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**DENR**

# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



In a virtual ceremony held last Thursday, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with USAID for the Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes (SIBOL) and the Safe Water projects.

STAR/ File

## DENR inks P2 billion partnership with USAID

[Elizabeth Marcelo](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 31, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has entered into a five-year partnership agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for P2 billion worth of projects which aim to improve the country's biodiversity conservation and access to clean water.

In a virtual ceremony held last Thursday, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with USAID for the Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes (SIBOL) and the Safe Water projects.

“Given the current pandemic, the DENR is committed more than ever to address the country's environmental challenges. We can easily attain this goal if we have partners like USAID,” Cimatu said, adding that USAID has been the Philippine government's “time-tested partner for the environment.”

SIBOL is a P1.1-billion project that aims to improve the governance of natural resources, stimulate public and private sector investments in conservation and reduce environmental crimes.

Safe Water, meanwhile, is an P870-million project that intends to increase access to stable water supply and sanitation services, as well as to promote sustainable management of water resources and strengthen the governance and regulation of the water sector.

Under the agreement, the DENR, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau, Forest Management Bureau and field offices nationwide, shall implement the projects for the next five years in cooperation with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the National Water Resources Board. The USAID, meanwhile, shall provide the technical assistance.

The SIBOL and Safe Water initiatives are among the projects under the P7.25 billion USAID-Philippines agreement on enhanced ecosystems and community resilience signed by the NEDA and USAID last February.

“Together, through these projects, we will advance our shared goals of environmental sustainability and improve the lives of Filipino communities,” Cimatu said.



USAID acting mission director Sean Callahan lauded the “long history of partnership between the DENR and USAID,” saying they “have achieved much in creating a more secure environment that sustains both ecological integrity and human development.



## DENR at USAID magtutulong para sa natural resources protection at clean water accessibility



May 30, 2021 @ 4:55 PM 13 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Upang mapalakas ang biodiversity conservation ng bansa at water access at sanitation services nagkaroon ng bagong kasunduan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at United States Agency International Development (USAID)

Malugod na tinanggap ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang five-year partnership sa USAID para sa Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes (SIBOL) at ang Safe Water projects sa nilagdaang memorandums of understanding (MOUs) noong Huwebes, Mayo 27, 2021.

“Given the current pandemic, the DENR is committed more than ever to address the country’s environmental challenges. We can easily attain this goal if we have partners like USAID,” sabi ni Cimatu at idinagdag pa nito na ang international development agency ay isang “time-tested partner” para sa kapaligiran.

Ayon sa DENR ang SIBOL at ang Safe Water programs ay ilan lamang sa mga proyektong nakapaloob sa P7.25 billion (US\$150 million) USAID-Philippines agreement para sa pinahusay na ecosystems and community resilience na nilagdaan ng National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) at USAID noong Pebrero 2021.

Isa ang DENR sa implementing partners na mamamahala sa paghahatid ng resulta ng programa para makamit ang mga layunin nito habang ang USAID ang magbibigay ng technical assistance para sa SIBOL at Safe Water initiatives.

Ang SIBOL ay ang P1.1-billion project (US\$22 million) na layuning mapabuti ang “natural resource governance, stimulate public and private sector investments in conservation, and reduce environmental crimes.”

Habang ang Safe Water initiative ay ang P870-million project (US\$18.4 million) na layuning maragdagan ang “access” sa matatag na water supply at sanitation services, maisaayos ang sustainable management ng water resources at mapalakas ang governance at regulation ng water sector.

Ang DENR, sa pamamagitan ng Biodiversity Management Bureau at ng Forest Management Bureau at iba pang DENR field offices sa bansa kasama rin ang NEDA at National Water Resources Board, ang magpapatupad ng mga proyektong ito sa loob ng limang taon.



“Together, through these projects, we will advance our shared goals of environmental sustainability and improve the lives of Filipino communities,” saad ni Cimatú.

Kaugnay nito sa kanyang panig, sinabi ni Acting Mission Director of USAID Sean Callahan na: “The long history of the partnership between DENR and USAID has been fruitful and together we have achieved much in creating a more secure environment that sustains both ecological integrity and human development.”

Kinilala rin ni Cimatú ang mahalagang kontribusyon ng USAID sa kapaligiran ng bansa sa ginanap na seremonya noong nakalipas na Huwebes.

Sinabi nito na ang kahalagahan ng DENR-USAID partnership para sa pangangalaga ng natural forest sa pamamagitan ng B+WISER (Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience) at Protect Wildlife projects.

“USAID, a consistent and effective ally of the DENR, has also supported us in creating sustainable models which guided us for the management of our ecosystems,” dagdag pa ni Cimatú.

Pinahalagahan din ni Cimatú ang “milestone partnership” sa pagitan ng DENR at USAID sa pamamagitan ng Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System na nakatutulong na iangat ang pamamahala sa 90% ng mga gubat sa bansa na nakatulong naman sa mga Pilipino na umaasa sa kagubatan para sa kanilang kabuhatan. **Santi Celario**



# Filipinos urged to protect oceans for food security

May 30, 2021, 1:19 pm



(Photo courtesy of OCEAN/Danny Ocampo)

**MANILA** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reiterated its call to Filipinos to protect the ocean, citing its significant role in ensuring food security during a learning event in the culmination of the celebration of the Month of the Ocean on May 24.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu emphasized the importance of protecting the oceans not only to help generate jobs for the tourism sector, but more importantly to ensure food security for the entire country.

"During this health crisis, we have already seen how essential food is to our daily lives. It is, therefore, also fitting that we protect our oceans because through the interconnection of biodiversity, our food supply whether inland or water depends on our oceans," Cimatu said in a news release on Saturday.

At the same time, DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda has expressed concern over the "very alarming" state of our oceans.

"If every person throws a piece of candy wrapper in the ocean, after just a few months, we would lose our oceans. This is the simplest form of explanation to this growing problem," he said.

Antiporda pointed out that the growing problem of marine pollution is one of the main reasons why the DENR closed all illegally operating open dumpsites across the country and strictly implemented Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The dumpsite closures are also in line with the ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation, which is one of the DENR's top priority programs in saving the country's oceans.

"In cleaning Manila Bay, we have three objectives -- to see is to believe, *dapat wala na tayong makikitang* (we should not see) debris. Second, to smell is to believe -- *dapat pag dumaan tayo dyan, ang simoy ng hangin ay amoy dagat na at hindi amoy kubeta* (we should smell fresh air from the sea), and third, to test is to believe -- *pag-test natin ng water quality, dapat standard na siya* (water quality test should be at standard level)," Antiporda pointed out.

Hosted by the Strategic Alliance and Environmental Partnership Division of the DENR Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service, the event featured the success story of the Calatagan Biodiversity Friendly Enterprise in Region 4-A (Calabarzon) and the Coral Rehabilitation Program of Region 11 (Davao).



The learning event, which will also be presented to elementary and high school teachers and members of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, also showcased the best practices followed by communities and DENR personnel in their respective regions.

The Month of the Ocean is celebrated annually in the Philippines during May by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 57 issued in 1998.

This year's celebration has a theme, "The Science We Need for The Ocean We Want." **(PR)**



# Incentives for turning plastic garbage into ecobricks eyed

By Jigger Jerusalem [May 30, 2021, 11:57 am](#)



**PLASTIC GARBAGE FOR ECOBRICKS.** Macabalan barangay chairperson Norbel Saa (left) cuts the ceremonial ribbon during the soft launching of the ecobrick hub in Barangay Macabalan on Saturday (May 29, 2021) with Leland George Llamazares (right), terminal operations manager of the Pilipinas Shell Northern Mindanao import facility in Cagayan de Oro. With them was Reynaldo Digamo (center), Environmental Management Bureau-10 regional director. (PNA photo by Jigger Jerusalem)

**CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY** – The local barangay unit of Macabalan here is planning to implement a reward system to encourage its residents to collect their plastic garbage to be used as raw material for ecobricks.

Macabalan barangay chairperson Norbel Saa said he will ask the barangay council to approve his proposal to provide incentive to residents who can turn in their plastic garbage to the ecobrick hub, the newly launched manufacturer of bricks that are made of waste plastics.

“They must not throw their garbage, but to give it to us. I will request the barangay council to allow me to give, for instance, five kilos of rice for every five kilos of plastic garbage they can turn in,” Saa said Saturday during soft launching of the ecobrick hub put up by Green Antz and Pilipinas Shell Foundation in the barangay.

