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DENR

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DENR

ENVIRONMENT Undersecretary Benny Antiporda and Taytay City Mayor George Ricardo Gacula II discuss the problem of water hyacinths that grow abundantly in the city's waterways. Local fisherfolk, who have been tapped to harvest the plants, will be paid for every kilo they collect.



Forest ranger brutally killed in Agusan del Sur

Published October 30, 2020, 9:27 AM

by [Mike Crismundo](#)

BUTUAN CITY – The regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) based here on Friday appealed to police authorities to conduct a thorough investigation into the brutal and merciless killing of another forest officer in Agusan del Sur.

DENR-13 Regional Executive Director (RED) Hadja Didaw Piang-Brahim condemned the killing of Forest Ranger Marianito G. Rufano, saying the latter was only performing his duty to protect the forest in the area.

Piang-Brahim has asked authorities to go after those responsible for the killing of Rufano.

“They must be arrested and charged in court,” the region’s top DENR 13 official said.

She said the local environment and natural resources office in the province has been ordered to help in the police investigation.

In a flash report to Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy A. Cimatu and DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations Enforcement, Mining and Muslim Affairs Jim O. Sampulna, Piang-Brahim said the victim was on the second round of hauling confiscated forest products with his team when they were flagged down by four armed men in Sitio Kiatsan, Barangay Bunawan Brook, Bunawan town, Agusan del Sur on Wednesday.

A day earlier, the team of the anti-illegal logging task force of the Bunawan Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENR) under CENR Officer Jerome Albia seized more than 5,000 board feet of illegally-cut lauan and other forest species in upper Bunawan Brook, particularly in Kiatsan area.

However, on Wednesday, when the team returned to haul the remaining illegally-cut forest products, four unidentified armed men, believed to be poachers, stopped Rufano while onboard his motorcycle, and stabbed him eight times, before he was shot to death.

The victim was believed confronting the four armed men on their possible involvement in the timber poaching activity when suddenly attacked and stabbed by one of the men, a DENR report said.

“We still have the sketchy report on the incident as authorities are still investigating in the area,” another DENR official here said.

Rufano’s team members were at a distance retrieving the illegally-cut lumber when the attack occurred, it also said.

“They were not able to react immediately. The suspects immediately fled after the incident,” DENR Regional Spokesperson Erik Gallego said.

Rufano was the second member of the DENR-13 Enforcement team killed while on duty in Caraga region, DENR 13 record here said.



Forest ranger brutally killed in Agusan del Sur

Last year, a member of the enforcement team of CENRO in Bislig City, under CENR Officer Victor Sabornido, was also shot by motorcycle-riding in tandem.

Meanwhile, an alert order has been issued to all DENR operatives on the field to exercise extreme caution, and double their safety measures while in the exercise of their duties and functions in the field.



Suspects in slay of DENR man in Agusan Sur identified

By Alexander Lopez October 30, 2020, 8:24 pm



SLAIN FORESTER. Marianito G. Rufano, the forester of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Bunawan, Agusan del Sur who was slain on Oct. 28, 2020. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources 13 (Caraga) said Friday (Oct. 30, 2020) murder charges would be filed against the suspects in Rufano's killing after one of them surrendered to the military on Thursday. *(Photo courtesy of Herzon Gallego)*

BUTUAN CITY – The suspects in the killing of a forester of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Agusan del Sur have been identified after one of them surrendered on Thursday, an official said.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 13 (Caraga) information officer Herzon Gallego told the Philippine News Agency (PNA) on Friday that suspect Sonny Yagong yielded to the Army's 25th Infantry Battalion and named Wilson Yagong, Tirso Yagong, and Jenefer O. Sudijana as the other suspects in the killing of Marianito G. Rufano.

Rufano and his coworkers were in Barangay Bunawan Brook in Bunawan town on Wednesday afternoon to retrieve illegally cut logs when he was slain.

"The suspect also handed over upon his surrender the murder weapon and identified the other suspects," Gallego said.

He said Rufano confronted a group of men whom he suspected of being timber poachers but was attacked by the latter instead.

"The DENR-Caraga will file criminal charges today (Friday) against the suspects," Gallego said.

Aside from murder, DENR-13 will also file charges for violations of Presidential Decree 705, or the Revised Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines, for stealing forest products inside a forestland owned by the government, he added.

Gallego said Rufano and his team managed to seize some 6,000 board feet of illegal lumber of the lauan and "toog" species.



Suspects in slay of DENR man in Agusan Sur identified

DENR-13 Executive Director Hadja Didaw D. Piang-Brahim condemned the killing of Rufano and ordered DENR-13 personnel to take extra precautions while performing their duties in protecting the forest in the area.

Death threats

Meanwhile, Gallego bared that the officer in charge of CENRO-Bunawan and the personnel who took part in the retrieval operation with Rufano have received death threats.

The threats, he said, were sent through unknown calls and text messages.

"They are not taking any chances now but continue to report to the office to perform their duties," Gallego said. *(PNA)*



Recto pushes reforest plan

posted October 30, 2020 at 11:30 pm

by [Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto on Friday said ‘plantreetos and plantreetas’ should be tapped by the government for its P5-billion reforestation program next year.

He said mobilizing “plantreetos and plantreetas” could shield the proposed budget of the government’s tree-planting drive from wastage and delays.

He said this was just one of his proposals “to mainstream” the National Greening Project, which had cost taxpayers P42.1 billion since 2011.

“This is one program which, like a sapling, should not be hidden under the canopy of tall trees. At a time when pandemic-hit people on the ground are looking for income, this can be part of the government livelihood menus,” Recto said.

He recommended that NGP’s implementing agency, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, begin by posting in town plazas details of the NGP projects.

“It can also partner with local governments willing to provide financial or ‘sweat’ equity,” Recto said.

The NGP has a budget of P3.15 billion this year, but will be raised to P5.15 billion under Malacañang’s proposed 2021 national budget.

The amount will be used to produce 72.9 million seedlings for planting on 82,349 hectares of new forest plantations and in existing ones, the DENR said in a briefer for its proposed P25.5-billion agency budget for 2021.

Recto said the DENR had spent P42.1 billion on NGP from 2011 to 2020.

The agency ended 2019 having planted 1.807 billion trees in 2.141 million hectares of land over 10 years.

“On paper, it is impressive because 2 million hectares of land reforested represents 1 in 15 hectares of the land in this country. Two million hectares is 32 times Metro Manila’s land area,” Recto said.

He urged the DENR to show proof of its achievements.

“Instead of counting the trees planted, it must show us the forests and invite people to sit under the shade of the hundreds of millions of trees it had planted. This is the ‘proof of life’ the people deserve to see.”

Recto sa DENR: 'Plantreetos, plantreetas' gamitin sa P5B reforestation program



October 30, 2020 @ 5:33 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Kung mayroon plantitos at plantitas na nagsasagawa ng urban gardening, iminungkahi ni Senador President Pro-Tempore Ralph Recto na pwedeng gamitin ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga “plantreetos at plantreetas,” sa P5 bilyong reforestation program sa susunod na taon.

Sa pahayag, sinabi ni Recto na dapat lumahok sa grassroots job ang tree-planting drive ng gobyerno sa susunod na taon sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng “plantreetos and plantreetas” na maaaring maging kalasag ng P5.1 billion budget laban sa pagsasayang at pagkaantala.

Isa lamang ito sa panukala ni Recto upang maging pangunahing aktibidad ng National Greening Project na ginastusan ng P452.1 bilyon simula pa noong 2011.

“This is one program, which, like a sapling, should not be hidden under the canopy of tall trees. At a time when pandemic-hit people at the ground are looking for income, this can be part of the government livelihood menu,” ayon kay Recto.

Aniya, dapat nang magsimulang maglagay ang DENR, implementing agency ng NGP, sa mga town plaza hinggil sa detalye ng NGP projects.

“It can also partner with local governments willing to provide financial or ‘sweat’ equity,” lahad pa nito.

Mayroong P3.15 bilyon ang badyet ng NGP sa taong ito, pero itinaas ito sa P5.15 bilyon sa ilalim ng panukalang pambansang badyet ng Malacañang sa 2021.

“The amount will be used to produce 72.9 million seedlings for planting on 82,349 hectares of new forest plantations and in existing ones,” ayon sa DENR sa ginanap na briefer sa panukalang P25.5 billion badyet ng ahensiya sa 2021.



Recto sa DENR: ‘Plantreetos, plantreetas’ gamitin sa P5B reforestation program

Nitong 2019, nakapagtanim ang ahensiya ng P1.807 bilyong puno sa 2.141 milyong ektaryang lupain sa loob ng 10 taon.

“On paper, it is impressive because 2 million hectares of land reforested represents 1 in 15 hectares of the land in this country. Two million hectares is 32 times Metro Manila’s land area.”

“Kahit sabihin pa natin na 62 percent lang ang success rate, kasi one out of three ay nalanta, nasunog, nabaha, a rate below the target 85 percent survival rate, malaki pa rin ang reportedly nataniman,” giit pa ng senador.

Dahil dito, hiniling ni Recto sa DENR na magpakita ng proof ng kanilang achievements.

“Instead of counting the trees planted, it must show us the forests. To invite people to sit under the shade of the hundreds of millions of trees it had planted. This is the ‘proof of life’ the people deserve to see,” punto nito.

Sinusuportahan ni Recto ang “tree planting dahil isa itong climate change resiliency measure, habang nagbibigay ng trabaho at naalagaan ang ating natural biodiversity.” **Ernie Reyes**



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Manila Bay's 'white beach'

posted October 31, 2020 at 12:30 am

by [Elizabeth Angsioco](#)



POWER POINT
by Elizabeth
Angsioco

"This project is a waste of public funds."

