming is making the oceans more stable, increasing surface temperatures and reducing the carbon they can absorb, according to research published Monday by climate scientists who warned that the findings have "profound and troubling" implications.

Man-made climate change has increased surface temperatures across the planet, leading to atmospheric instability and amplifying extreme weather events, such as storms.

But in the oceans, higher temperatures have a different effect, slowing the mixing between the warming surface and the cooler, oxygen-rich waters below, researchers said.

This ocean "stratification" means less deep water is rising towards the surface carrying oxygen and nutrients, while the water at the surface absorbs less atmospheric carbon dioxide to bury at depth.

In a report published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, the international team of climate scientists said they found that stratification globally had increased by a "substantial" 5.3% from 1960 to 2018.

Most of this stabilization occurred towards the surface, and was attributed largely to temperature rises.

They said this process is also exacerbated by the melting of sea ice, meaning that more fresh water—which is lighter than salt water—also accumulates on the surface of the ocean.

Study co-author Michael Mann, a climate science professor at Pennsylvania State University, said in a commentary published in *Newsweek* that the "seemingly technical finding has profound and troubling implications."



These include potentially driving more "intense, destructive hurricanes" as ocean surfaces warm.

Mann also pointed to a reduction in the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed, which could mean that carbon pollution builds up faster than expected in the atmosphere.

He warned that sophisticated climate models often underestimate ocean stratification and may also be underestimating its impact.

With warmer upper waters receiving less oxygen, there are also implications for marine life.

By absorbing a quarter of man-made CO<sub>2</sub> and soaking up more than 90 percent of the heat generated by greenhouse gases, oceans keep the population alive—but at a terrible cost, according to the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC).

Seas have grown acidic, potentially undermining their capacity to draw down CO<sub>2</sub>. Warmer surface water has expanded the force and range of deadly tropical storms. Marine heatwaves are wiping out coral reefs, and accelerating the melt-off of glaciers and ice sheets driving sea level rise.

Last year, research published in the US Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calculated that climate change would empty the ocean of nearly a fifth of all living creatures, measured by mass, by the end of the century.



# Rio Tinto: Mining giant accused of poisoning rivers in Papua New Guinea

8 hours ago



A satellite shot of the Panguna mine

Mining giant Rio Tinto is facing accusations that a mine it abandoned in Papua New Guinea two decades ago is leaking poisonous waste into rivers.

More than 150 people living in Bougainville have filed a complaint with the Australian authorities.

They say that waste from the copper and gold mine is causing health problems for 12,000 people living nearby.

The mining firm says it is willing to speak to the current owners of the Panguna mine and the local community.

It comes after Rio Tinto's **boss and two other senior executives resigned** earlier this month following the news that the company had destroyed sacred Aboriginal sites in Pilbara, Western Australia.

## ▪ **Rio Tinto: Church of England condemns Aboriginal destruction**

"Our rivers are poisoned with copper, our homes get filled with dust from the tailings mounds, our kids get sick from the pollution," said Theonila Roka Matbob, a traditional landowner and member of the local parliament in Bougainville.

The Panguna mine was one of the region's biggest for copper and gold in the 1970s and 1980s, but widespread anger among local communities over environmental damage and distribution of profits forced its closure more than two decades ago.

Rio Tinto handed its stake in the mine to the government of Papua New Guinea four years ago, but many feel the company should still take responsibility for cleaning up the site.

"These are not problems we can fix with our bare hands. We urgently need Rio Tinto to do what's right and deal with the disaster they have left behind," Ms Matbob said.

A spokesman for the British-Australian firm **told the Sydney Morning Herald** that it was willing to engage with the local community.

"We are aware of the deterioration of mining infrastructure at the site and surrounding areas, and claims of resulting adverse environmental and social, including human rights, impacts," a spokesman told the newspaper.



## Parrots in wildlife park moved after swearing at visitors

Rob Picheta, CNN • Updated 30th September 2020

**London (CNN)** — Five parrots have been removed from public view at a British wildlife park after they started swearing at customers.

The foul-mouthed birds were split up after they launched a number of different expletives at visitors and staff just days after being donated to Lincolnshire Wildlife Park in eastern [England](#).

"It just went ballistic, they were all swearing," the venue's chief executive Steve Nichols told [CNN Travel](#) on Tuesday. "We were a little concerned about the children."

"I get called a fat t\*\*t every time I walk past," Nichols complained.

The African grey parrots -- named Eric, Jade, Elsie, Tyson and Billy -- were given to the park from five different owners within the same week, and shared a quarantining facility together before being placed on display.

But staff immediately noticed that the birds shared a propensity to fly off the handle.



