

13 APRIL 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR, Comelec tear down posters nailed on trees in Isabela

By Villamor Visaya, Jr. April 12, 2022, 8:15 pm



SPARE THE TREES. Personnel of the Commission on Elections and Department of Environment and Natural Resources remove campaign materials nailed on trees in Isabela province on Tuesday (April 12, 2022). DENR-2 Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said in a briefing the law prohibits the cutting or injuring of planted or growing trees, flowering plants and shrubs or plants of scenic value in public places. *(Photo by Villamor Visaya Jr.)*

CITY OF ILAGAN, Isabela – The Commission on Elections (Comelec) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) led a day-long "Oplan Baklas" drive here on Tuesday, removing campaign posters and other paraphernalia on trees along Isabela's main roads.

"We are appealing to the candidates and their supporters to follow the law. They could face legal sanctions if they continue to violate the rules," DENR-Cagayan Valley Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said in a briefing prior to the operations.

She cited Republic Act 3571 which prohibits the cutting, destroying, or injuring of planted or growing trees, flowering plants and shrubs or plants of scenic value along public roads, in plazas, parks, school premises, or in any other public pleasure grounds.

"The trees provide ecological and environmental benefits. Let us conserve and spare trees from campaign posters," she added.

Bambalan said under Presidential Decree 953 (Sec. 3), violators could be punished with imprisonment from six months to two years, or fine of not less than PHP500 and not more than PHP5,000, or both.

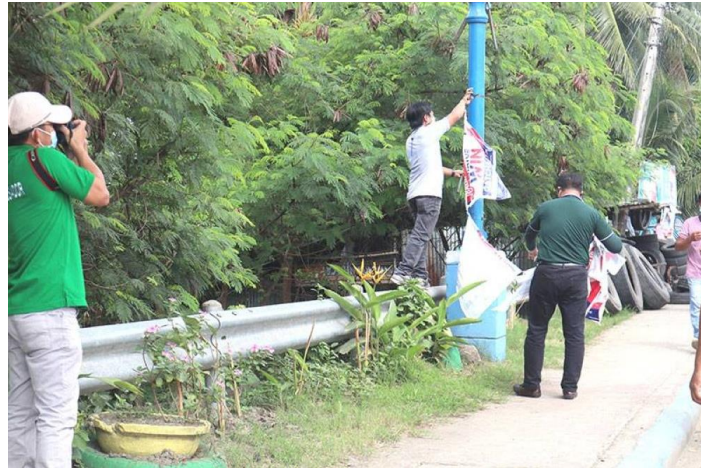
Lawyer Michael Camangeg, acting Isabela election supervisor, said the Comelec, through the Fair Elections Act, may authorize political parties to create common poster areas for their candidates in public places, but in no instance shall it designate as poster areas any trees, plants, or shrubs along public roads.

"In fact, the DENR is even authorized by the Commission to remove oversized posters and materials not in the common poster areas aside from the campaign paraphernalia nailed or posted at trees," Camangeg added. **(PNA)**



Isabela 'Oplan Baklas' begins

By [Vince Jacob Visaya](#) April 13, 2022



Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Comelec, and Department of Public Works and Highways workers remove campaign posters placed on trees, posts and non-common poster areas in Isabela on Tuesday, April 12, 2022. PHOTO BY VINCE JACOB VISAYA

NAGUILIAN, Isabela: The Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had spearheaded a day-long "Oplan Baklas" drive on Tuesday, April 12, tearing down campaign posters and other paraphernalia nailed, tacked and tied on trees along Isabela's main roads.

Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said in a Tuesday briefing prior to the actual operation that the candidates have been warned about the consequences of not following election laws and rules such as posting posters on trees.

She cited Republic Act 3571 which prohibits the cutting, destroying, or injuring of planted or growing trees, flowering plants and shrubs or plants of scenic value along public roads, in plazas, parks, school premises, or in any other public pleasure ground.

"Let us conserve and spare trees from campaign posters," she added.

Presidential Decree 953, Sec.3, punishes violators with imprisonment of six months to two years, or a fine of not less than P500, not more than P5,000, or both.