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) insistence that it is correct in putting dolomite "white sand" along a part of Manila Bay, is puzzling to say the least. I thought that like many other issues, this would die a natural death after a week or so of receiving criticism from people.

This dolomite "beach" is part of DENR's Manila Bay rehabilitation project. With a budget of P359 million sourced from the contingency fund of President Rodrigo Duterte, the department intends to cover some 500 meters of Manila Bay shoreline with crushed dolomite from Cebu. As of now, only 120 meters have been covered.

Recent typhoons and heavy rains that hit Manila have shown how wrong the DENR is in embarking on this project. The white dolomite "sand" has been repeatedly washed out and DENR needed to "restore" the area every time. But DENR has a different version, saying that the dolomite is not being washed out. Instead, black sand was being washed in, resulting in the white artificial sand being covered.

Washed out or washed in, the thing is, scientists have said that when nourishing a beach, the material that should be used is one similar to what is already there. Manila Bay's shoreline is naturally gray, and definitely, its sand is NOT dolomite. Moreover, one international expert said that dolomite is used for construction of roads and not one of the world's artificial beaches is made of dolomite. Apparently, the project did not undergo an environmental impact assessment (EIA) to determine if what will be done will be good or bad for the environment.

In fact, the DENR issued Administrative Order No. 2003-30 on the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) System. This AO requires that projects that pose potential significant impact to the environment need to secure Environment Clearance Certificates (ECC) before they can be implemented to make sure that the environment is protected. Apparently from the get-go, the DENR did not consider the "dolomite project" as potentially harmful since reports say that no EIA was done.

Besides the harm to environment, in a statement, scientists from the University of the Philippines (UP) have raised concerns about the high project costs since this will require continuously replacing the sand with crushed dolomite. "The addition of dolomites ... cannot serve to anchor the loss of beach sand, nor serve as replacement for eroded sediments... Beach nourishment projects are not one-shot deals, especially for continuously eroding shorelines," the statement said.



Manila Bay's 'white beach'

Simply put, if DENR does not stop now, government will need to spend for more and more dolomite in the future to replace the ones that are washed out. And even with such expenditures, we cannot expect Manila Bay to be rehabilitated.

The health hazards of dolomite have been underscored. The Department of Health (DOH) initially said that dolomite dust can cause respiratory problems. The UP Marine Science Institute warned that prolonged inhalation of dolomite dust particles could cause chronic health effects, chest discomfort, shortness of breath and coughing. Should this artificial beach be opened to the public as initially planned, we can only imagine the health problems that people who will frequent the place may experience.

The DENR and Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque defended the project by saying that the project will bring the "white beach" to people who cannot afford to go to the real thing like Boracay. Also, Roque claimed that this will be good for the mental health of people in this time of pandemic. Evidently, our government officials are not mindful of the actual health hazards of dolomite.

Instead of listening to people, especially environmentalists and scientists, DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said that the project will continue and more crushed dolomite will be used to cover the planned 500 meters of Manila Bay's shoreline. There is no information on where the dolomite is coming from since the Cebu provincial government has issued a cease-and-desist order for the unauthorized extraction of dolomite rocks.

Additionally, the DENR also said that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) will construct a breakwater as additional protection so the dolomite will stay intact. It is unclear if the budget that will be used for a breakwater of 500 meters in length (following the DENR plan) is included in the original P359 million, or if this will be sourced from DPWH budget. In this case, it should have been included in the General Appropriations Act of 2021. The cost of building the breakwater is also unknown as of this time.

An important point that needs to be raised is the fact that the "dolomite beach" is a beautification project and NOT something that will rehabilitate Manila Bay. As such, it should not have been under the Manila Bay rehabilitation program.

During this time when tens of millions of Filipino families are suffering due to worsening poverty, and a time when even Duterte has repeatedly said that the government no longer has money, this fake white beach project is a waste of public funds. This is something that we cannot afford.

Had the P359 million been used to help our impoverished people, almost 60,000 families or 300,00 individuals could have been helped at P6,000 per family. Then we can say that this is money well spent.

The DENR should now listen to the experts and stop this fake white beach project before things get worse.

@bethangsioco on Twitter Elizabeth Angsioco on Facebook

Topics: [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) , [Manila Bay](#) , [Rodrigo Duterte](#) , [rehabilitation project](#)



‘Will this rehabilitate Manila Bay?’ groups ask of breakwater to protect dolomite

By [Gaea Katreena Cabico](#)(Philstar.com)
- October 30, 2020 - 11:32am



Sandbags were placed along the artificial white sand beach along Manila Bay amid the ongoing rehabilitation of the natural harbor by the DENR in this undated photo.

MANILA, Philippines — Fishers and environment groups questioned a proposal to build a breakwater to protect the artificial white sand beach along Manila Bay’s shoreline, saying the move is geared towards beautifying, not rehabilitating, the degraded harbor.

Fishers group PAMALAKAYA said that while a breakwater may be able to hold some of the dolomite sand, this does not guarantee that it will effectively impede water flow and prevent the crushed dolomite rocks from being washed out.

“This plan is a 180-degree turn to the ultimate goal of Manila Bay rehabilitation. It is a government’s manifestation that they are leaning toward beautification, and abandoning their supposed mandate to restore its marine ecosystem,” Fernando Hicap, PAMALAKAYA national chairperson, said in a statement.

Lawyer Gloria Ramos, vice president of Oceana Philippines, said the installation of a breakwater also needs a thorough environmental impact assessment.

“Is this a case of protecting the dolomite project not Manila Bay?” Ramos told **Philstar.com**.

In 2008, the Supreme Court, through a mandamus, directed government agencies to “clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay, and restore and maintain its waters.”

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said in an interview on ABS-CBN News Channel Thursday that the rehabilitation does not only focus on the baywalk.

“We are addressing different tributaries, river systems, settlements in order to address the problem of Manila Bay,” he said.



‘Will this rehabilitate Manila Bay?’ groups ask of breakwater to protect dolomite

Breakwater and geotubes

In the same interview, Leones said that the Department of Public Works and Highways will build a breakwater to ensure that the pulverized dolomite rocks used as artificial white will not be washed away by strong waves.

“The DPWH — as we have been informed — to ensure the beach will be there and will not be destroyed by strong current, they plan to put a breakwater in the area,” he said.

This is on top of the geotubes—“durable” plastic bags filled with sand placed along the perimeter—already installed to withstand storm damage and provide stability to the P28-million beautification project.

Earlier in October, Leones said in a briefing that the use of geotextile tube system is more economical than the traditional method of constructing a breakwater.

‘Expensive, inflexible’ infra

Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment said the government will waste funds on “expensive and inflexible” infrastructure that will not adapt to the exponential impacts of climate change such as stronger cyclones and rising seas.

“Generally, ‘grey’ infrastructure that are not designed to support coastal greenbelting as the main coastal defense strategy will not be sustainable. We have seen Manila Baywalk’s existing breakwaters sundered by typhoons and storm surges over the past decade,” Leon Dulce, Kalikasan PNE national coordinator, said.

He once again called for an independent public investigation into the beach nourishment project.

PAMALAKAYA also said the installation of breakwater, which it said is a “troubleshooting” measure, shows the lack of research and planning of the government project.

“But sure the government can troubleshoot all they want, and they will still miss what Manila Bay really needs. Thus a waste of funds, one after another,” Hicap said.

PROTECTING DOLOMITE | Fishermen's group questions move to install breakwater in Manila Bay

October 30, 2020 , 12:01 PM



October 30, 2020) – The government's plan to save the crushed dolomite from erosion by building a breakwater on the shorelines of Manila bay was questioned by a federation of Philippine fishermen on Friday.

PAMALAKAYA said it would be a waste of resources to build a dike to protect the artificial sand because there is no guarantee of preventing soil erosion.

“Wouldn't breakwater a sore thumb to the Manila Bay's famous sunset?” asked Fernando Hicap, national chairperson of PAMALAKAYA or the National Federation of Small Fisherfolk Organizations in the Philippines.

“While breakwaters may be able to hold some of the dolomite sands, these do not guarantee that it would totally and effectively impede the water flow and prevent the dolomite sands from washing out,” he added.

PAMALAKAYA also called the plan a “180-degree turn” from Manila Bay's rehabilitation.

“Installation of breakwaters, which could be regarded as a troubleshooting measure, manifests lack of research and planning of the beach nourishment altogether,” Hicap said.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is planning to install the breakwater as the outer region of the half-kilometer stretch of crushed dolomite is slowly eroding and replaced by the Manila Bay's black sand.

The agency also dumped some 3,500 tons of crushed dolomite from Cebu to beautify a half-kilometer stretch of Manila Bay near the United States embassy. This was supposed to cap their efforts to rehabilitate the area, including the installation of three sewage treatment facilities.

However, a number of groups questioned the move and the sustainability of maintaining the crushed dolomite in the area.

Some have also noted the possibility of further erosion with the approach of Typhoon Rolly, which is expected to bring heavy rains and strong winds over Metro Manila as it moves over Central Luzon.

(Katrina Elaine Alba/MM)

Customs intercepts trafficked tarantulas



By [Benjamin L. Vergara, TMT](#)
October 30, 2020

OFFICIALS of the Bureau of Customs (BoC) at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) rescued 119 tarantulas, classified as endangered wildlife species, intended for illegal pet trade.