Jordan Apat, project representative for Green Antz Builders Incorporated, said they can undertake the same arrangement by giving a piece of ecobrick to residents in exchange for, as an example, five kilos of plastic waste.

Apat said the ecobrick project will benefit members of the Macajalar Wharf Porter Association Federation of Multipurpose Cooperative as well as residents of Macabalan.

Leland George Llamazares, terminal operations manager of the Pilipinas Shell Northern Mindanao import facility in this city, said the project, which costs almost PHP4 million, including the 33 solar panels that power the manufacturing site, also aims to provide livelihood to the people.

“Hopefully, in the next months to come, we’ll see more progress for this project,” he said in the same event.

Apat said the hub can make 40 pieces of ecobricks with two kilos of segregated plastics mixed with a sack of cement using simple machines, such as shredders and molders, in 30 to 40 minutes.

“For 20 tons of plastic, we can produce ecobricks for one hectare,” he said, adding the bricks can be used either as concrete blocks for structures, or installed as pavers.

He said the facility can manufacture 5,000 to 6,000 ecobricks in a 24-hour operation.





Aside from providing the technology, Apat said Green Antz will also train the workers on how to operate the machines and the entire process of brick-making.

“We will train them this June. After that, they can already operate,” he added.

As the partner organization, the porters’ association will provide the manpower in the ecobrick production, the cooperative’s chairperson, Villaruel Jumawid Jr., said.

“Our counterpart is the workforce. We are committed, we will manage this properly. Our operation will be transparent,” Jumawid said.

Meanwhile, Environmental Management Bureau-10 director Reynaldo Digamo said one of their areas of concern is on plastic pollution and initiatives, thus the ecobrick hub can help address the issue.

“Plastic pollution is one of the biggest problems the country is facing right now. We are finding ways to solve it. This (project) which can turn plastic waste into a resource is very beneficial,” he said.

To replicate this initiative, Digamo urged companies to go into programs, such as what Pilipinas Shell Foundation has done to help the environment and provide additional income to the people.

Digamo also hoped that the beneficiaries of the Macabalan ecobrick hub will use the facility to the fullest.

“The millions of pesos invested will just go to waste if this project is not being used properly,” Digamo said. **(PNA)**



# Attempt to smuggle wildlife species declared 'lego toys' foiled

By Ferdinand Patinio May 30, 2021, 12:58 pm



**SMUGGLING ATTEMPT.** A red bearded dragon is one of the various wildlife species discovered inside a parcel declared as lego toys. Government authorities foiled the attempt to smuggle the wildlife species from Kuala Lumpur on May 28, 2021. (Photo courtesy of BOC)

**MANILA** – Authorities from the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have foiled an attempt to smuggle different wildlife species declared as “lego toys” from Malaysia.

This, after the BOC port of Ninoy Aquino International Airport, with the Wildlife Traffic Monitoring Unit (WTMU) of DENR, apprehended the claimant of a package containing various wildlife species in Fedex warehouse in Pasay City on Friday.

Port of NAIA District Collector Carmelita Talusan on Saturday said the package declared as “lego toys” came from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Upon examination, it was discovered that 20 sulcata tortoises, 10 razorback turtles, one red bearded dragon, two corn snakes, and eight savanna lizards were concealed with toys.

The BOC said both the claimant and the consignee will face charges for Illegal importation of wildlife species under Section 1113 in relation to Section 117 and 1401 of Republic Act 10863 or "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act" and Sec. 27 of RA 9147 or “Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.”

The BOC through the leadership of Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero is in agreement with DENR to uphold wildlife protection and its conservation. **(PNA)**



# Airport customs foil smuggling of wildlife



**BYBUSINESSMIRROR**

MAY 31, 2021

AGENTS of the airport customs district foiled on Friday a smuggling attempt to bring into the country several preserved specimens of wildlife species from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

A combined team of customs and wildlife personnel nabbed a package that contained 20 pieces of Sulcata tortoise, 10 pieces razorback turtle, one head of a red-bearded dragon, two heads of corn snake and eight heads of savannah lizards. The contraband is valued at P284,000.

The contraband was found concealed in a box declared as “Lego toys” at the Federal Express warehouse in Pasay City.

Airport Customs agents and members of the Wildlife Traffic Monitoring Unit (WTMU) of Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) apprehended the claimant.

A customs report said that around 6:15 p.m. last Friday, an alleged representative of the consignee came to the warehouse to claim the parcel.

Unknown to the claimant whom authorities didn't identify, customs and wildlife agents have already known the contents of the package as banned wildlife species. The claimant who is also suspected as the importer was immediately apprehended by the authorities.

The claimant and all other personalities found involved in the smuggling attempt will face charges for Illegal importation of Wildlife species under the “Customs Modernization and Tariff Act” or “Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.”

District Collector Carmelita M. Talusan said they are fully united with the DENR in upholding wildlife protection and conservation.



## BOC, DENR naharang ang pagpuslit ng wildlife species, claimant arestado



May 30, 2021 @ 9:09 AM 21 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Naharang ng mga tauhan ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) Port of NAIA katuwang ang Wildlife Traffic Monitoring Unit (WTMU) ng Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) ang tangkang pagpuslit sa iba't ibang “wildlife species” sa isinagawang operasyon sa FedEx warehouse, Pasay City.

Batay sa ulat ng BOC, alas-6:15 ng gabi nitong Mayo 28, 2021 nang arestuhin ng mga awtoridad ang nagsilbing claimant at nagpakilalang kinatawan ng consignee makaraang tangkain nitong kunin ang isang parsela na naglalaman ng mga nasabing mga hayop.

Napag-alaman sa BOC, ang nasabing parsela o pakete na ipinadala mula Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia ay idineklara na naglalaman ng “lego toys.”

Sa isinagawang physical examination, nabuking na naglalaman ito ng may 20 piraso ng sulcata tortoise, 10 piraso ng razorback turtle, 1 red bearded dragon, 2 corn snake at 8 savanna lizard kung saan kasama nito ang ibang mga laruan.

“The claimant and all involved will face charges for Illegal importation of Wildlife species under Section 1113 in relation to Section 117 and 1401 of RA 10863 or Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and Sec. 27 of RA 9147 or Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act,” saad ng BOC. **Jay Reyes**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/boc-denr-naharang-ang-pagpuslit-ng-wildlife-species-claimant-arestado/?fbclid=IwAR2ZmWrnCkiW036RK3URCTptfpBf9weIWrDq45HhCSy-fOImClrCvUytRio>



# Wildlife species mula Malaysia nasabat sa Pasay City

By Chona YuMay 29, 2021 - 05:33 PM



Nasabat ng mga tauhan ng Bureau of Customs at Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang iba't-ibang uro ng wildlife species sa isang Fedex warehouse sa Pasay City.

Sa pahayag ng BOC, kabilang sa mga nasabat 20 piraso ng sulcata tortoise, 10 piraso ng razorback turtle, isang red bearded dragon, dalawang corn snake at walong savanna lizard.

Nabatid na galing ng Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia ang mga wildlife species at ideneklarang 'lego toys' ng consignee.

Sa isinagawang operasyon ng BOC, naaresto ang hindi pinangalanang consignee.

Kasong paglabag sa Illegal importation of Wildlife species under Section 1113 sa Republic Act 10863 o "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act" at "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act" ang kakaharaping kaso ng consignee.

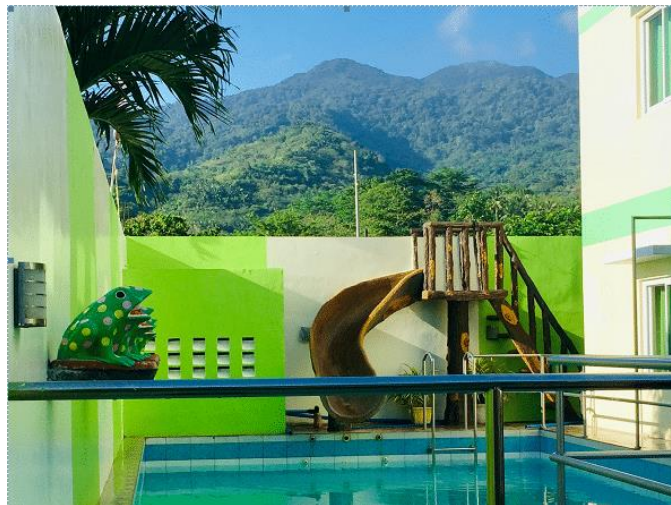


# DENR explains why the sudden increase in the number resorts in Laguna has become problematic

Published May 30, 2021, 7:23 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

The sharp increase in the number of resorts in Laguna the past few years has been worrisome as far as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is concerned.