Lawyer Michael Camangeg, acting Isabela election supervisor, said the Comelec, through the Fair Elections Act, may authorize political parties to create common poster areas for their candidates in public places, but in no instance shall it designate as poster areas any trees, plants, or shrubs along public roads.

"The DENR is even authorized by the Commission to remove oversized posters and materials not in the common poster areas aside from the campaign paraphernalia nailed or posted at trees," Camangeg added.

Oplan Baklas teams scoured roads San Pablo, Santa Maria, Cabagan at Tumauini for the first group; City of Ilagan, Gamu and Naguilian for the second group; Reina Mercedes, Cauayan City and Alicia for the third group; Echague, San Isidro, Santiago City and Cordon for the fourth group; and Roxas, Mallig, Quezon, San Manuel, and Aurora for the fifth group.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/04/13/news/regions/isabela-oplan-baklas-begins/1839811>



DENR at COMELEC, bumuo ng 5 na team para sa pagpapatupad ng Oplan Baklas sa Isabela

By **Bombo Gina Marquez** -April 12, 2022



CAUAYAN CITY – Pinangunahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Isabela ang pagbabaklas sa mga campaign materials na nakakabit sa mga hindi awtorisadong lugar pangunahin na sa mga puno ng mga kahoy.

Layunin ng hakbang na ito na maipromote ang environmental friendly na halalan.

Katuwang ng DENR-Isabela sa pamumuno ni PENRO Federico Cauilan Jr. ang ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan tulad ng Commission on Elections (COMELEC) – Isabela sa pamumuno ni Provincial Election Supervisor Michael Camangeg, DILG Isabela sa pangunguna ni Provincial Director Corazon Toribio, Isabela Police Provincial Office (IPPO) at iba't ibang Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) sa Isabela.



Naglatag ang PENRO ng iba't ibang ruta at limang team na kabilang sa Operation Baklas.

Ang unang team ay mula sa CENRO-Cabagan na may rutang San Pablo, Cabagan, Tumauni habang ang ikalawang team ay nagsimula sa Lunsod ng Ilagan hanggang sa bayan ng Naguilian.

Ang ikatlong team ay may rutang Reina Mercedes, Cauayan City at Alicia habang ang ikaapat na team ay sa bayan ng Echague, Santiago City at Cordon.

Ang ikalimang team ay sa mga bayan ng Roxas, Mallig, Quezon, San Manuel at Aurora.

Sa naging pagsasalita ni PENRO Cauilan Jr. sa isinagawang briefing bago sinimulan ang pagbabaklas ay sinabi niya na magpapatuloy ang Oplan Baklas hanggang sa matapos ang halalan gayundin ang monitoring sa mga campaign materials na ikinakabit sa mga puno at halaman.



Inamin naman si Atty. Camangeg na malaking tulong sa COMELEC ang pakikipagtulungan ng DENR sa kanilang pagbabaklas dahil limitado ang kanilang mga kawani sa pagsasagawa nito.

Paalala ng DENR at COMELEC sa mga kandidato at sa kanilang mga tagasuporta na ikabit lamang ang kanilang mga campaign paraphernalia sa mga awtorisadong lugar upang hindi masayang at hindi maisama sa kanilang Operation Baklas.



NegOcc, MGB ink pact to devolve mining papers issuance functions

By Nanette Guadalquiver April 12, 2022, 4:42 pm



MOA SIGNING. Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson (2nd from right) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Western Regional Director Raul Laput (right) sign the memorandum of agreement for the transfer of functions on the processing and issuances of two mining documents to the provincial government. Witnessed by Provincial Administrator Rayfrando Diaz II (2nd from left) and Provincial Environment Management Office head Julie Ann Bedrio, the signing rites were held during the Governor's Permit Holders Forum and Dialogue held at the Negros Residences in Bacolod City on Tuesday (April 12, 2022). *(Photo courtesy of PIO Negros Occidental)*

BACOLOD CITY – The province of Negros Occidental has entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Western Visayas (MGB-6) for the transfer of mining documents issuance functions to the provincial government.