The parcel that was concealed inside rubber shoes was intercepted at the DHL warehouse after it arrived from Poland to a consignee in General Trias, Cavite.

The BoC said it discovered the tarantulas when Customs operatives noticed the suspicious images after the package was scanned by an X-ray.



DEADLY TRADE Customs officials check smuggled tarantulas placed in individual plastic vials and packed in shoe boxes from Poland . PHOTO COURTESY OF BoC

It was declared as "buty" or Polish word for shoes, but which turned out to be different species of live tarantulas. Because they were still babies and too small, they were packed in individual plastic vials.

The arachnids were immediately turned over on Thursday to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Wildlife Traffic Monitoring Unit for proper handling and care, a BoC official said.

In 2019, BoC-NAIA confiscated two parcels of 757 live tarantulas and 87 other live spider species, both from Poland, as part of a wildlife trade bust.

The deadly spiders were separately concealed inside oatmeal and cookie boxes and white plastic containers.



Customs intercepts trafficked tarantulas

Tarantulas are classified as endangered species, and illegal wildlife trading is penalized with imprisonment of six months and one day to one year and a fine of P10,000 to P200,000 pursuant to Republic Act 9147 (Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act).

The unlawful importation carries a penalty of not less than 30 days and one day but not more than six months or a fine of not less than P25,000 but not more than P75,000, or both, if the appraised value of goods unlawfully imported, including duties and taxes, does not exceed P250,000 under Section 1401 of RA 10863 (Customs Modernization and Tariff Act).

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service commended the BoC recently for intercepting a reticulated python. Previous apprehensions involving smuggling of wildlife animals and species were also commended by the DENR and international bodies, including Traffic Southeast Asia, a leading international NGO working exclusively on wildlife trade.



Wildlife team rescues Philippine serpent eagle



Philippine serpent eagle. (Contributed photo)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

October 30, 2020

THE wildlife team of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) based in Dingalan, Aurora came to the rescue of an adult endemic Philippine serpent eagle (*Spilornis holospilus*).

A concerned upland farmer found the bird weak in the Sierra Madre mountain portion of Barangay 3 in Maria Aurora town in Aurora. The farmer reported it immediately to the police and called the Cenro Dingalan for its immediate rescue.

The bird is now in the custody of Cenro Dingalan to undergo care and rehabilitation before it gets released back to the wild.

The DENR said the raptor is better wild and alive because it plays an important role in the ecosystem by balancing the population of other species.

“Let us protect our wildlife and their habitat by sharing this (Facebook) post, reporting wildlife crime to the nearest DENR office in your area and avoiding the consumption of wildlife meat that can lead to zoonotic diseases and the next pandemic,” the DENR said in a statement.



Hamilo Coast preserves Batangas mangrove forest



By [The Manila Times](#)
October 31, 2020



One of nature's essential habitats at Hamilo Coast is a 10-hectare mangrove forest

ONE of nature's essential habitats at Hamilo Coast is a 10-hectare mangrove forest, the largest of its kind in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Together with the World Wildlife Fund for Nature Philippines (WWF-Philippines), Hamilo Coast continues to preserve over 10,000 mangrove trees in this lush coastal paradise that is at rhythmic pace with the tides.

Besides stabilizing the shoreline against erosion, storm surges and typhoons, conservationists also believe that of all coastal ecosystems, mangrove preservation is a sound investment due to its high adaptive capacity to climate change.

Mangroves act as marine sanctuaries for a massive diversity of fish and underwater creatures. These habitat-forming species take refuge in this protective nursery where they often thrive at the interface of open water and the terrestrial environment.

Those who come to visit the thickets of mangroves at Hamilo Coast begin their tour with a short 200-meter trek through the forest. Along the path are posters that explain the crucial role of mangrove trees in reforestation. At the end of the trail, guests are taken on a canoe ride through the reforested area.

With mangrove trees growing up to a towering 50 feet, visitors have a unique opportunity to witness the awe-inspiring effects of Hamilo Coast's dedicated stewardship toward the environment, contributing to the livelihood of the local fishing community that makes its home at Papaya Cove where this tour ends.

The mangrove forest at Hamilo Coast remains an inspiring reminder of how a well-planned and well-executed development and nature can co-exist in harmony — to provide a most wholesome beach resort living and an excellent lifestyle choice.



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 **Masungi Georeserve**
9 hrs · 🌐

MASSACRE OF THE FOREST. 😞 On the ridge of the mountain a company tried to fence, our hearts were broken to find an entire grove of mature trees sliced down and obliterated from the face of the earth. Illegal logging and land speculation inside the Upper Marikina Watershed, one of the nearest protected areas to Metro Manila, remain critical challenges. This is why we need to urgently and seriously protect it and work together - government, civil society, private sector, citizens, and indigenous groups - to save the little that is left of it and restore it towards a working ecosystem, which will provide clean water and air, a habitat for precious biodiversity, and protection from disasters and... [More](#)



The value of the Sierra Madre



By [Leander C. Domingo, TMT](#)
October 31, 2020

More than three years since its launch, the “Know Your North” campaign of Victory Liner has created more awareness on the beauty and diversity of Northern Luzon.

The campaign showed the northern part of Luzon that has spots worth visiting, like the Sierra Madre mountain range that stretches from Cagayan to Quezon, and the majestic plains spanning Cagayan and Zambales.

Also of equal importance is Know Your North created awareness on the need to preserve the natural beauty and diversity of Luzon’s northern portion, which is still teeming with forests, beaches, rivers and mountains. The forests hosted by the northern part of Luzon also hosts watershed critical to the island’s food production.

“While Know Your North primarily showcases the diverse culture and beauty of the northern part of Luzon, equally important is it also advocates the preservation and appreciation of the natural diversity of that vast area,” said Victory Liner Director Gabby Malvar.

One of the episodes of Know Your North centering on preserving the diversity of the Sierra Madre is the “Palanan Plot of Sierra Madre,” a story of Jholo Sagao who is the lone steward 286-hectare Palanan Plot in the mountain range that he protects from illegal loggers and poachers.

“There are trees here that you will not find in other forests. There are 272 species here. That is the beauty of this reserve that I watch and guard,” Sagao, who has been undertaking such duties since 1994, said in Filipino.

He said he visits the area every day, and if it were not for his efforts and the community, the forest reserve would be gone by now.

A key figure in the establishment of the Palanan Plot in Isabela is the late botanist Leonardo Co who convinced local folk in the area to help establish a 16-h ectare plot so his students can study the area’s diversity. The area Co created expanded to 272 hectares.

Despite threats to his life, Sagao said he wants the next generation to enjoy the diversity and beauty of the Palanan Plot, and has made his life mission the protection of the area from illegal loggers and poachers.

“I am not afraid, that is my principle,” he said, explaining the next generation has the right to also enjoy the beauty and diversity of areas like the Palanan Plot.

Malvar said stories like Sagao’s featured in the bus company’s Know Your North campaign can inspire the present and next generations to also take steps to preserve areas like the Palanan Plot.

“Brave souls like Sagao are just one of the select personalities who have very moving stories to tell to our countrymen, especially the youth,” Malvar said.



The value of the Sierra Madre

Victory Liner's Know Your North campaign has been at the forefront of producing short videos that present stories about Filipino heritage, culture and peoples from Northern Luzon. In just three years, the bus company's centerpiece campaign has reached millions of audiences in the Philippines and abroad.



Gov't wants more investments in renewable energy

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:40 AM October 31, 2020

The Philippines wants to entice more “green” energy investments as it aims to bounce back from the pandemic-induced recession while fighting climate risks and enhancing disaster resilience, President Duterte’s chief economic manager said.

“Like most countries, we are also in the midst of a great battle against COVID-19. The pandemic added to our vulnerabilities. But it has steeled our determination to make our economic development more inclusive and our communities more resilient,” Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said in a speech during the 7th Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum.

“The ongoing pandemic has forced us to rethink our ways of economic life, which makes this an opportune moment to intensify our action on the climate crisis,” Dominguez said.

As such, Dominguez said the Philippines was “turning the contagion into an opportunity to begin building sustainable and safer cities.”

In particular, “we aim to shift our investments to clean energy resources and green technologies,” Dominguez said.

On top of the planned shift to renewable power sources, Dominguez said the Philippines already put in place a national disaster risk reduction and management plan, a disaster risk financing and insurance strategy, a country-wide catastrophe risk model as well as a national asset registry system to better prepare for natural calamities.

The latest Philippine Statistics Authority data showed that the damage due to natural disasters and extreme events reached P463 billion from 2010 to 2019, with the agriculture, infrastructure as well as communications sectors suffering the most when calamities strike.

Dominguez earlier noted that “unlike COVID-19, for which a vaccine will likely be produced soon, there is no quick solution for the climate crisis.” —**Ben O. de Vera**

Read more: <https://business.inquirer.net/310804/govt-wants-more-investments-in-renewable-energy#ixzz6cOzdWHmX>

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Better wastewater management for our cities

By: [Jonathan Breton](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:02 AM October 31, 2020

This World Cities Day, it is important to reflect on how we can foster livable cities that allow us to not only survive but also thrive. 2020 has been a trying year with COVID-19, but we should not lose sight of the need to build resilient cities, as the Philippines continues to rapidly urbanize.

The country has already set in motion its smart nation ambition: Currently under construction, New Clark City will be its first smart and resilient metropolis. The Philippines should not let its initiatives lose momentum.