WATER-INTENSIVE BUSINESS—Resorts flourish in Laguna, but their effects on the sustainability of the Mount Makiling watershed is worrying DENR. (Photo from DENR)

The agency bared on Sunday, May 30 that it is putting up water conservation policies in the Mount Makiling Forest Reserve (MMFR) as the water-intensive resorts in the protected area threaten water resource sustainability in Laguna.

The policies—to be implemented by the city governments of Los Baños and Calamba City—will address the threat on water resources that can arise from the influx of tourists visiting the resorts.

DENR, through its project dubbed “Economics, Policies and Institutions of Groundwater Use by Resorts in Los Baños and Calamba, Laguna”, is now employing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to analyze the spatial distribution of resorts in the two areas. It also involves the formulation of a mechanism by which tourists could be charged with a fee for their use of Laguna’s environmental resources.

“The project employs economic methods to analyze the willingness-to-pay of visitors for improved water conservation practices by resorts and the conservation of MMFR to secure water services,” the DENR said in a statement.

Between 2014 and 2020, the number of resorts in Los Baños jumped from 42 to 171. The growth was more frenetic in Calamba, as the number of resorts ballooned from 466 to 855 during the same period.

The watershed of Mount Makiling is important in supporting the domestic, agricultural, and industrial water requirements of Los Baños and Calamba City, the DENR said.

“Mount Makiling is a dormant volcano. This is the reason why its underground water gives rise to hot springs. Thus, it encouraged the establishment of numerous resorts with the natural hot spring water in swimming pools and baths,” it explained.



The agency said that while resort operations have generated income for the owners and gave livelihood opportunities to local via tourism-oriented businesses like restaurants, food stalls, convenience stores, “this has brought about negative side effects, such as that of the use of water resources by the industry.” The DENR project aims to ensure sustainable water operations despite the continuing existence of the resorts.

If its any indication, the DENR bared that the majority of visitor-respondents have expressed their willingness to pay for the conservation of the groundwater resource from Mount Makiling.

“They want to contribute to the conservation efforts. they agreed that current practices are wasteful because groundwater is indeed limited,” it said.

## Trekkers showing indecent behavior to be banned at Mount Apo



Video screenshot from DENR-Davao FB Page

### [RALPH LAWRENCE G. LLEMIT](#)

May 30, 2021

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Davao Region (DENR-Davao) warned trekkers from doing indecent behaviors at Mount Apo as this would result in them getting banned from trekking the mountain.

In a Facebook post on Saturday, May 29, DENR-Davao posted a video of a certain trekker drinking wine or liquor at the mountain's peak while making unnecessary noise and showing indecent behavior.

DENR-Davao reminded all trekkers to respect the sanctity of Mount Apo and strictly follow trekking policies imposed by the Protected Area Management Board (Pamb) of Mount Apo. These policies include strict prohibition of nudity, indecent activities, and unnecessary noise.

"Mount Apo is not just about its ecological and wilderness value. It is also remarkable for its cultural significance and is highly respected as it is believed to be the burial ground of Apo Sandawa, the indigenous community's Great Forefather," the agency said in a post.

It added that they are also calling the attention of the porters and guides to not tolerate these trekkers.

"Violators of the policies set by the PAMB will be held accountable and will be blacklisted or be banned from trekking Mt. Apo. As what we have always called the public for, let's protect and conserve our dear Mt. Apo," DENR-Davao said.

DENR-Davao regional public affairs office chief Jayvee Jude Agas told SunStar Davao in a phone interview on Sunday afternoon, May 30, that they have not yet reached out to the people involved in the video as the clips were only forwarded by concerned citizens.

"Ang aim sa among pagpost sa (Our aim of posting the) video is just to raise awareness. There are policies that every trekker of Mount Apo should follow," Agas said.

Despite not reaching out to the people behind the viral video, the official said the people on the video are still not free from possible sanctions.





The DENR-Davao official also called out the attention of porters and guides not to tolerate the indecent behavior of trekkers.

Due to the incident, Agas said they will raise the matter for possible crafting of rules and regulations in the next joint Pamb en banc meeting with DENR Davao Region and Soccsksargen, considering Mount Apo is part of two regions.

Agas previously said that Pamb recommended that there will be a regular rehabilitation period of Mount Apo through a yearly three-month closure or “offset season,” particularly from June to August.

The recommendation came up months after DENR-Davao Executive Director Bagani Fidel Evasco, who is also the Pamb chairman, proposed for the temporary closure of Mount Apo to trekkers “due to the unappealing findings from the team’s recent conduct of trail and camp assessment.”

Evasco, together with selected officials and personnel from Davao Oriental and Davao del Sur, recently conducted a trail and camp assessment from February 11 to 14, passing Sitio Paradise Digos trail to Camp Gudi-Gudi then to the summit.

Following the activity, multiple observations were publicly released such as trekkers’ non-observance of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases guidelines on health protocols, occurrence of littering and vandalism, traces of drug substances, and alarming soil cultivation within its Strict Protection Zone.

The director then pushed for its immediate rehabilitation by having it temporarily closed.

However, the majority of Pamb members voted for the deferment of the proposed closure during an emergency en banc meeting on February 23.

Agas also said the recommendation was made to prevent possible forest fires in the mountain in the future.



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### DENR-Davao, nagbabala sa mga umiinom ng alak sa Mt. Apo | TV Patrol

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"Huwag magkalat sa Mount Apo". Nag-abiso ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa mga umaakyat ng Mount Apo na sundin ang patakaran sa pag-akyat ng bundok.

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# Group backs ban on coastal mining

By [Jordeene B. Lagare](#)

May 31, 2021

The Offshore Mining Chamber of the Philippines (OMCP) has signified its support for a proposal to ban sand mining in some coastal towns in the Ilocos region to prevent shoreline erosion.

In a statement, OMCP said since it is relatively a new mining concept, only those with the expertise and proper technology should be allowed to undertake mining operations in offshore areas, not in shorelines.

OMCP endorsed the guidelines issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) last May 16, 2016 that prohibits mining within 500 meters from the shorelines to offshore, as well as mining 200 meters from the shoreline to inland areas of any coastal town.

It also said proper and adequately evaluated Environmental Compliance Certificates must be secured first from the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau and dredgers and mining vessel must obtain Environmental Impact Assessment from country of design and/or manufacture.

The guidelines state that entities involved in offshore mining or dredging must have an ISO Certificate for their offshore mining or dredging standards of operation for environmental protection and ecological balance.

Offshore mining firms must be adequately capitalized as environmentally safe and ecologically balanced offshore mining vessels are capital intensive, complete with experienced technical people.

Likewise, OMCP said an entity must have obtained an approval for the Feasibility of Mining Declaration and Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program from the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

It must also have an approved public consultation and acceptance of the local community and resolution from the local government units signifying no objection to the offshore mining or dredging activity.

Before any export shipment can be done, there must be a mineral ore export permit (MOEP) no less duly passed upon by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for the proper payment 4 percent of excise taxes and proper payment of mineral reservation fees to DENR-MGB of 5 percent.

The mining group cited the Build Back Better Program, an initiative by the provincial government of Cagayan under a quadripartite agreement involving the DENR, the Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Interior and Local Government, which prevented illegal black sand mining in favor of environmentally correct dredging of silts and iron sand in the coastal towns.

"To make it more effective, the technical committee of the Build Back Better Program of Cagayan has tapped the expertise, resources and know-how of several large scale mining firms in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) to assist in its efforts to desilt, dredge, siphon and widen the mouth of Aparri River where flood water constrictions perennially and seasonally cause floods in Cagayan," it said.



OMCP said to date, JDVC Resources Corp. has been approved and fully permitted to do offshore large-scale mining operations to mine magnetite iron deposits off Cagayan.

JDVC has already deployed its first deep sea mining vessel, the MB Siphon 1, which has commenced its site developmental stage, preliminary sea bed trenching, and bulk sampling preparatory to commercial export shipment.

OMCP issued their statement after Probinsyano Ako party-list Rep. Jose "Bonito" Singson Jr. proposed a ban on coastal mining.