The signing rites, led by Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson and MGB-6 Regional Director Raul Laput, were held during the Governor's Permit Holders Forum and Dialogue held at the Negros Residences here on Tuesday.

“To everyone present, including the national government agencies, may the good Lord give us the wisdom to find better ways on how we can work together for the furtherance of responsible mining practices,” Lacson said in his keynote message before some 170 permit holders.

The MOA provides for the transfer of functions on the processing and issuances of the certificate of environmental management and community relations record (CEMCRR) and social development and management program (SDMP), which are part of new policies affecting sand and gravel as well as quarry extraction in the province.

This is based on Executive Order 138 issued by President Rodrigo Duterte on June 21, 2021 or the “Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Government Units, Creation of Committee on Devolution, and for other Purposes”.

Laput said the mining industry is considered a major driving force in the country's local and national economy.

“This is a very important meeting of our permit holders and our government agencies to share relevant information, give updates, share concerns and exchange ideas on how we can address issues affecting the industry,” he added.

The CEMCRR is issued as proof of a good record of accomplishment of a company or permit holder in terms of community relations while the SDMP is a community development tool required of permit holders to ensure that the host and neighboring communities benefit from the project in terms of livelihood, education, infrastructure, medical and other social development programs.



Both documents are part of the requirements for permit applications for quarry, small-scale mining and sand, and gravel for commercial and industrial use.

Local issuance of quarry, sand, and gravel for areas below five hectares and small-scale mining permits is a devolved function under the Local Government Code of 1991.

Lacson said he has been informed that some applicants and permittees are circumventing the law by applying multiple applications when the ordinance provides that a qualified person may only be granted one permit in any local government unit at any one time.

“I want to be forthright with you, always remember that the permit given to you is a privilege, a privilege to use our resources judiciously, not to exploit our limited natural reserves. We are not supposed to do indirectly what is prohibited directly,” he told the permit holders. **(PNA)**



DENR-MGB Region 3 awards

by [Manila Standard](#) April 12, 2022, 7:13 pm

During the Stakeholders' Summit held on April 8, 2022 at Royce Hotel, Clark Freeport, Pampanga, the DENR – Mines and Geosciences Bureau Regional Office No. III (MGB-R3) awarded to Benguet Corporation's wholly-owned subsidiary, Benguetcorp Resources Management Corporation or "BRMC" (formerly Benguetcorp Nickel Mines, Inc.) the PLAQUE OF RECOGNITION for attaining the highest score of 94.47% in the Tenement, Safety and Health, Environment, and Social Development (TSHES) Monitoring, and CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION for having the best recorded improvement on its operations CY 2020 vs CY 2019, both under the Metallic Category. BRMC was also commended by MGB-R3 for its efforts in keeping its permitted area in Sta. Cruz, Zambales safe and conducive for work through CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION for attaining 2 Million Man Hours Worked Without Any Lost Time Accident Up until the End of CY 2021.



Benguetcorp Resources Management Corporation (BRMC) is recipient of PLAQUE OF RECOGNITION for attaining the highest score of 94.47% in the Tenement, Safety and Health, Environment and Social Development (TSHES) Monitoring. In the picture is Benguet Corporation's Ms. Pamela Gendrano, Asst. Vice President for Environmental Compliance (fourth from left) and BRMC's Engr. Glenn Duka, Vice President-Resident Manager (third from left) together with BRMC's Safety, Health and Environment Team.

These recognitions and awards underscore the long-term commitment of Benguet Corporation to safe and environmentally friendly mining operations within and outside the host communities in Sta. Cruz, Zambales where it operates.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/news/national/314221335/denr-mgb-region-3-awards.html>



Before typhoon season sets in: SMC expands cleanup of Tullahan, Pasig rivers; more students, volunteers join coastal cleanup efforts

April 12, 2022 5 min read

Tullahan river clean-up (Photo courtesy of BusinessMirror)

MANILA — San Miguel Corporation (SMC) reported that its massive initiative to clean up and rehabilitate the Tullahan and Pasig rivers and help mitigate flooding throughout Metro Manila has gained ground, with key sections of both rivers now significantly deeper, wider, and able to carry larger amounts of floodwater.