Amid urban problems that smart cities can address such as flooding, traffic, and overcrowding, there is one crucial pillar that digitalization can help address: wastewater management. With rapid urbanization, the Philippines is facing significant challenges in terms of water and sanitation. Only 10 percent of wastewater is treated while 58 percent of the groundwater is contaminated. Metro Manila alone generates about 2 million cubic meters of wastewater every day.

The pandemic has also led to increased wastewater production. An exponential increase in medical waste has made its way into landfills and oceans, which can adversely impact our health.

Water management in cities also presents its own unique problems. In cities where increasingly dense populations are driving greater space constraints, water solutions need to be constructed to ensure minimal disruption to residents and existing infrastructure.

As the government gears up to address issues of universal water and sanitation services coverage by 2028, reliable and intelligent technology will be critical in enabling this transformation.

Pumping stations are crucial to the water and wastewater process. They are designed to collect and quickly move as much water as possible. With today's technology, pumping stations can undergo advanced computer modelling of pressurized sewer systems, Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) flow simulation, and model testing to optimize the design right from the start, avoiding future complications such as blockages, odors, power outages, and flooding.

We at Grundfos recently worked with Lio Tourism Estate, located in El Nido, Palawan, to support its wastewater management efforts. Keen to find wastewater management solutions that will help them raise the bar for sustainable tourism, Lio achieved this by applying intelligence to its wastewater management process, creating energy and cost savings with a space-efficient and reliable solution.

In smart cities, smart wastewater systems can also meet the demand for freshwater by detecting and preventing combined sewage overflows and chemicals in wastewater with the help of sensors. Wastewater treatment also allows us to get the most out of used water by harnessing it repeatedly.

Freshwater is one of the most precious natural resources that is getting scarce by the day. Treating and reusing wastewater reduces water consumption and further saves water for the community.

We should not see used water as waste, but as a resource that can be looped back into production.



Better wastewater management for our cities

Technology that can empower smart city transformation exists, but how do we start? Collaboration is key. The public sector can effect change, while the private sector can bring the expertise, agility, and innovation. Best practices and learnings can also be shared between countries to replicate what works.

We must also ensure a citizen-centric design approach to such developments. Smart cities are built for the people, and must solve actual, pressing problems and bring value to citizens.

As we continue to move toward greater urbanization, our cities need to evolve as well. Water management is a key pillar in this. Once we begin to reconsider our approach to water, we will start building cities that are truly resilient against global crises.

Jonathan Breton is general manager of Grundfos Philippines.



Massive dredging to solve flooding-problem

By dredging, cleaning, and widening these tributaries both in Bulacan along with the Tullahan River System, we can increase their capacity to carry excess rainwater and thus reduce flooding.



Published 46 seconds ago on October 31, 2020 01:00 AM

By [TDI @tribunephil](#)



River dredging is one way of addressing flooding in prone areas. / Photograph courtesy of SMC

Amid the impending construction of the P734 billion Manila International Airport in Bulacan town — seen as the biggest airport development in the Philippines — San Miguel Corporation (SMC) has committed to help solve the flooding problem in Bulacan by dredging, widening and cleaning up major rivers in the province.

SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon S. Ang said the company had been in talks with local government units and other stakeholders the past few weeks to outline the company's flood mitigation strategy.

The local government units (LGU) and stakeholders had been requesting for SMC to replicate its ongoing P1-billion Tullahan-Tinajeros River System dredging project in Bulacan, to help mitigate flooding which has affected Bulacan residents, particularly those living in the low-lying areas of the province.

“Cleaning up major rivers in Bulacan is really part of our plan. That is why many stakeholders, led by the provincial government and local government units, welcome the project. We have committed to help with this issue and show that this airport project will not only provide jobs and boost the economy, but will also provide a long-term solution to the perennial flooding in Bulacan,” Ang said.

To be subjected to river channel improvement, according to Ang, will be tributaries belonging to the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System (MMORS).

According to Ang, the plan is to dredge, widen and deepen the Alipit or Taliptip, Sta. Maria and Meycauayan Rivers, to address the risk of upstream flooding.

For the Alipit River, Ang said the target is to achieve a bottom width of 60 meters and a depth of 2.5 meters, mean sea level (MSL) throughout its 7.21-kilometer length. For the Sta. Maria River, target is a bottom width of 90m, dredged depth of 5.0m MSL, and length of 0.50 km.



Massive dredging to solve flooding-problem

Meanwhile, for Meycauayan River, the target bottom width is 80m; dredged depth, 4.5m MSL, and length of 4.46 km.

Ang said the company has also studied future improvements to alleviate the potential risk of flooding, as continued urban development can increase surface runoff volumes. These include further dredging the rivers to increase their top width and dredged depth.

“Constant dredging and cleanup is important for these tributaries leading to the Manila Bay as silt, trash and other obstructions restrict the free flow of water, cause heavy flooding, and affect the marine ecosystem and traditional fishing grounds,” he said.

“By dredging, cleaning and widening these tributaries both in Bulacan along the Tullahan River System, we can increase their capacity to carry excess rainwater and thus reduce flooding,” he added.

SMC’s flood mitigation strategy will complement the Department of Public Works and Highways’ Valenzuela-Obando-Meycauayan Area Drainage System Improvement Project, further improving overall flood mitigation in the province.

Early this year, SMC launched its five-year, P1 billion initiative to dredge and clean the Tullahan River. Some 600 metric tons of dredged soil and solid wastes are being collected daily from an initial 5.25 km. stretch from Navotas to Malabon City.

As of 25 October, a total of 49,281 metric tons of silt and solid wastes have been extracted. The entire project spans 27 kilometers from the La Mesa Dam to Navotas City leading to the Manila Bay.

The Tullahan River dredging project is in cooperation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and is part of the government’s efforts to rehabilitate the Manila Bay.

Tullahan River also acts as a spillway for water coming from Angat and Ipo Dams.

“Our flood mitigation initiatives in Bulacan and Tullahan are part of, and will complement, the government’s long-term flood control projects. We want everyone to benefit from the airport project, particularly the communities around it. As soon as we have completed all government requirements and clearances for the airport and start construction, we will also commence the cleaning and dredging of these Bulacan rivers,” Ang said.

Despite the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, SMC has committed to pursue various infrastructure projects to help stimulate the economy, including building the airport, which is seen to generate millions of direct and indirect jobs. At P734 billion, it is the largest single-item investment in the history of the Philippines.

SMC acquired larger excavators, a fleet of barges, tugboats, cranes and dump trucks for the project, and is looking to acquire more as the project progresses.

In two years, SMC is looking to complete the Navotas-Malabon section and dredge a total of 1 million cubic meters from this section alone. The Valenzuela and Caloocan section of the Tullahan River will be next in the pipeline.



OVER COVID CASE SPIKE 3 mines locked down



By [Dexter A. See](#)
October 31, 2020

ITOGON, Benguet: Three big mining companies and nearby communities were recently locked down by the municipal government over a reported rise in coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases in their respective mining sites over the past several days.

Mayor Victorio Palangdan urged the management of Philex Mining Corp., Benguet Corp. and Apex Mining Co. Inc. to conduct testing, required of their mine workers to prevent the further spread of the disease in communities outside the sites.

Philex reported that it ceased operations over the weekend in light of the case spike.

Eduardo Aratas, Philex Legal and Administrative division head, said results of contact tracing and expanded testing showed that 216 individuals had tested positive for the virus: 175 workers, nine contractors' workers and 36 villagers.

He added that nine of the confirmed cases were able to recover.

Froilan Roger Lawilao, Benguet Corp. Administration department manager, said the company was also compelled to place some areas under total lockdown over positive test results of some 110 workers.

He added that the infected workers have been told to stay in their designated bunkhouses while awaiting results of ongoing contact tracing at the mine site.

Lawilao said the situation is under control.

Apex Mining reported to the Philippine Stock Exchange that it also temporarily suspended operations at its Sangilo mine here over positive Covid-19 test results of more than 80 employees.

Apex said Sangilo mine, which is owned by subsidiary Itogon-Suyoc Resources Inc., was ordered locked down because of a sudden increase in the number of virus cases in the municipality.

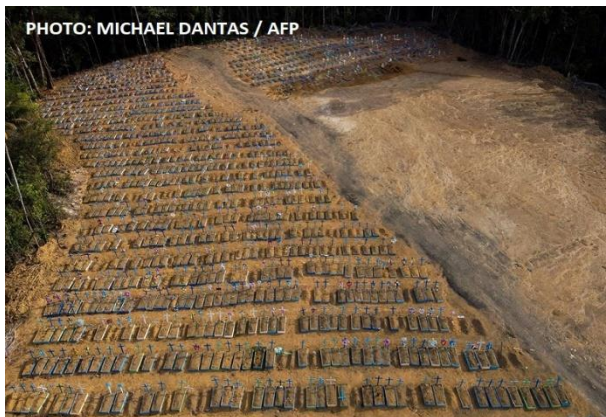
While awaiting swab test results, conducted on its workers by the rural health unit, the corporation disinfected all areas where the cases were identified.

The company has requested assistance from the local government and the Department of Health to conduct mass testing, required of its workers in the mine site.

Apex said mining operations will resume upon completion of ongoing contact tracing and testing and that only those with negative results would be allowed to return home.

Bilang ng nasawi sa COVID-19 sa buong mundo nadagdagan pa ng mahigit 20,000 pa

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo October 30, 2020 - 12:23 PM



Umabot na sa 1,186,209 ang bilang ng mga nasawi sa COVID-19 sa buong mundo mula sa 1,164,227 na datos kahapon.