During a congressional hearing, Singson mentioned the practice of some mining firms, especially those owned by the Chinese, to extract sand from shorelines in Ilocos region in search of magnetite iron.



# FCF mine firm cited for safe operations

[By Leander Domingo](#)

May 29, 2021



This photo combination shows the progress made by FCF Minerals in rehabilitating a road in Tulingan.  
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A LONDON-based mining company operating in Quezon town in Nueva Vizcaya was recognized for its safe mining operations from the Philippine Mines Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) for the year 2020.

The announcement was made through a letter from lawyer Wilfred Moncano, Director of Mines and Geosciences Bureau Central Office, to FCF Minerals Corp.

Darren Bowden, FCD Minerals Corp. president and chief executive officer, said this recognition shows the tremendous cumulative record of accomplishment of the company as it was awarded Safest Surface Mining Operation, Safest Mining Operations, and 2nd Runner Up for Best Mining Forest

"As a company, FCF Minerals is not focusing on winning awards, but it is gratifying when third parties recognize the efforts of the employees," Bowden said.

Around 300 kilometers north of Manila, FCF Minerals operates in Runruno village its Gold-Molybdenum Project under a financial or technical assistant agreement or FTAA with the Philippine government.

"As developments continue to unfold, we will remain vigilant and commit ourselves to maintaining the safety and well-being of our people. We will draw strength from the values that tell us who we are and what we stand for," Bowden said.



Meanwhile, PMSEA also awarded engineer Lester Mangliwan of FCF Minerals as the Best Surface Mine Supervisor for 2020

James Carmichael, FCF Minerals country manager, said while the company is showing strong principles and commitment to sustainable development on environmental protection and conservation towards responsible mining, FCF is conducting rehabilitation while undertaking its mine operations.

"Our rehabilitation includes three stages which include stage one involving slope stabilization, protection and erosion control measures," Carmichael said.

He explained that while stage two is planting pioneering and fast-growing species that serve as shade and curtain trees for an immediate vegetation cover, stage three is the climax planting of regenerants from endemic, premium and dipterocarps species.

"At stage three, we collect these species from superior and healthy mother trees being identified at special tree cutting and earth balling permit areas," Carmichael said.

He said among the rehabilitated areas of the company that already completed the three stages of rehabilitation were the Tayab Dumpsite 1 and Malilibeg Dumpsite while other areas are currently on stage two and stage three of rehabilitation.

Carmichael said more than 392.783 hectares were planted under the Mining Forest Program (MFP) of the company.

"As against the total disturbed areas to date, which is 182.52 hectares, with regard to the compliance obligation of two hectares replacement for every hectare of area cleared or disturbed, FCF is now at 107.60-percent compliant," he said.

Carmichael said more than 175 surface owners have already benefited from their maintenance program for plantation areas.



## The oceans under serious threat

[By Fr. Shay Cullen](#) May 30, 2021

The island of Palawan in the Philippines is considered an environmental haven of cleanliness and beauty. But what was discovered recently in the fish market of Puerto Princesa - a dorado fish, one of many they say with a belly full of plastic waste such as bottle caps, candy wrappers and a yellow plastic spoon - shocked the customers in the fish market. Other fish vendors said they frequently find similar plastic trash in the fish.

Besides pollution, there were big losses to small-scale fisherfolk in coastal communities in recent years because of the proliferation of commercial fishing fleets and factory ships of other countries. Not only is China grabbing the fishing grounds of the Philippines and other Southeast Asian nations, but huge fishing fleets run by corporations dominate the ocean. They are destroying the oceans by irresponsible "bottom trawling" and many fish species are needlessly killed. The ships drag huge nets along the ocean floor destroying everything in their paths, destroying corals and ecosystems and habitats of fish. The commercial fishing industry kills between 0.97 and 1.97 trillion wild fish worldwide every year. This is called "by-catch" and "accidental take."

For example, every hour, 30,000 sharks are killed. That is 50 to 70 million sharks every year - hauled on board, fins cut off, and they are thrown back to die, all to delight diners with shark fin soup. This is a barbaric attack against nature and unsustainable. The shark is a magnificent creature, evolved after millions of years into the perfect ocean hunter and essential to maintaining balance in the ocean's wildlife. This mass killing has caused a 70-percent decline in shark populations globally over the past 50 years, making them an endangered species.

Having watched the well-made and convincing documentary on the state of our oceans by researcher Ali Tabrizi called "Seaspiracy" shown on Netflix and excerpts on YouTube, we can see how the oceans are under threat. It has caused many people to question the methods of the commercial fishing industry that result in overfishing the oceans.

What is revealed is so shocking. It is enough to cause people to stop eating fish and turning to organic plant-based food, this writer among them. We need to stop eating so much meat and fish to save the planet and the oceans. The oceans are vital to life on earth as they make up 71 percent of the planet's surface. They are the greatest absorbers of carbon dioxide.

Phytoplanktons are microorganisms, the microscopic plants that make up the basic food of the ocean's food chain and they are rapidly diminishing. Forty percent have been lost since the 1950s, studies show. This is caused by warming of the oceans that results from climate change and global warming. These microorganisms are responsible for absorbing carbon dioxide and giving off oxygen for us and the animals to breathe. They are more effective than all the trees on the planet and now they are threatened by human activity. We, humans, refuse to save ourselves and stop burning coal, oil and everything that burns. We are the world's most dangerous arsonists.

The human species, many of whom are ignorant, are destroying the planet that supports us, that give us the air we breathe and the food we eat. The rainforests are being destroyed and global warming triggered by human activity is killing off the vital life sustaining phytoplanktons that could save us by absorbing carbon dioxide.

In the documentary, they quote an International Monetary Fund report that says, "We calculate that this (phytoplankton) is equivalent to the amount of carbon dioxide captured by 1.70 trillion trees - four Amazon forests' worth."



The fishing industry has another huge negative impact on the planet and the oceans - the discarded and lost nets. Likely, millions of tons of nets are floating in the oceans entangling dolphins, whales and thousands of other sea creatures including turtles. They wash up on beaches everywhere. According to Greenpeace, "More than 640,000 tons of nets, lines, pots and traps used in commercial fishing are dumped and discarded in the sea every year, the same weight as 55,000 double-decker buses."

"We hear a lot about the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPGP)...46 percent of it is discarded fishing nets, which are far more dangerous for marine life than our plastic straws," says environmentalist George Monbiot, a contributor to the documentary. Plastic straws are only 0.003 percent of the garbage in the ocean, but we have to do more than ban plastic straws. Every fishing boat must be held accountable for its missing fishing gear.

Another danger to the oceans and all the fish is longline fishing. This employs long fishing lines that carry hundreds of hooks with bait and they catch everything indiscriminately. Turtles, dolphins, whales and even sea birds get caught. The fish caught are mostly by-catch, mentioned above, and are thrown back dead. The hooks and lines are frequently lost and left to float under water for years and continue killing and maiming all sea creatures.

The strongest defenders of the so-called "sustainable" fishing industry are some nongovernment organizations (NGOs) that promote sustainable fishing. Some claim that the canned tuna we see on supermarket shelves are "dolphin-safe." The documentary "Seaspiracy" showed that in most cases the canned tuna was not dolphin-safe. Many of the NGOs get their funds from the commercial fishing industry and cannot be critical of the industry or be unbiased.

I used to think that fish farming was the best answer to the rape of the oceans. But this, too, has many problems. The fish packed in underwater cages develop diseases and antibiotics are used that can affect the consumer. Sea lice are a big problem in fish farms and dangerous chemicals (several are banned) are needed to control them. So, the farmed fish are also of low quality because of the feeds or pellets they are fed with.

Again, it is greed that causes the overfishing, pollution, the plastic and chemicals poured into our oceans that are destroying our planet. We need greater awareness, widespread effective law enforcement on the seas and a moral conscience to stop the abuse from destructive fishing.





## Hold carbon majors accountable for climate crisis – groups to CHR



BYLENIE LECTURA

MAY 30, 2021



Environmental and human rights groups urged the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to expedite the issuance of a resolution declaring 47 firms, including Shell, accountable for human rights harms due to climate impacts.

Once released, they said the CHR resolution can be used alongside the Dutch ruling as benchmarks to craft climate litigations against Shell and other carbon majors, such as Exxon, Total, and Chevron, in the Philippines and abroad.