SMC President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Ang said that after 22 months of cleaning up major segments of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system, and nine months of activities at key sections of the Pasig River, the company's most recent hydrographic surveys show significant improvements in both rivers' depths and carrying capacity.

Specifically, Ang said that the Tullahan River's depths at areas along the 10-kilometer stretch the Company's cleanup teams have worked on are now between three to five meters, compared to one to two meters previously.

This is due largely to the teams' removal of silt and solid wastes from the river's depths, which restrict both the water's flow and capacity, contributing to increased flooding.

For the Pasig River, Ang said completed sections now measure five to six meters deep from the previous two to three meters.

"Essentially, what we've accomplished is to remove the silt and wastes that have made these rivers shallow and increase their ability to receive water from upstream channels, particularly during heavy rain or typhoon season, which is when severe flooding in many areas in Metro Manila occur," Ang said.

He added: "At a particular section in Potrero and Marulas, our teams have removed eroded soils that extend some 10 to 15 meters wide, which used to restrict the flow of the Tullahan



river. We're happy to report that areas near Tullahan like Valenzuela now experience fewer instances of severe flooding, and if there are floods, they subside much faster now."

Meanwhile, Ang said that for SMC's Pasig River rehabilitation initiative, aside from continuing operations in Manila along the vicinities of Pandacan and Paco, activities are also now focused at the shallow Marikina River junction in Pasig City, the area where the Marikina and Pasig Rivers meet. Pasig river waters flowing into this area come from the Laguna Lake, via the Napindan floodgate.

"The Marikina River junction area is particularly critical as it acts as a bottleneck, restricting the flow of water flowing from the Marikina River. This causes the massive flooding we always see in upstream areas," Ang said.

"Once we deepen these areas, water will flow more freely and there will be fewer cases of overflow in areas that typically experience them," Ang said.

To date, the combined total of silt and solid wastes removed from the Tullahan and Pasig Rivers stands at 1,221,206 metric tons. Out of this total, 876,296 metric tons come from the Tullahan River, where Ang said teams on the ground estimate to hit the one million mark by June this year.

SMC has allotted a P1-billion budget for the program that was launched in 2020.

For the P2-billion Pasig rehabilitation effort, the company is currently extracting at least 3,000 metric tons per day to meet its new 75,000-metric ton per month goal. There are now two groups in operation in Manila and Pasig City. In March alone, these two groups removed 78,200 metric tons.

SMC is upping its daily extraction target to at least 5,000 metric tons per day in June as more equipment arrives. This is to meet its 125,000-metric ton per month goal and a total of three million metric tons in two years.

Thus far, SMC has removed some 344,910 metric tons of silt and waste from the Pasig River since it started its cleanup activities last July 2021.

Meanwhile, Ang also reported that its coastal cleanups in Batangas province and Navotas City are also progressing well. In particular, its efforts in Calatagan, Batangas are receiving an extra boost from students and volunteers who have been turning up in increasing numbers to help out.

Ang said that with pandemic restrictions easing, more volunteers are joining the company and government volunteers in removing wastes from the shorelines. Recently, over a hundred students, including beneficiaries of SMC's education assistance programs, came to help out at the weekly clean-up in Calatagan, Batangas.

To date, Ang said a total of 4,917 garbage bags of residual waste have been collected from the shores of Calatagan.

"We're happy that aside from the things the students learn from school, we are also able to influence them somehow to have a sense of environmental stewardship at an early age. We hope this will help mold them into responsible leaders when they grow up and become more



responsible for their communities,”Ang said.

SMC’s coastal cleanup teams in Tanza, Navotas, on the other hand, have removed 7,293 bags of garbage to date, with the help of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and local community volunteers.

SMC’s weekly cleanup activities in Navotas are located at Isla Pulo, where the Tanza Marine Tree Park is located. The 26-hectare mangrove strip of an island with a 3.5-kilometer shoreline serves as a natural barrier that protects nearby cities from storm surges and coastline erosion.