Sa huling datos na nakalap ng Radyo INQUIRER, pinakamaraming bilang ng nasawi sa US na umabot na sa 234,177.

Umabot naman na sa mahigit 159,000 ang bilang ng mga nasawi sa Brazil.

Ang death toll sa India ay mahigit 121,000 na.

Habang ang death toll sa Mexico ay umabot na sa mahigit 90,000.

Umabot naman na sa mahigit 32.9 million na ang bilang ng mga naka-recover na sa sakit.

Habang nasa mahigit 11.1 million pa ang aktibong kaso.

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

USA – 234,177

Brazil – 159,033

India – 121,131

Mexico – 90,773

UK – 45,955

Italy – 38,122

Spain – 35,639

France – 36,020

Peru – 34,362

Iran – 34,113

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/272576/bilang-ng-nasawi-sa-covid-19-sa-buong-mundo-nadagdagan-pa-ng-mahigit-20000-pa#ixzz6cOl5jQGB>

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Quarantine status sa bansa simula Nov.1 hanggang Nov.30, pinal na – IATF

By [Bombo Reymund Tinaza](#)

-October 30, 2020 | 2:44 PM

Inianunsyo ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque na naisapinal na ang quarantine classifications sa iba't ibang lugar sa bansa matapos ang takdang panahong ibinigay sa mga local government units (LGUs) para umapela.

Sinabi ni Sec. Roque, walang pagbabago sa naging anunsyo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte noong umaga ng Martes.

Ayon kay Sec. Roque, simula Nobyembre 1 hanggang 30, sasailalim sa general community quarantine (GCQ) ang Metro Manila, ang Batangas, ang Iloilo City, ang Bacolod City, ang Tacloban City, ang Iligan City at Lanao del Sur.

Ang iba't ibang lugar pang Pilipinas na hindi nabanggit ay mapapasailalim sa modified general community quarantine (MGCQ).



DILG to LGUs: Brace for ‘Rolly’

By Christopher Lloyd Caliwan October 30, 2020, 1:53 pm



DILG Secretary Eduardo Año. (File photo)

MANILA – The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Friday urged local government units to heighten their disaster preparedness efforts ahead of the onslaught of Typhoon “Rolly”.

“Hindi na kailangan aantayin mo yung bagyo bago mag-evacuate lalo na sa mga low-lying areas sa eastern seaboard natin (There is no need to wait for the typhoon before implementing evacuation especially in low-lying areas in our eastern seaboard),” Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said in a radio interview.

Citing the importance of full preparedness, Año said the damage to properties can be repaired but lost lives can never be revived.

“Importante talaga safety muna yung mga kababayan natin. Yung puwedeng tamaan ng typhoon surge at pagbaha, landslide at erosion, safe dapat muna sila from those. Yung mga property wala tayo magagawa diyan, talagang sisirain yan ng bagyo pero kaya naman ma-repair (The safety of the public is of primary importance. Those who will be affected by the typhoon surge, flooding, landslide, and erosion should be safe first. Properties will surely be destroyed by the typhoon and we cannot do anything but we can still repair them),” he added.

He also assured the LGUs that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has built separate evacuation centers and quarantine facilities for Covid-19 patients to allay fears of the spread of the virus.

Año noted that empty quarantine facilities may be used to temporarily house the evacuees.

“Ang mga eskwelahan puwede natin magamit, provincial gymnasium puwede rin natin magamit pero higit diyan nakapag-prepare naman tayo (We can utilize the schools, We can also use provincial gymnasiums but what is important is our preparation (for disasters),” Año noted.

He said the country has regional and provincial evacuation centers that were built specifically for disaster safety purposes.



DILG to LGUs: Brace for ‘Rolly’

With the blended learning scheme imposed in the pandemic, Año said more schools are available for the evacuees.

He added that the Department of Education (DepEd) has been amenable to this set-up since this is part of the joint memorandum agreement among the DILG, DepEd and the Department of Health (DOH).

Año said the relief goods are already “pre-positioned” with the mayors and governors on stand-by.

He said it is a grave offense for the mayors and governors to be absent in their respective jurisdictions during calamities as this is strictly specified under the agency’s Operation: Listo.

Last year, the DILG presented the revised manual for LGUs or the Operation LISTO Manual, which contains preparedness action plans in dealing with the impact of weather disturbances on the country.

DILG spokesperson and Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya said the LISTO manual version 3 contains not only the checklist of mayors, DILG field officers, chiefs of police, fire marshals but also provides authority to local chief executives to undertake preemptive or mandatory evacuation when necessary and other measures on preparedness and response that LGUs must undertake depending on the alert levels.

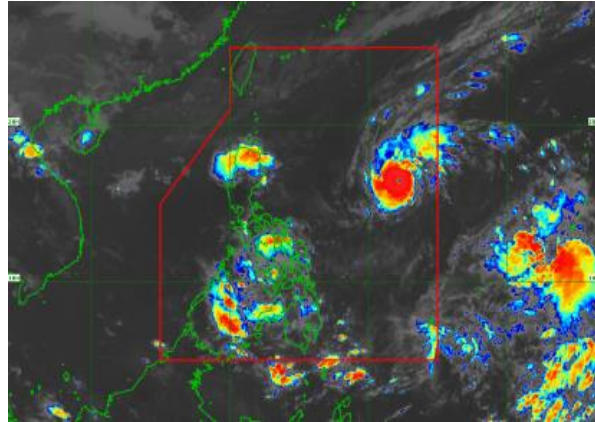
The DILG, through its Local Government Academy, has developed Operation LISTO, a national advocacy program for disaster preparedness and disaster risk management at the local level, which advocates disaster readiness not just of the LGUs, but also of the communities and families at the household levels.

In its latest weather bulletin, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said Rolly, packing maximum winds of up to 165 km. per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 205 kph, is expected to further intensify before hitting the Aurora-Quezon area by Sunday or Monday. *(PNA)*



'Rolly' continues to intensify

By Ma. Cristina Arayata October 30, 2020, 12:49 pm



(Image grabbed from PAGASA's Facebook page)

MANILA – Typhoon Rolly continues to intensify while moving westward at 15 kph, the weather bureau said in its 11 a.m. bulletin on Friday.

“Rolly” now packs maximum sustained winds of 165 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 205 kph, added the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

The typhoon was last tracked 1,100 km. east of Central Luzon and is forecast to move west-southwestward from Friday afternoon until Saturday night.

PAGASA maintained that “Rolly” may make landfall over the Aurora-Quezon area on Sunday or Monday.

Its trough will bring light to moderate with at times heavy rains over Bicol, the Visayas, Caraga, Northern Mindanao, and Zamboanga Peninsula on Friday.

Meanwhile, no tropical cyclone wind signal (TCWS) was hoisted over any part of the country.

"However, in anticipation of the arrival of strong breeze to near-gale conditions due to ‘Rolly’, TCWS No. 1 may be raised over several provinces in the Bicol region this afternoon," PAGASA said.

Rough to very rough seas will be experienced over the seaboards of northern Luzon, and the eastern seaboards of Central and Southern Luzon.

Gale warning is in effect in these waters.

Moderate to rough seas will prevail over the eastern seaboards of the Visayas and Mindanao, and the remaining seaboards of Luzon, PAGASA said. **(PNA)**

Candaba swamp flooding may persist, worsen amidst 'Rolly'

By Catherine Teves October 30, 2020, 6:21 pm



MANILA – Flooding will likely continue plaguing Central Luzon's Candaba swamp area in the forthcoming days and may even worsen with the onslaught of incoming Typhoon "Rolly" (international name Goni).

"We're anticipating such situation as the area's existing flood water is receding very slowly," said Pampanga River Basin Flood Forecasting and Warning Center (PRFFWC) weather observer Rommel Yutuc.

He warned that expected rain from Rolly over Central Luzon will raise the already high flood water level and aggravate the situation, so communities in the area's low-lying towns of Candaba, San Luis, San Simon, and Apalit in Pampanga province, as well as nearby Calumpit and Pulilan towns in Bulacan province, must prepare accordingly.

On Friday, PRFFWC again alerted the affected communities on the flooding problem.

"Floodwater there this weekend may still be above the area's 4.5-meter high alarm level," Yutuc said.

He is not discounting the possibility that such flood water may even rise beyond the area's five-meter high critical level due to Rolly.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) forecast shows Rolly may plow through Central Luzon and dump rains before leaving the Philippine landmass early next week.

Yutuc said rain from the successive onslaught of severe tropical storm "Pepito" (Saudel) and Typhoon "Quinta" (Molave) this month already triggered flooding in the Candaba swamp area.



Candaba swamp flooding may persist, worsen amidst 'Rolly'

Pepito and Quinta already left the country but runoff from the rain of both weather disturbances is still flowing into the area so flooding there continues, he noted.

"Water flows into Candaba since this area has the lowest ground elevation in Luzon," he said.

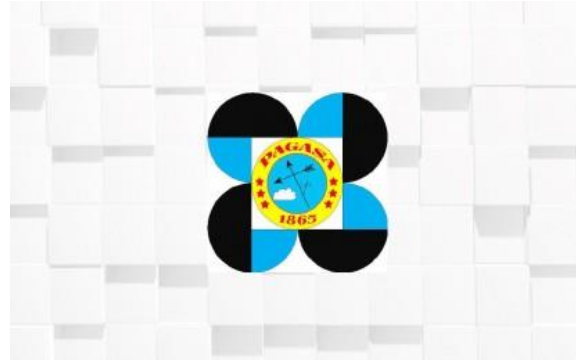
According to PRFFWC, Candaba swamp area is located in the plains downstream of Mt. Arayat on the left bank of Pampanga River channel.