The district court in The Hague ruled last week that Shell must reduce its carbon emissions by 45 percent by 2030. Judge Larisa Alwin said in the verdict that Anglo-Dutch multinational Shell has an “enormous CO2 emission for which it is responsible.”

Greenpeace Campaigner Virginia Benosa-Llorin said the Dutch court ruling brings the groups a step closer to attaining climate justice for Filipinos “who are at the receiving end of injustices arising from decades of fossil fuel addiction.”

Von Hernandez, global coordinator for Break Free From Plastic, is hoping that the CHR will take this as a cue to release its long-awaited resolution. “At a time when our people are already experiencing the escalating impacts of climate change, further inaction and delay on the part of the CHR effectively translate to condoning the human rights violations being committed on millions of Filipino by the fossil fuel industry.”

In 2019, reports quoted CHR Commissioner Roberto Cadiz who said “carbon majors” could be found legally and morally liable for human rights harms to Filipinos resulting from climate change. CHR was expected to have released a resolution in August last year. Greenpeace Philippines, Ecowaste Coalition, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, Sentro ng Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa, PhilRights, and Hernandez are among the petitioners to the Philippine Climate Change and Human Rights Inquiry.

### Shell’s carbon-neutral plan

When asked for comment on how the court ruling would affect Shell’s business in the Philippines, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. external relations head Cesar Abaricia said the company is supportive of its parent firm’s goal which is to reduce its net carbon footprint compared to a 2016 baseline by 20 percent by 2030, 45 percent by 2035 and 100 percent by 2050.



“Shell has its plan to become carbon-neutral by 2050. To help that ambition, we have been building our facilities with inverter-type equipment. Our Batangas import facility is utilizing 100-percent green energy. Most of our retail sites are all solar-panel powered. We have effectively laid down the foundations for a resilient, adaptive, and future-ready organization,” he said.

The Shell group said it is investing billions of dollars in low-carbon energy, including electric vehicle charging, hydrogen, renewables and biofuels, to scale up its new energy businesses even more quickly.

“Urgent action is needed on climate change which is why we have accelerated our efforts to become a net-zero emissions energy company by 2050, in step with society, with short-term targets to track our progress. We will continue to focus on these efforts and fully expect to appeal [the] disappointing court decision.”

The Asian People’s Movement on Debt and Development and the Asia Energy Network said the Dutch court ruling serves as a warning to Asia’s “dirty companies” — finance, construction, and energy firms that have played major roles in the perpetuation and growth of fossil fuel industries in the region.

“Five of these companies — Mizuho, ICBC, MUFG, SMBC Group, and Bank of China, most of which are set to hold their shareholders’ meetings this June — rank among the biggest institutions that have been financing what is now considered a climate chaos. Their individual investments in projects across the fossil fuel cycle range from \$101 billion to \$148 billion between 2016 and 2020,” they said.

“The verdict on Shell sets a precedent that inspires us, climate activists from Asia, to intensify our campaign initiatives including litigation and judicial actions to keep compelling these companies to exit the fossil fuels business with clearly-spelled out targets and definite timelines.”



# Challenging the lies about climate change

[By Ben Kritz](#) May 30, 2021

DESPITE what some of us may think of ourselves, opinion columnists are no more infallible than any other ordinary mortals and occasionally react to erroneous or incomplete information and, in doing so, commit the venal sin of misinformation. This is not intentional, and any columnist with even a crude understanding of the importance of ethical practice and credibility will, once the error is revealed, revise his viewpoints accordingly.

The evil cousin of misinformation is disinformation, the deliberate act of spreading false or grossly misrepresented information in order to confuse and mislead the public. Most people are familiar with this as "fake news," and it is universally regarded as immoral and harmful. Most traditional and social media platforms have become increasingly proactive in challenging and, if possible, removing "fake news." While this has generated some limp protests - generally from the worst offenders - about curbs on "freedom of expression," the consensus is that fighting disinformation in a direct way is right and proper and that allowing it to persist is irresponsible.

Recently - on May 22 and May 25, to be exact - some blatantly false and dangerously misleading claims on the topic of climate change and precisely fitting the definition of disinformation received wide circulation among the news-consuming public here in the Philippines. As it would be unethical to allow these claims to go unchallenged and uncorrected - notwithstanding the narrow, minority fringe of malcontent in society from which they emanate - I will address them here in summary fashion.

## **The first lie: There is no climate fund**

A salient feature of the 2015 Paris Agreement on greenhouse gas reduction and climate change mitigation is that the world's wealthier economies (who are also the world's biggest polluters) would contribute substantial amounts to a fund that lesser economies could tap in order to finance climate-change mitigation and adaptation in their own countries. In an opinion piece on May 22, the astonishing claim was made that "The climate fund... is a dead letter in the Paris Agreement. It is not going to happen. Not a single dollar has been contributed to the fund."

The only thing that is not an outright lie about that statement is that there is not "a" fund, there are many - four of which are under the umbrella of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that leads the Paris Agreement: the Global Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

Outside the UNFCCC, there are numerous other climate funds managed by multilateral development banks such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank; bilateral funds managed by individual governments; funds created by foundations and faith-based organizations; and regional funds for developing countries in Asia, Africa and South America. As of this past Thursday, according to a continuously updated public database maintained by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), there are a total of 99 climate-specific funds worldwide.

## **The second lie: The US is not part of the Paris Agreement**

The author of the May 22 piece surmised that the reason the "fund has not materialized" is that "The United States, which was expected to contribute the most to the fund, pulled out from the Paris Agreement."

Indeed it did, on the order of the discredited fascist former president of the US in 2017; if memory serves, the same writer, evidently a supporter of Cheeto Mussolini, hailed the move as a righteous decision at the time.



The US, and its money, officially rejoined the Paris Agreement on Friday, February 19 this year, by way of an executive order signed by current US President Joseph R. Biden.

### **The third lie: Sea level rise is not happening**

In the May 22 article, the writer argued that climate-induced sea level rise is either not happening at all or is being greatly exaggerated. To support this argument, he presented "evidence" from an article written in the Epoch Times by a certain H. Sterling Burnett, whose qualifications in climate science are about those of the average Starbucks barista: a bachelor's degree in cultural anthropology and a PhD in applied philosophy.

In the article, Burnett cited erroneous data from 1993 that showed the mean sea level in the Pacific Island nation of Tuvalu had actually fallen over the previous decade. What Burnett conveniently omitted, however, is that a more careful study over the next 10 years found that sea levels in Tuvalu are in fact rising at a similar rate as those in the rest of the world - an average of about 5.6 millimeters per year.

The sources of supporting information for Burnett's Epoch Times article are something called "Climate at a Glance," and "Climate Change Weekly." Both of these are maintained by the Heartland Institute, a far-right "think tank" that dedicates itself to climate-change denialism, among other causes; the material cited by Burnett in the Epoch Times article was actually written by Burnett himself for the other websites.

The Epoch Times, incidentally, is owned by and considered the newsletter of the ultra-right-wing Falun Gong religious cult, whose founder has variously claimed to be an alien, able to walk through walls and render himself invisible.

### **The fourth lie: Scientists are conspiring to 'push' climate change**

In the May 25 article, the writer dwelled at length on the subject of a supposed conspiracy among "climate scientists" to push the climate-change agenda despite knowing fully well that it does not exist. As evidence for this claim, he cites a December 2009 column written by conservative columnist George Will for The Washington Post, in which Will detailed the revelations of the conspiracy found in emails from the UK's Climate Research Unit (CRU).

Selectively ignoring follow-up information that substantially changes initial preconceptions seems to be a habit with some people and can only be the result of laziness, incompetence or malicious intent.

The CRU emails and other documents - which were stolen in a cyberattack - initially did cause some concern and led to a number of high-level investigations by the governments of the UK and US as well as an independent inquiry by Pennsylvania State University. While the investigators concluded that the CRU scientists should make some procedural changes to make information more publicly accessible, none of the total of six inquiries found that researchers were covering up or altering data, as had been alleged.

### **No, we're not going to debate you**

In both of the offending columns, the writer resorted to a favorite tactic of conspiracy theorists the world over (it is particularly popular with "flat-earthers"), challenging authorities - in this case, the Climate Change Commission and the Senate - to respond, implying that if they do not, their silence would confer validity on the ludicrous "climate change is a hoax" thesis.