Elsie, one of the potty-mouthed parrots. (Jade shown top).  
Lincolnshire Wildlife Park

"They literally, within a very short period of time, starting swearing at each other," Nichols said. "'F\*\*k off' is the most common one," he explained -- "it's a very easy one for them to learn" -- but the birds would utter "anything you can think of."

Most customers enjoyed the talent once the parrots were displayed. "The visitors were giving them as much back as what they were giving to them," Nichols said.

But concern for younger customers forced staff to split up the birds and temporarily remove them from the park's public areas. Staff now hope the birds' language will become more family-friendly now that they have been separated.

"To take in a swearing parrot isn't an unusual thing, it's something that happens probably three or four times a year," Nichols said.





But the pandemic has led to a surge in donations, as owners spend more time with their birds and decide to give them to parks that can provide them with a larger living space, he explained.

"We would normally take in one or two parrots in a fortnight. Today we took in eight," he said.

African greys are among the most popular species of parrot. Around 1.1 million indoor birds were kept as pets in the UK in 2019, according to the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association.



# Final whale saved from grim Australia mass stranding

Published September 29, 2020, 6:46 AM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

A lone whale was rescued from among hundreds of carcasses Sunday, taking to 110 the number of creatures that survived a mass stranding in southern Australia.



Rescuers working to save a whale beached in Macquarie Harbour on the rugged west coast of Tasmania

The country's largest-ever mass stranding saw around 470 pilot whales become stuck in a remote harbour on Tasmania's rugged western seaboard last week, sparking a major effort to save the animals.

It was "absolutely remarkable" another whale was found alive six days after the pod was first discovered, a Tasmania environment department spokeswoman told AFP, adding that it had been taken back out to sea. More than 100 rescuers toiled for days in chilly waters, but many volunteers and conservationists have now packed up as efforts turned to disposing of the remaining carcasses.

"There has been a tremendous team effort and this combined commitment has allowed us to get as many whales as we can back out to sea," Parks and Wildlife Service manager Rob Buck said of the "complex rescue".

With more than 300 carcasses spread across a 10-kilometre area (about 6 miles), authorities shifted their focus Sunday to a mass sea burial.

Boats have begun towing the dead whales into the open ocean, where they will be released over several days.

Authorities have warned that more whales could be found in the area, with some animals likely to become beached for a second time.

The causes of mass strandings remain unknown, but some experts have suggested the pod may have gone off track after feeding close to the shoreline or by following one or two whales that strayed.



# France to ban mink farms and wild animals in travelling circuses

Published September 29, 2020, 5:53 PM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

France said Tuesday it planned to “gradually” ban mink farms in the country as well the use of wild animals in travelling circuses and the breeding of dolphins and orcas in captivity.

Environment minister Barbara Pompili announced the sweeping measures saying “our attitude to wild animals has changed”.

The country’s three dolphinariums will also no longer be able to breed or bring in new dolphins or killer whales.

“It is time that our ancestral fascination with these wild beings no longer means they end up in captivity,” Pompili added.

Animals rights group PETA hailed the decision as “an historic victory”.

“Champagne bottles are being uncorked here. Thank you to all those who have helped bring this about.” The animal charity 30 Million Friends also welcomed the ban, tweeting that the government had taken “the public’s demands for the wellbeing of wild animals” into account.

It said it wanted the decisions to be pushed through as quickly as possible.

However, the minister was vague on when the shutters would come down on mink farms and the use of wild animals for entertainment, saying only that it would be in “the years to come”.

“Putting a date on it does not solve all the problems,” she said.

## Dogged resistance

“I prefer to start a process so that we get there as quickly as possible.”

The measures are sure to be resisted by the French fur industry, which has fought a dogged rearguard action in recent years against luxury fashion houses going fur-free.

And it is as yet unclear what the measures will mean for theme parks that stage birds of prey shows. Pompili said no new dolphinariums will be allowed to be built in France.

She said the government was looking at the idea of a sanctuary for the dolphins and the three orcas which now in captivity.

And she warned that it could take “seven to 10 years to prepare a future” for the creatures.

French circuses use some 500 wild animals at the moment, according to the profession.

Pompili said the government was going to offer circuses and dolphinariums an aid package of up to eight million euros (\$9.3 million) to help them adapt to the bans.

“We are asking (circuses) to reinvent themselves,” she said.

“It will be a time when they will need support, and the state will be at their side,” the minister added.



More than 20 European countries have either banned or heavily restricted the use of animals for entertainment.

Some 400 local councils in France already have such bans in place.



ANDREW BLADON/  
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ANDREW Bladon of the  
University of Cambridge shows  
this photograph of a Peacock  
Aglais butterfly, which is in danger  
as it depends on the climate for  
survival.