"It encompasses the areas, either partly or wholly, the towns of San Miguel, San Ildefonso, Pulilan, Baliuag, Calumpit and Plaridel (Bulacan), Cabiao (Nueva Ecija), Candaba (whole area), San Luis, San Simon, Apalit (Pampanga)," said PRFFWC.

PAGASA expects Rolly to make landfall in the Aurora province-Quezon province area on either Sunday evening (Nov. 1) or early Monday morning (Nov. 2) at an estimated peak intensity of 175 kph to 185 kph. (*PNA*)

Tullahan River may flood areas due to 'Rolly'

By Catherine Teves October 30, 2020, 5:27 pm



MANILA – Residents along the Tullahan River in Luzon are facing the possibility of being flooded again if the La Mesa Dam overflows due to the onslaught of typhoon "Rolly" (international name Goni).

"Downpour from Rolly can raise La Mesa's water to the spilling level so those communities must prepare for this eventuality," said Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) hydrologist Edgar dela Cruz on Friday.

If La Mesa reaches such a level, he said its water will just overflow and spill into the Tullahan River and the surrounding communities.

"Such happens because La Mesa has no gate to control its water flow," he said.

Dela Cruz said if inclement weather looms, La Mesa can request to receive less water from Ipo Dam.

"That'll somehow control (the) flow of water into La Mesa," he said.

Even with such precaution, however, he said tropical cyclones like Rolly can still bring rain that will raise La Mesa Dam's water to the spilling level.

He said rain during 2009's storm "Ondoy" (Ketsana) did so and caused La Mesa Dam to overflow.

Such overflow resulted in the flooding of communities along the Tullahan River, he noted.

The Tullahan River is among the major waterways in Metro Manila.

The river begins in Quezon City and flows down to Valenzuela and Malabon cities before discharging into Manila Bay.

The government is cleaning up the Tullahan River to declog this waterway, improve water quality, and facilitate the flow of water.



Tullahan River may flood areas due to 'Rolly'

As of 6 a.m. Friday, PAGASA reported La Mesa's water level at 79.20 meters, just 0.95 meters below the 80.15 meters spilling or normal high water level.

"Too much rainfall from Rolly can cause La Mesa to overflow," said dela Cruz.

He urged communities along the Tullahan River to monitor government reports about Rolly and La Mesa Dam.

In its 11 a.m. severe weather bulletin on Friday, PAGASA located Rolly at 1,100 km east of Central Luzon. It was moving westwards at 15 kph with maximum sustained winds of 165 kph near its center and gustiness of up to 205 kph.

PAGASA expects Rolly to make landfall in the Aurora province-Quezon province area on either Sunday evening (Nov. 1) or early Monday morning (Nov. 2) at an estimated peak intensity of 175 kph to 185 kph. (*PNA*)

Phivolcs: Typhoon Rolly may trigger lahar flows near Mayon, Pinatubo, Taal volcanoes

Job Manahan, ABS-CBN News
Posted at Oct 31 2020 03:00 AM



A resident wades through a river with lahar flow coming from Mayon volcano in Guinobatan, Albay province on Jan. 27, 2018. *Romeo Ranoco, Reuters/file*

MANILA — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) warned Friday that Typhoon Rolly’s expected heavy rainfall could cause lahar flows in rivers and drainage areas near 3 volcanoes in Luzon, and urged residents near the areas to be prepared.

Communities near Mayon, Pinatubo, and Taal volcanoes must increase their vigilance and must take necessary precautions amid Typhoon Rolly’s intense rains, Phivolcs said.

“Due to its trajectory, current severe intensity and potentially high-volume rainfall, Rolly can be expected to generate volcanic sediment flows or lahars, muddy stream flows or muddy run-off in rivers and drainage areas on the monitored active volcanoes,” state seismologists said.

Potential lahar flows from the Mayon volcano, Phivolcs said, may occur along Miisi, Binaan, Anoling, Quirangay, Maninila, Masarawag, Muladbucad, Nasisi, Mabinit, Matan-ag, and Basud Channels in Albay Province.

“Mayon lahars can threaten communities downstream of the above channels with inundation, burial and wash away,” it said.

Mt. Pinatubo’s lahars, meanwhile, are likely to be “channel-confined” and may occur on the upper to middle reaches of the Sto. Tomas-Marella and Bucao River systems.

According to Phivolcs, the muddy stream flows from Mt. Pinatubo could affect communities in San Marcelino, San Narciso, San Felipe and Botolan in Zambales.

“Muddy streamflows may likewise be generated along the O’Donnell and Pasig-Potrero River systems draining the Pinatubo edifice to the north and southeast, respectively and affect downstream communities in Tarlac and Pampanga provinces,” said Phivolcs.

Typhoon Rolly, which is nearing the strength of a super typhoon category, could also trigger lahar flow around Taal Volcano, it added.



Phivolcs: Typhoon Rolly may trigger lahar flows near Mayon, Pinatubo, Taal volcanoes

It could recur on previously affected communities of Agoncillo and Laurel in Batangas.

“Prolonged and heavy rainfall may generate muddy streamflow and muddy runoff around Taal Volcano, particularly on the slopes west of Taal Lake where thin remnant ash can be remobilized in streams and roads and overland of the lakeward slopes.”

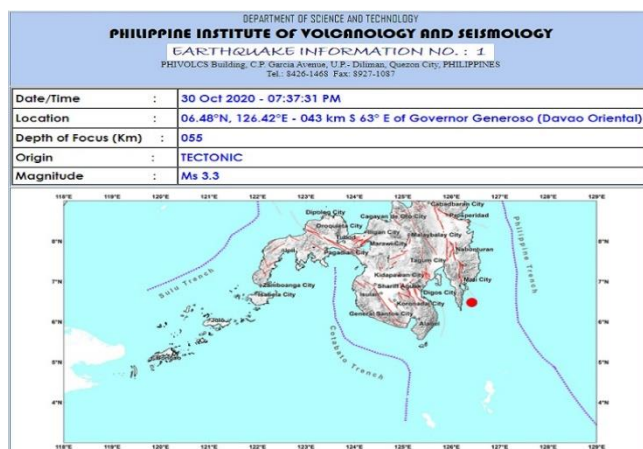
Typhoon Rolly on Friday night continued to intensify into near the super typhoon category as it barreled closer to eastern Luzon, state weather bureau PAGASA said.

The Japan Meteorological Agency has categorized Rolly as a "violent typhoon," the highest category.

Read More: [Phivolcs](#) [lahar flow](#) [Philippines news](#) [Taal](#) [Pinatubo](#) [Mayon](#) [Rolly PH](#) [Bagyong Rolly](#) [Lahar flow Rolly](#) [weather](#)

Governor Generoso, Davao Oriental niyanig ng magnitude 3.3 na lindol

By Mary Rose Cabrales October 30, 2020 - 07:44 PM



Niyanig ng magnitude 3.3 na lindol ang lalawigan ng Davao Oriental.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, naitala ang pagyanig sa 43 kilometers southeast ng bayan ng Governor Generoso, alas-7:37 gabi ng Biyernes (October 30).

May lalim na 55 kilometers at tectonic ang origin ng pagyanig.

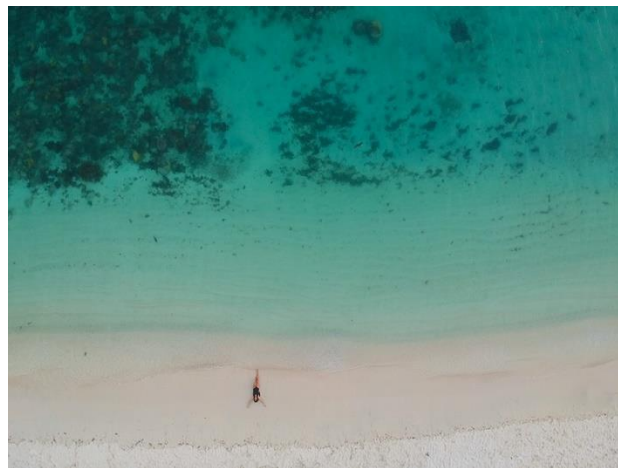
Wala namang naitalang pagkasira ng mga ari-arian, intensities at aftershocks bunsod ng pagyanig.



Palawan, Boracay among world's '50 most beautiful places'

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 30 2020 03:16 PM



MANILA -- Two Philippine destinations made it to the list of "50 most beautiful places" of an international travel website.

Palawan and Boracay ranked 8th and 18th, respectively, in Big 7 Travel's list, which "took into account Pinterest data for 'most beautiful places in world' pins, the most liked photos on Big 7 Travel Instagram, [and] suggestions from readers and our editorial team."

In an [article](#) released Thursday, Big 7 Travel described Palawan as "a fantastic triple threat of diverse wildlife, pristine landscapes, and subterranean marvels."

Boracay, meanwhile, was praised for its "tranquil beaches, casual nightlife, and lush tropical scenery."

The Department of Tourism, through a statement released Friday, said it celebrates the news about two of the Philippines' prime destinations.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said the inclusion of Palawan and Boracay in the rankings brings pride to the entire country, and is in line with their efforts to reopen tourism in the two destinations.

Topping the list of Big 7 Travel's "50 most beautiful places" is Torres del Paine National Park in Chile, followed by Faroe Islands, Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming, Li River in China, and Lake Bled in Slovenia.