Personally, I think even the least informed reader deserves more respect than to be assaulted by one of the least sophisticated logical fallacies, the Argument from Ignorance. Challenging the bald lies is a distasteful necessity; entertaining them beyond that would be to give them far more than the credibility they actually deserve, which is none.

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# Is recycling a waste? Here's the answer from a plastics expert before you ditch the effort

PUBLISHED SAT, MAY 22 2021 11:21 AM EDT UPDATED FRI, MAY 28 2021 8:51 AM EDT  
Eric Rosenbaum @ERPROSE

## KEY POINTS

- Terracycle and Loop founder and CEO Tom Szaky says the economics of the recycling business are broken in key ways, but consumer and corporate interest in building a circular economy continues to grow.
- Low oil prices, bans on imported recyclables in countries like China, and the latest trends in packaging design make it harder to recycle.
- Still, the recycling CEO says getting to a low-waste or even zero-waste economy is the way the world once was and can be again.



Photograph of the inside of a garbage collection center in Vine Hill, California, December 8, 2020. (Photo by Smith Collection/Gado/Getty Images)

Smith Collection/Gado | Archive Photos | Getty Images

Recycling may make you feel better in a very small way about your role in helping to avert a global apocalypse, but even in “friendly” places, from John Oliver to NPR podcasts, recycling, especially of plastics, is being given a hard look. More people are wondering: Does it work?

The debate is not new. For years the economics of plastic recycling have been questioned. But the problem is not going away. The globe is already producing two trillion pounds of solid waste a year and is on pace to add more than a trillion more on an annual basis in the coming decades, according to World Bank data. A recent study found that the 20 top petrochemical companies in the world, among the group Exxon Mobil and Dow, are responsible for 55% of the world's single-use plastic waste, and in the U.S., specifically, we are [generating about 50 kilograms of throwaway plastic](#) a year, per person.

The Covid pandemic has heightened attention to the issue, as use of disposable goods went up anywhere from 30% to 50%, according to Tom Szaky, CEO of recycling companies Terracycle and Loop, who joined CNBC's Leslie Picker on a recent [CNBC Evolve](#) Livestream about sustainability and business. He says concerns about the macroeconomics of waste management systems suffering economically are real, and there are ways to solve it that don't just rely on government. We all need to take a deeper look at how we recycle beyond the feel-good blue bin, and what we can do to get past the problems.



### 1. The economics of recycling are broken.

Szaky says recent reporting on the economic issues for plastics recycling and restrictions around the world on imported recyclables, which are both weighing on the sector, are not an anti-environmental attack but “absolutely rooted in facts.”

He says it is important for consumers to understand that just because you recycle an item does not mean it will be recycled in the end.

“What makes something be recycled in a country doesn’t have to do with what we normally think: Can it be recycled? Most of the things we put in blue bins that are not recycled are put in the garbage because they are things waste companies can’t make money off, and that is the true bottleneck,” he said.

The right question is “Can a garbage company, the actual company in charge of the recycling in the geography, recycle it at a profit?”

According to Szaky, what’s happened is a profitability model that is decreasing as oil prices have gone down, which started in 2015, and even after a commodities market recovery post-Covid, have stayed down relative to recent history. The petrochemicals companies that make plastics rely less on recyclables when the price of their core commodity, oil, is lower. Second, China stopped importing recyclable waste, a move followed by other countries in 2018.

Both issues are critically important to the business model of recycling and the health of the infrastructure because they circle back around to how much demand there is to collect those material types.

“And it all hurt the business construct for recycling companies and that means our recycling capabilities are deteriorating,” Szaky said. “Recycling is not out there trying to do the best it can but maximize profit and we need to think about that as we aim for a more circular economy,” he said.

### 2. A packaging industry mega trend is working against recycling

The biggest global trend in packaging is not helping. Efforts to reduce costs in products and packaging are “objectively reducing value” Szaky said, “which also makes them less recyclable.”

The “lightweighting” of packages, making them have less physical material and more complexity as a result of that design challenge, makes them less profitable to recycle.

All of these economic issues lead to a situation in which what people would like to see is not what they would actually see if they went behind the scenes in the recycling industry. But Szaky says at the same time, consumers want to recycle more, and more companies are leaning into their own recycling.

What companies decide to do about recycling on their own initiative — and pay for — can be done in spite of the challenging economics and can still pay off for the companies in the future. That’s the Terracycle business model, working with companies to fund their own voluntary recycling efforts. And that is more important

### 3. Why companies don’t recycle enough, but should more

Szaky says what’s really important right now is companies deciding to lean in and create their own recycling programs. But he says it is still not easy for the corporate mindset to embrace.



“As a retailer or brand, if you just frame it as ‘the right thing to do’ the funding will be small and sporadic because there is no P&L logic to do it. But if you can use it to drive foot traffic like Walmart with car seats or Staples with pens, it can be monetizable,” he said.

Brands that run their own recycling programs should be doing it as part of a plan to drive more market share and brand preference. And he says it becomes “monetizable in a recognizable way” the bigger they become and the faster they can grow. “That is true for any sustainability measure a company is looking to implement in the short term.”

Some products won’t be recycled unless companies are the recycler.

A dirty diaper or toothbrush or cigarette is not recyclable because it costs too much. It is another economic problem, not a physics or chemistry one.

Terracycle recently launched a diaper recycling program in Holland and now it is expanding to many countries.

“Diaper recycling doesn’t make sense from an economic perspective. It is expensive to collect and process,” Szaky said. But for the company that leads, “it can drive core value maybe better than TV ads,” he added.

Consumers want to do the right thing, and companies may want to do the right thing as well in acknowledging an environmental crisis — and fund a feel-good marketing campaign — but Szaky stressed that they need to see “not just the right thing, but that it will pay back.”

Szaky’s other business, Loop, which works with companies on circular economy production, recently teamed with a luxury watchmaker on the world’s tallest landfill: Mt. Everest. The mountain is littered with oxygen tanks from previous climbs and the watchmaker was able to both clean up the mess, an expensive undertaking, and source metal for its watches, which may add to the story it sells consumers in a way competitors can’t match.

#### **4. The real solution is obvious: Consuming less**

The white elephant, the fundamental answer to the challenge, is modulating consumption downward, but Szaky says that is a hard one for the business world to champion. “It is fundamentally de-growth.”

Loop, even working with companies to create products from recyclables and where the recycling is part of the product story and selling point, “is not the answer to the garbage problem,” he says.

It may be among the best ways to manage waste in a circular economy, but Szaky says we will need to aim to go back to a world where garbage doesn’t exist.

“Before the 1950s, we received milk from the milkman and mended clothes and cobbled shoes,” he says.

Reuse does still exist at scale today in certain markets, such as beer kegs and propane tanks, but not nearly enough, and without the convenience of an infrastructure which makes return easy and widespread. That is one of the keys he sees for the future.

#### **5. Reusable versus recyclable**

While the goal of zero waste is ambitious, it is realistic to imagine a world in which more consumer products become reusable, if they can be easily returned in the circular economy.





Reusable versions of products from Nestle, Procter & Gamble, Kroger, Walgreens, and hundreds of other retailers are being, or will in the future, be made available to consumers.

**We can switch a consumer who maybe doesn't even care about sustainability and that's frankly the most important. We need to bring everyone along, not just people who view this as a high-passion project.**

Szaky envisions the buy-and-return-anywhere model as a key one for the future.

"Buy your favorite shampoo bottle in a reusable form at a Walgreens in New York and drop it off at Burger King and buy an Impossible Whopper in reusable packaging too, and drop that off somewhere else."

This model can help solve a big problem: consumer behavior. Szaky says while there is a significant consumer market motivated by environmental concerns and consumption, for the recycling industry to really work it needs to avoid relying on the most-motivated consumers. Even plastic recycling that is economic today, such as soda bottles, only results in 1 in 4 bottles being recycled. The No. 1 goal for most consumers will remain convenience and value.

A reusable package is an upgrade over a disposable package in an objective way, and with the convenience of drop-off locations it can lead to an easier shift in behavior, but it has to be offered at the right value to consumers. "With all three things coming together we can switch a consumer who maybe doesn't even care about sustainability and that's frankly the most important," Szaky said. "We need to bring everyone along, not just people who view this as a high-passion project."

## **6. Economics are busted but the recycling mindset matters**

For all the debate over recycling and the hard facts about its economics, Szaky says there is a reason we talk about it so much.

The individual journey with sustainability always begins with recycling. And that remains key and a reason to figure out how to fix its short-term and long-term challenges.