[Editorial, Opinion-Editorial](#)

Our budget for recovery will be ready at year's start

Published October 30, 2020, 4:28 PM

by [Manila Bulletin](#)



The proposed national budget for 2021 as approved by the House of Representatives has now been transmitted to the Senate.

In the final days of House deliberations on the budget, the House increased allocations for programs to enable the government to meet problems raised by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the principal problem now facing the country.

Thus the House increased the allocation of the Department of Health for the acquisition of vaccines as soon as these become available. From P2.5 billion in the original budget proposal, the amount was tripled to P7.5 billion. The amount of P2 billion was also added to the DOH's program to enhance its overstretched hospital and other health facilities; and P300 million for its mental health program.

Added by the Small Committee which finalized the House bill was P2 billion to the budget of the Department of Social Welfare and Development for assistance to families affected by the pandemic

The amount of P4 billion was added to the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment for its program of assistance to displaced workers. The loss of so many jobs due to the closure of many companies has been one of our most serious problems today.

The nation's public education program has also been upset by the pandemic, with distance learning systems replacing face-to-face classes. Thus the budget of the Department of Education was increased by P1.7 billion for its distance learning program dependent on the Internet, radio and television, laptops for teachers and tablets for school children.

The House Small Committee also boosted the budgets of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for additional aircraft, P2 billion; the Philippine National Police, P2 billion; the Philippine National Oil Co.'s development program for renewable resources, P400 million; and modernization of the Energy Regulatory Commission, P100 million.



Our budget for recovery will be ready at year's start

This record-high budget is designed to further strengthen government response and stimulate economic recovery in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, Speaker Lord Allan Velasco said. It has now been sent to the Senate, which may add some programs of its own and perhaps trim the public works allocations, said to contain construction projects that may not be urgently needed at this time.

With its expected early approval by Congress, the National Appropriation Bill should be ready for President Duterte's signature in December, so its programs can begin in January, 2021. The Philippines, like all other countries on the planet, has been severely set back by the pandemic and it will take the whole of 2021 just to start restoring the losses it suffered this year.



Climate refugees: A global problem



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

October 31, 2020

CLIMATE refugees are people who have been forcibly displaced as a result of environmental factors caused by climate change and natural disasters. Every year since 2008, 26.4 million people have been forced to leave their countries due to extraordinary weather events such as typhoons, tsunamis, flooding and natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, etc. (When people seek refuge within their own countries as environmental refugees, they are commonly referred to as internally displaced persons).

Scientific studies revealed rising seas will supplant encroaching deserts and other forms of land degradation as the major threat to habitability of many places this century. The evacuation of 1,400 residents of Papua New Guinea's Carteret Islands (the world's first climate refugees, according to the United Nations) due to rising sea levels offers a sobering vision of the future for coastal populations.

Global warming brought about by excessive fossil fuel use is reported to result in the thermal expansion of the oceans and the melting of icecaps. A 1-meter increase in sea level will displace millions of people in the delta regions of the Nile and Ganges rivers, further compounding land scarcity in Egypt and Bangladesh. To think that world population is projected to increase by 93 million annually, all of them in need of food, water and shelter. In fact, as the root causes of the Southeast Asian migrant crisis unraveled, it was not surprising, as it turned out in the UN High Commissioner for Refugees-backed Bangkok Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean of concerned countries, that some of the "boat people" are in reality climate refugees from Bangladesh and Myanmar aiming for Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

The combined effects of warmer climates and higher seas will make typhoons more frequent and more destructive, further damaging the habitability of coastal areas. Extensive river diversions will markedly lessen the amount of freshwater discharged into coastal areas while higher sea levels will increase saltwater intrusion thus reducing mangrove forest cover and disrupting major fisheries within fragile ecosystems.

Endangered places that may cease to exist include, among others, Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands in the Pacific, Maldives in the Indian Ocean as well as the touristic string of emerald islands and islets in the Caribbean, prompting the formation of an association of small island states working towards solutions to their plight to counter sea level rise before the UN.

Platforms on forced climate displacement

Climate refugees are very much benefited by the Platform on Disaster Management, a state-led initiative largely supported by Germany, that works to protect people displaced by the impacts of natural disasters. Successful initiative examples are Australia and New Zealand's programs



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designed for Pacific island states, allowing people to obtain work visas for a number of months. The two countries' programs offer access to skills development and support services to help people invest the money they earn back home so that their families can cope better and stay where they are for at least some more years. As an example, in a village in Samoa, 20 to 25 young men per year leave to work in Australia where they earn seven times more than what they earn in Samoa. The money that goes back is utilized in establishing businesses and in building storm-proof dwellings.

Furthermore, international relocation is under consideration in the Pacific island states.

Kiribati, for example, purchased an area of higher ground in Fiji, a precedent in the context of climate change. The land could be used for resettlement purposes or it could be farmed to secure food supply. Fiji, on the other hand, has its own relocation plans.

The message of the Pacific island peoples is clear. They want to leave in a controlled manner and not end up in refugee camps.

On the other hand, for Asean member states such as the Philippines that bore the brunt of many natural calamities in the recent past — e.g. typhoons, which caused floods, landslides and monsoon rains in the Visayas and parts of Luzon; the magnitude 7.2 earthquake that struck the islands of Bohol and Cebu; and Typhoon “Yolanda” in 2013 which claimed lives, property and crops — the response was ecosystem-based adaptation such as mangroves which dissipate wave energy during typhoons and tsunamis (even if mangrove saplings take time to root before they become effective defense against the onslaughts of wind and waves).

A project of the US-based Conservation International, making use of nature-based solutions like planting mangroves has also the advantage of least expense and the opportunity for coastal communities to collect mangrove forest species like crabs, fishes, etc. to improve livelihoods. Restoring mangroves has economic benefits beyond breaking waves compared to concrete seawalls which are expensive and need repairs from time to time.

In pursuance of the ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solution mentioned above, there is an available adaptation fund in the context of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change with \$180 million to increase resilience to climate change.

Legal protection gap

Be that as it may, climate refugees are not covered by the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) for the reason that climate refugees are not fleeing persecution on account of race, religion, nationality or membership in a particular racial or political group. Any of these grounds is a requirement needed to fulfill traditional “refugee” models when applying for resettlement in another country.

Actually, the main problem in legislative protection for climate refugees is the distinction between “migrant” and “refugee.” For some legal minds, the former connotes a voluntary move while the latter is involuntary. Be it noted that human displacement as a consequence of climate change is a comparatively recent concept which emerged due to the destructive effects of global warming.



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Whatever, paramount is granting protection to environmentally displaced persons into a context of law. Meaning, for those who have no choice but to leave their country, the chance of resettlement must be taken seriously in consideration of the rapidly deteriorating climate. This is the time to legislatively secure a new category of refugees and finally close the legal protection gap for the growing huge number of environmentally displaced victims.

Conclusion

Environmental change brought about by global warming has had enormous and irreversible effects on our climate with the last few years accounted as the warmest on record. US climate officials even say there is a two to one chance that 2020 would end up as the globe's hottest. It is also predicted that Latin America will experience further decrease in water availability; Europe's coastal flooding will rise; and deaths from disease associated with floods and droughts are expected in the countries of Asia. In Africa, a great number of people are exposed daily to increased water stress with no solution in sight.

It is easy to surmise that the world's poorest people will be hit the hardest, especially for those living on marginal lands or flood-prone cities and countryside. To think that according to an Oxfam report, the poorest 50 percent of the world's population emit only 10 percent of emissions while the richest 10 percent are responsible for 50 percent of emissions.

Certainly, rich/developed countries have a duty to act fast to avoid dangerous climate change to prevent increasingly disastrous impacts from forcing more people out of their homes and support the growing number of desperate climate refugees already facing the worst consequences of climate change.

Indeed, poverty and inadequate development policies along with rapid population growth are the roots of environmental degradation in the developing world. Present climate refugees may already be the biggest single group of displaced persons. By the middle of this century, people forced to leave their homes and places of livelihood because of flooding, desertification, toxic pollution, sea level rise or other disruptions may even constitute the largest in number among those displaced by all other means. In that connection, the International Organization for Migration estimates that there could be as many as 200 million of these refugees by 2050.

The quickly spreading climate refugees in many parts of the world is an indication of the seriousness of global environmental decline. It is a fact that ecosystems are made more vulnerable by human pressure on land, forests and soils. Poor people are forced to live in disaster-prone areas and become more vulnerable to natural forces. Some villages in the Philippines are areas once covered by forests but are now virtually denuded. Areas susceptible to earthquakes are inhabited by thousands of Nepalis despite experiencing catastrophic earthquakes.



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Bars of silt and sand called “chars” in the middle of the Bengal delta are home to millions of Bangladeshis. Thousands of Latin American slum dwellers, living in hovels, perched on deforested hillsides, are potential mudslide victims during heavy rainstorms. All of them potential climate refugees. The problem must be stopped at its source through a combination of environmental and population measures.

This is the best time to consider bright prospects for the quickly growing climate refugees, helping and supporting them build a future, even as some more capable countries invoke the primacy of their people’s welfare to justify closing their borders to the influx of climate refugees fleeing from the impact of climate change.



China, Japan set concrete goals on climate change

October 30, 2020 | Filed under: Editorial, Opinion | Posted by: Tempo Desk

JAPAN'S new Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga used his first policy address to parliament to declare that Japan, the world's third largest economy after the United States and China, has set a deadline – the year 2050 – to end its emission of polluting greenhouse gasses.

“We will bring the total amount of greenhouse gas (emitted by Japan) to net zero by 2050, meaning carbon neutral,” he said. “I declare we aim to realize a decarbonized society.”