When people start recycling, it does open the pathways to a broader change in mindset.

"It may lead to a plant-based diet instead of animal protein, or a smaller life, or biking ... creating even more important outcomes," he says. "But first we have to solve the business problem."



## The nature reserve with a 500-year plan



By Rina Diane Caballar 28th May 2021

In the past 30 years, a wilderness has grown up in the heart of New Zealand's capital – so successfully its neighbours now complain about the raucous racket of rare birds. But this is just the first step in a much longer plan for wilderness in the city.

As I walk along a winding trail through [Zealandia](#), an ecosanctuary in New Zealand's capital city of Wellington, I smell the wet earth from last night's rain, hear birds cackle and sing, and feel a slight chill from the cool breeze. Then, I see it: a streak of yellow landing on a tree branch high above. It's a [stitchbird](#) – a sparrow-sized songbird whose Māori name, [hihi](#), refers to the rays of the sun.

One of New Zealand's rarest birds, the hihi is a success story for Zealandia, which houses the [largest mainland population of around 100 adults](#). Hihi are considered a threatened species, [disappearing from the mainland in the 1880s and confining themselves to Little Barrier Island](#) off the north-eastern coast of New Zealand's North Island. In 2005, they were translocated to Zealandia, where they have been breeding successfully each year.

Aside from housing [over 40 native bird species](#), Zealandia is also home to dozens of critically endangered reptiles, frogs and invertebrates, as well as hundreds of native plants and trees. Yet unlike many ecosanctuaries located on an offshore island, in a forest or in a rural environment, Zealandia is situated in a valley in Karori, a suburb only 10 minutes' drive from New Zealand's parliament.



*Populations of the hihi, a rare bird endemic to New Zealand, are recovering on the mainland thanks to the refuge of Zealandia (Credit: Alamy)*

Evidence of the benefits of green spaces in cities abound – from [improving physical and mental health and well-being](#) to [absorbing carbon, mitigating floods](#) and [reducing the heat island effect](#). Urban green spaces become even more vital as [two-thirds of the world's population will likely be living in cities by 2050](#), while [87% of New Zealand's population already lives in urban areas](#).

"As we become more urbanised, we need to connect people to nature," says Margaret Stanley, an ecologist and associate professor in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Auckland. "The more they connect with nature, the more they value it."



Zealandia's rich biodiversity can be attributed to the 5.3-mile (8.6km) [predator-exclusion fence](#) encircling [225 hectares](#) (556 acres) of land. A group of conservation managers, engineers and scientists designed and tested a fence suitable to Zealandia's needs – one high enough to prevent invasive mammalian predators such as ferrets and possums from jumping or climbing over, with a wire mesh wall to exclude pests down to the size of a mouse and an underground skirt to prevent rats and other animals from burrowing underneath. After the fence's construction in 1999, pest eradication followed, with Zealandia declared predator-free a year later. Since then, a number of flora and fauna have been reintroduced or naturally grown in the ecosanctuary.

*You might also like:*

- [The pre-Incan technology revived by Peru](#)
- [The world's first 'infinite' plastic](#)
- [A neglected protein-rich superfood](#)

"By creating an area that excludes all introduced mammalian predators, we've created a safe haven," says Paul Atkins, Zealandia's chief executive. "And what we've seen is a rapid increase in the population of these birds that had been previously on the edge of extinction from the [Wellington] region."



*Zealandia is home not only to a wide array of rare birds, but reptiles like these green geckos too (Credit: Alamy)*

Zealandia is a perfect example of a living laboratory that can be a boon for conservation research, even within cities. "It's a place where restoration techniques can be trialled, which is important for advancing conservation management outside of these areas," Stanley says. "It's also an accessible way for the public to see research in action."

***When people walk around their neighbourhoods, they might see trees or hear birds, but they don't always think about that moment as experiencing nature – Kiri Joy Wallace***

And because they're a dedicated space for plants and animals to grow and thrive, ecosanctuaries are easier to protect and manage. They're also a purposeful way to experience nature in urban areas. "When people walk around their neighbourhoods, they might see trees or hear birds, but they don't always think about that moment as experiencing nature, so it becomes passive," says Kiri Joy Wallace, an urban ecologist and research fellow in the Environmental Research Institute at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. "With ecosanctuaries, you go to that pocket of nature and actively experience it."

Yet not all cities are equipped to build fenced-in areas, as they may not have such expansive green spaces or the time, money and resources to transform these spaces into nature reserves and keep them predator-free. "Instead of fenced areas, plan for corridors of vegetation throughout the city, so nature is dispersed and not contained in one place," Stanley says. "By doing that, you're not only increasing biodiversity in the city, but you're also connecting



communities that don't have access to nature." This is especially true for underserved communities that historically have less vegetation in their neighbourhoods, or low-income residents who might not be able to afford the entrance fees.

Spreading nature across the city also avoids the isolating effect ecosanctuaries tend to have. "You're reinforcing this idea that nature is separate from people," Wallace says. "And the benefits we get are constrained to just that one spot, which people only experience when they visit or live around it."



*The pest exclusion fence makes Zealandia the first fully enclosed urban nature reserve in the world  
(Credit: Steve Attwood)*

Today, regular maintenance of Zealandia's fence continues, including monitoring for mice and occasional incursions from animals such as weasels and stoats. Restoring the sanctuary's ecosystem still remains a priority, ensuring all species within will flourish and thrive. But Zealandia is turning its efforts outward, moving beyond the fence and engaging communities around the greater Wellington region – where **more than 200,000 New Zealanders live, or 8% of the country's population** – with its education programmes that inspire nature-based learning experiences for schools, internships, professional development for science teachers and volunteer opportunities.

"A big part of Zealandia's success is that it's embedded in the community," says Ellen Irwin, lead ranger in Zealandia's conservation team. "We've got hundreds of volunteers coming in almost every day, feeding the birds and checking the fence daily, making sure there's no tree fall or anything that might let a mammalian predator in. The ecosanctuary wouldn't function without them."

***You could have birds leaving the sanctuary, but if they don't have good habitats and safe places to go, then they're not going to survive – Ellen Irwin***

Zealandia also assists with responsible predator-trapping initiatives and educates people on planting native trees, whose fruits and flowers nourish native birds. "The sanctuary provides a safe space for species to breed and thrive, but the trapping and planting efforts of local community groups make it a team effort of folks across Wellington wanting to make it a more biodiverse city," Irwin says. "You could have birds leaving the sanctuary, but if they don't have good habitats and safe places to go, then they're not going to survive."

This spillover of birds from nature reserves to urban areas is a positive outcome, yet it also poses a challenge for cities, especially in New Zealand where people haven't had to live with these species. For instance, people have complained about **kākā**, an at-risk parrot **destroying their homes**, or the **raucous singing** of tūī, a honeyeater with a distinctive tuft of white feathers on its throat.

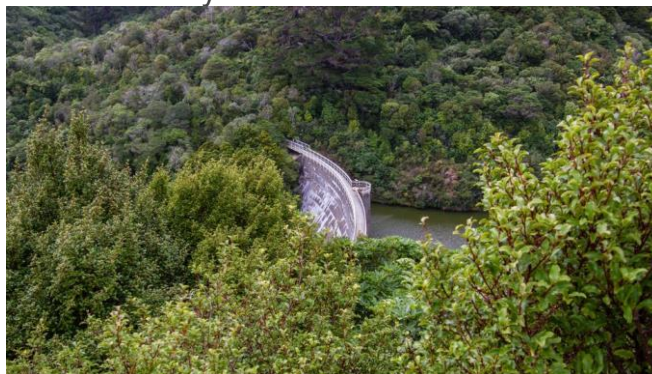
"I see it as a sign of success when people complain that birdsong is too loud. But now that this wildlife has started to interact with our homes, it's brought up this idea of human-wildlife conflict," says Stanley. "Conservation in cities has to start with individuals and communities because everything you do affects nature in cities. The next step is to encourage behaviour change in the way people interact with nature."



*The charismatic kākā has recovered in Zealandia, but its boisterous behaviour has upset some of the reserve's neighbours (Credit: Alamy)*

For cities wanting to follow in Zealandia's footsteps, Atkins advises to find the right starting point ecologically, then get the community involved in restoring that. Zealandia itself began as farmed and mined land before the [construction of a dam in 1878](#) which supplied water to Wellington. As a critical water supply, the land around the valley was protected and allowed to regrow, making it easier to convert into a nature reserve once the dam was decommissioned in 1997.

"What we didn't start with was a bare paddock. We had an ecosystem that was damaged but not desolate," Atkins says. "Find a green space that's capable of being regenerated, where you can see quick signals of that regeneration so you have immediate evidence of your work, and restore it together with your community."



*The site at Zealandia was once a valley dammed for water to supply Wellington (Credit: Alamy)*

Looking to the future, Zealandia has a 500-year vision of restoring the forest and freshwater ecosystems of the valley where it resides as closely as possible to their prehuman state. This five-century period is the sanctuary's estimate of how long it would take for the forest's original canopy to regrow. Some species of [rātā trees](#), for instance, can live up to a thousand years, while hardwood trees like [rimu](#) have a life span of between 550 and 650 years.

***For it to be enduring, we have to get people involved and committed to an intergenerational view— Paul Atkins***

Bringing this vision to life is daunting and challenging, but a mindset shift is key. "The moment you recognise the intergenerational aspect of your work is the moment you realise you have to treat it differently than another enterprise that might be here for only 10 years," Atkins says. "It makes you think about how to plan from year to year to ensure the security of that 500-year view, and set up exemplars of what can be done to mitigate, reverse or help solve the issues we might be facing in the next 100, 200 or 500 years."

It's a far-off and bold target, but Zealandia's long-term vision plays an essential role in the sanctuary's current and future success. "For it to be enduring, we have to get people involved and committed to an intergenerational view, where we are stewards and not owners," says Atkins. "It's not just a function of how long it takes a tree to grow – it's also a function of how we need to behave if we're going to make sustainable change."



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31 MAY 2021, MONDAY



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# PH logs 7,058 new COVID-19 cases – DOH

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published May 30, 2021 2:57:51 PM



**Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, May 30)** -- The country recorded 7,058 new COVID-19 infections on Sunday, the Department of Health's latest bulletin showed.

Of the 1,223,627 total cases in the country, 53,757 or 4.4% are active cases. The DOH said 93.2% are experiencing mild symptoms, 2.3% are asymptomatic, 1.4% are critical, 1.8% are in severe condition, and 1.28% are experiencing moderate symptoms.

Meanwhile, the death toll rose to 20,860 after 139 more patients succumbed to the virus. The number of COVID-19 survivors jumped to 1,149,010 with 6,852 new recoveries.

All laboratories were operational on May 28, while four laboratories were not able to submit their data to the COVID-19 Document Repository System. Based on the data in the last 14 days, the DOH added that the four non-reporting laboratories contribute, on average, 1.9% samples tested and 1.6% of positive individuals.

The DOH also said 13 duplicates were removed from the nationwide tally, of which eight are recoveries and one death.

It added that 80 cases that were previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as deaths after final validation.

The daily positivity rate, or rate of individuals who tested positive, was at 13.2% based on 44,928 tests done as of May 28. The World Health Organization recommends a percentage of 5%, as high rates may mean high transmission and more undetected cases.

The DOH said earlier that COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila and four nearby provinces under NCR Plus continue to decline, but slower than the previous weeks.

Meanwhile, the number of infections continues to rise in all regions in the Visayas. Likewise, all regions in Mindanao are also seeing an increase in cases, with faster increase of infections in Regions 10, 11, and Caraga.

On the other hand, the Department of Foreign Affairs has received no new reports on COVID-19 cases among overseas Filipinos.

To date, the total number of confirmed cases among Filipinos abroad is at 19,720. The death toll is at 1,179 and the total number of recoveries is at 12,004.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/5/30/PH-COVID-19-cases-May-30-.html>





# 50,000 doses ng Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine darating sa bansa sa Mayo 30

By Chona Yu May 29, 2021 - 08:44 AM



Limampung libong doses pa ng bakuna kontra COVID-19 nagawa ng Sputnik V mula sa Russia ang darating sa bansa bukas, Mayo 30.

Ayon sa pahayag ng National Task Force Against COVID-19, darating ang mga bakuna sakay ng Qatar Airways.

Inaasahang darating ang mga bakuna ng 11:00 ng gabi sa Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

Agad na dadalhin ang mga bakuna sa Pharmaserv Warehouse sa Marikina City bago ipamahagi sa iba't-ibang lugar.

Ito na ang ikatlong batch ng Sputnik V na darating sa bansa.

Mayo 1 unang dumating ang 15,000 doses at sinundan noong Mayo 12 ng 15,000 doses.

Sa ngayon, nasa 8 milyong doses na ng bakuna ang nakukuha ng Pilipinas kung saan 5 milyon dito ay gawa ng Sinovac ng China.



# Mga empleyadong 40-yr old pataas, ‘priority’ sa A4 vaccination – DOH

By **Bombo Christian Yosores**

-May 30, 2021 | 1:13 PM

MANILA – Nilinaw ng Department of Health (DOH) na may susundin pa ring “prioritization” kapag nagsimula na ang COVID-19 vaccination sa A4 group o essential workers.

Ayon kay Health Usec. Leopoldo Vega, ituturing na priority sa vaccination ng essential workers ang mga manggagawang 40-years old pataas.

“Itong June na to, bibilisan ang A1 to A3, may special lane ho ‘yan. Hindi mawawala sa vaccination centers, saka sa A4 dahan-dahan na. Lalo na 40 years old, uunahin sa mga working group. Mauuna ‘yung mas matanda. ‘Yung vulnerability kasi sa COVID-19 mas mataas sa matatanda,” ani Vega sa panayam ng DZBB.

Una nang sinabi ng DOH na posibleng sa Hunyo magsimula ang pagbabakuna sa essential workers.

Nitong Biyernes, sinabi rin ng Malacanang na kasali na sa A4 priority group ang lahat ng government at private workers, at mga nagta-trabaho sa informal sector.

Ayon sa National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), tinatayang 35.5-milyong manggagawa ang inaasahang mababakunahan sa ilalim ng A4 priority group.

Batay sa huling datos ng DOH, nasa 5,120,023 indibidwal na ang nababakunahan ng bansa laban sa COVID-19.



# Over 1.84 billion coronavirus vax shots given worldwide

May 30, 2021, 1:10 pm



**ANKARA** – Over 1.84 billion coronavirus vaccine shots have so far been given worldwide, figures compiled by Our World in Data, an online portal, showed on Saturday.

China leads the global count with 602.99 million jabs, followed by the US with 292.1 million, the data showed.

India has administered 203.17 million shots, Brazil 66.43 million, and the UK 63.35 million.

Germany has given some 49.26 million shots, France 34.94 million, Italy 33.56 million, and Mexico 29.24 million.

Turkey is ranked 10th on the list with over 28.75 million shots, followed by Russia, Spain, Indonesia, and Canada.

The country with the most doses administered by population is the East African island nation of Seychelles, with 136.74 doses per 100 people.

Most coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccines are administered in two doses so the number of shots given is not the same as the number of individuals fully vaccinated.

Since December 2019, the pandemic has claimed over 3.52 million lives in 192 countries and regions, with more than 169.57 million cases reported worldwide, according to figures compiled by the Johns Hopkins University.

The US, India, and Brazil remain the worst-hit countries in terms of the number of infections and deaths. (**Anadolu**)



# Hybrid ng India at UK COVID-19 variants natuklasan sa Vietnam

By **Bombo Dave Vincent Pasit**

-May 30, 2021 | 2:27 AM

Nakatuklas ang mga awtoridad sa Vietnam ng bagong coronavirus variant na kombinasyon ng Indian at UK COVID-19 variants na kumakalat nang mabilis.

Matapos kasing matagumpay na containment sa virus sa loob ng mahigit isang taon, sa kasalukuyan ay nakakaranas nang pagtaas sa bilang ng infections sa naturang bansa magmula noong Abril.

Ayon kay Health Minister Nguyen Thanh Long, maglalabas ang Vietnam ng genome data ng bagong tuklas na variant.

Ang variant na ito ay mas nakakahawa aniya kumpara sa mga nauna nang natuklasan na uri ng coronavirus.

Sa ngayon, apat na variants ng coronavirus ang kinukonsidera ng World Health Organization bilang global concern.

Kabilang sa mga variants na ito ay ang unang natuklasan sa India, Britain, South Africa at Brazil.

Sa ngayon, wala pang sagot ng WHO sa variant na natuklasan sa Vietnam. (Reuters)

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