Japan thus became the second country to set a concrete deadline to achieve carbon neutrality. The first was China whose President Xi Jinping announced to the world in his speech before the United Nations General Assembly last month that China will go carbon neutral by 2060.

It was in December, 2015, that the nations of the world agreed in Paris, France, to reduce the carbon emissions from their industries to keep the rise in global temperature from rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius over per-industrial levels. This would substantially reduce the risks of climate change which had begun to melt the polar ice, raising ocean levels.

Under the Paris agreement, each country submitted a plan for a “nationally determined contribution” to the total effort to mitigate global warming. The Philippines sent its own national plan for increased use of renewable sources of energy, such as solar, geothermal, and wind power, and less dependence on highly polluting coal plants.

The United States, second to China in the carbon pollution emitted by their industries, withdrew from the Paris agreement in 2017. The new President Donald Trump reportedly did not believe in climate change and, in any case, was out to protect the interests of the coal miners who were part of his support base.



Nothing much was heard about the Paris agreement in the next few years as each country grappled with its own problems of development. Then last month, in his address to the UN, China's President Xi surprised the world with his announcement of a concrete plan for China to totally stop its contribution to world pollution by 2060. This Monday, China's Communist leadership met to discuss Xi's pledge before the UN. It will now revamp its new five-year plan, to take effect in 2021, to help meet President Xi's goal of carbon neutrality by 2060.

Japan has now followed suit, the second country to make a concrete pledge with a definite goal of zero carbon emission by 2050. The two Asian nations with the biggest contributions to carbon pollution and climate change have come out with deadlines that the whole world will be able

to check.

The other nations might want to match these pledges with their own, especially the other top polluting nations of Europe and the Americas.



Air pollution linked to 15% of coronavirus deaths, says study

[Agence France-Presse](#) / 05:53 PM October 30, 2020



In East Asia, which has some of the highest levels of harmful pollution on the planet, the authors found that 27% of COVID-19 deaths could be attributed to the health effects of poor air quality.
Image: [Istock.com/torwai](#) via AFP Relaxnews

Long-term exposure to air pollution may be linked to 15% of COVID-19 deaths globally, according to research published Tuesday that highlights the health risks posed by greenhouse gas emissions.

Previous research has shown how air pollution from exhaust fumes and factories takes two years off the life expectancy of every man, woman and child on Earth.

Now experts in Germany and Cyprus say they have estimated the proportion of deaths from coronavirus that can be blamed on the exacerbating effects of air pollution.

Their study, published in the journal *Cardiovascular Research*, drew on health and disease data from the United States and China relating to air pollution, COVID-19 and SARS— a serious lung disease similar to COVID-19.

They combined this with satellite data of global exposure to particulate matter — microscopic particles — as well as ground-based pollution monitoring networks, to calculate to what extent air pollution can be blamed for COVID-19 deaths.

In East Asia, which has some of the highest levels of harmful pollution on the planet, the authors found that 27% of COVID-19 deaths could be attributed to the health effects of poor air quality.

In Europe the proportion was 19 %, compared with 17% in North America.

“If both long-term exposure to air pollution and infection with the COVID-19 virus come together then we have an adverse effect on health, particularly with respect to the heart and blood vessels,” said paper co-author Thomas Munzel.

He said that air pollution made known COVID-19 risk factors such as lung and heart problems more likely.

Specifically, the team noted that particulate matter appeared to increase the activity of a receptor on lung cell surfaces, ACE-2, which is known to be involved in the way COVID-19 infects patients.



Air pollution linked to 15% of coronavirus deaths, says study

“So we have a double hit: air pollution damages the lungs and increases the activity of ACE-2, which in turn leads to enhanced uptake of the virus,” said Munzel, a professor at the University Medical Center of the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz.

‘Remedy is reduce emissions’

The authors stressed that attributing COVID-19 deaths to air pollution did not mean that pollution itself was killing people with COVID-19 — though they didn’t rule out such a cause-effect linkage.

Jos Lelieveld, of the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, told Agence France-Pressé that the research suggested “the pollution particles are a co-factor in aggravating the disease.”

He said their estimates suggested that more than 6,100 COVID-19 deaths in Britain could be attributed to air pollution. In the U.S. that figure is around 40,000.

The authors said that without a fundamental change in how cities power themselves, including a transition to clean and renewable energy sources, air pollution would continue to kill huge numbers of people even after the pandemic recedes.

“The pandemic ends with the vaccination of the population or with herd immunity through extensive infection of the population,” they wrote.

“However, there are no vaccines against poor air quality and climate change. The remedy is to mitigate emissions.” **RGA**

Read more: <https://technology.inquirer.net/105196/air-pollution-linked-to-15-of-coronavirus-deaths-says-study#ixzz6cObcEknY>

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Amount of plastic dumped in Mediterranean Sea to double in 20 years — report

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The report estimates that over one million tons of plastic have already accumulated in the Mediterranean Sea. Image: [IStock.com/Damocean](#) via AFP Relaxnews

Nearly 230,000 tons of plastic is dumped into the Mediterranean Sea every year, a figure which could more than double by 2040 unless “ambitious” steps are taken, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said Tuesday.

Egypt, Italy and Turkey are the countries that release the most plastic into the sea, mainly due to large coastal populations and huge amounts of “mismanaged waste,” an IUCN report found.

But on a per capita basis Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia have the highest levels of plastic waste leakage into the Mediterranean.

The report, called “Mare Plasticum: The Mediterranean,” estimates that over one million tons of plastic have already accumulated in the Mediterranean Sea.

“An estimated 229,000 tons of plastic — equivalent to over 500 shipping containers — are leaking into the Mediterranean Sea every year,” said the report, blaming “mismanaged waste” for 94% of the total plastic leakage.

Under a “business as usual” scenario, this figure will reach 500,000 tons per year by 2040, which is why “ambitious interventions beyond current commitments will be required to reduce the flow of plastic into the sea.”

Minna Epps, the director of the IUCN’s marine program, warned that “plastic pollution can cause long-term damage to terrestrial and marine ecosystems and biodiversity.”

“Marine animals can get entangled or swallow plastic waste, and ultimately end up dying from exhaustion and starvation,” he added.

Over 50,000 tons of plastic leakage into the Mediterranean could be avoided each year if waste management was improved in the top 100 contributing cities alone, the report said.



Amount of plastic dumped in Mediterranean Sea to double in 20 years — report

A ban on plastic bags in the Mediterranean Sea basin region would further reduce plastic leakage into the sea by another 50,000 tons per year.

“Governments, private sector, research institutions and other industries and consumers need to work collaboratively to redesign processes and supply chains, invest in innovation and adopt sustainable consumption patterns and improved waste management practices to close the plastic tap,” said Antonio Troya, head of the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation which is based in Malaga, southern Spain. **RGA**

Read more: <https://technology.inquirer.net/105190/amount-of-plastic-dumped-in-mediterranean-sea-to-double-in-20-years-report#ixzz6cOdqpw62>

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Nature loss to cause more pandemics – UN



By [Agence France-Presse](#)
October 31, 2020

PARIS: Future pandemics will happen more often, kill more people and wreak even worse damage to the global economy than Covid-19 without a fundamental shift in how humans treat nature, the United Nations' biodiversity panel said on Thursday (Friday in Manila).



AGONY Medical personnel treat a Covid-19 patient in Liege, Belgium on Oct. 21, 2020. A small country, Belgium is severely hit by the virus and expected to impose tough lockdown anytime. AP PHOTO

Warning that there are up to 850,000 viruses which, like the novel coronavirus, exist in animals and may be able to infect people, the panel known as Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Ipbes) said pandemics represented an “existential threat” to humanity.

Authors of the special report on biodiversity and pandemics said that habitat destruction and insatiable consumption made animal-borne diseases far more likely to make the jump to people in future.

“There is no great mystery about the cause of the Covid-19 pandemic — or any modern pandemic,” said Peter Daszak, president of the Ecohealth Alliance and chairman of the Ipbes workshop that drafted the report.

“The same human activities that drive climate change and biodiversity loss also drive pandemic risk though their impacts on our agriculture.”

The panel said Covid-19 was the sixth pandemic since the influenza outbreak of 1918 — all of which had been “entirely driven by human activities.”

These include unsustainable exploitation of the environment through deforestation, agricultural expansion, wildlife trade and consumption — all of which put humans in increasingly close contact with wild and farmed animals and the diseases they harbor.

Around five new diseases emerge among humans every single year, any one of which has the potential to become a pandemic, the panel warned.



Nature loss to cause more pandemics – UN

Ipbes said in its periodic assessment on the state of nature last year that more than three-quarters of land on Earth had already been severely degraded by human activity.

One-third of land surface and three-quarters of fresh water on the planet is currently taken up by farming, and humanity's resource use has rocketed up 80 percent in just three decades, it said.

Ipbes conducted a virtual workshop with 22 leading experts to come up with a list of options governments could take to lower the risk of repeat pandemics.

It acknowledged the difficulty in counting the full economic cost of Covid-19.

But the assessment pointed to estimated costs as high as \$16 trillion as of July 2020.

The experts said that the cost of preventing future pandemics was likely to be 100 times cheaper than responding to them, "providing strong economic incentives for transformative change."

"Our approach has effectively stagnated," said Daszak. "We still rely on attempts to contain and control diseases after they emerge, through vaccines and therapeutics."

The Ipbes suggested a global, coordinated pandemic response, and for countries to agree upon targets to prevent biodiversity loss within an international accord similar to the Paris agreement on climate change.