“As majority of the population is now protected against the virus and restrictions easing, we expect our cleanup efforts for both in our rivers and coastal areas to go a notch higher with more volunteers and more equipment arriving in the coming months,” Ang said. (ai/mtvn)

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2022/04/12/before-typhoon-season-sets-in-smc-expands-cleanup-of-tullahan-pasig-rivers-more-students-volunteers-join-coastal-cleanup-efforts/?fbclid=IwAR0QHftr_CKzDICUhTPITClvImfowpOAJpw1964tdU0wQKXNKsY0log-OUA



Trekking, mountaineering now allowed at Mt. Hamiguitan



Photo from Wikimedia Commons

THE Protected Area Management Board (Pamb) of the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary is allowing trekking and mountaineering beginning April 11, 2022.

However, only one climb organizer is permitted to organize the activities -- JM Boundless Adventure Tour Assistance Services, which is owned by John Meryl G. Jayno.

Based on the guidelines given by the MHRWS-Protected Area Management Office (Pamo), no walk-in trekkers are allowed. Only MHRWS-Pamo is permitted to contact and verify the bookings.

DIY climbers and trekkers may be accepted after thorough review of requirements and verification of trekkers.

MHRWS-Pamo has also set guidelines on campfire prevention, waste management, and other trail prohibitions to ensure the safety of trekkers and the environment of Mt. Hamiguitan.

These include strict prohibition on littering, fireworks, use of detergents, shampoos, and bath soaps in water sources, and feeding of wildlife, among others.

The journey to Mt. Hamiguitan is a three-day itinerary with trekking fees ranging from P1,000 to P3,000, depending if trekkers are a partner organization of MHRWS, students, senior citizens, or regular trekkers.

The Mt. Hamiguitan, located in Davao Oriental, was inscribed as a Unesco World Heritage Site in 2014. **(ICM)**



Save rainwater, too

Published April 12, 2022, 12:05 AM
by [Jullie Y. Daza](#)

When LPA meets Malakas, destructive floods occur in places in the Visayas and Mindanao while Metro Manilans pray for rain. Rain is as utilitarian as it is romantic, but what a waste, when all that precious precipitation just goes down the drain.

And yet, and yet, at least 20 SM malls are doing something about it – something that neither the Department of Agriculture nor the National Water Resources Board wants to consider as a practical solution to the perennial water shortage problem. The answer is a series of rainfall catchments to catch the rain and store it for uses other than drinking.

Okay, so rainwater is not fit for drinking, but under a system like MWSS where potable water comes out of the same taps for washing, flushing toilets, putting out fires, irrigating, and manufacturing, whatever volume is saved for drinking is a blessing and a bonus!

Quoting from an SM Supermalls report, the water caught in those catchments spread out among 20 malls is enough to fill 32 Olympic-size pools. Imagine our farms and plantations thirsty for rain today and drowning in seasonal or untimely floods next week, when DA could easily have designed and distributed yesterday a prototype of SM's rain-storing facilities. If the malls can do it, why not a government department funded to help farmers and urban dwellers as well? We're not asking for a dam which takes years and billions to build, we're waiting for a much simpler, cheaper way to harvest rain and even prevent floods.

SM Masinag, with a catch capacity of 17,681 cubic meters, serves two communities whose drainage systems are connected to the mall through its 30 hp submersible pumps that flush out accumulated rainwater, thereby preventing floods.

SM gives credit to a law authored by no less than presidential candidate Sen. Manny Pacquiao, whose Rainwater Harvesting Act mandates the "establishment, maintenance, and management of rainwater harvesting systems." Under the hot sun or in the rain, the candidate tells his fans and supporters how he prays for signs and receives messages in his dreams.

The good senator should next pose this question to DA and other relevant government agencies: How many more typhoons before you start saving rain, a gift from heaven?



Daily Tribune ✓

17h · 🌐



WATCH:

Various groups and pro-environment beauty titlists led by Miss Philippines Earth 2021 [Naelah Aishorbaji](#) on Holy Tuesday ask voters to select pro-people and pro-environment candidates. | 📺 Joey Sanchez Mendoza

#HolyWeek... See more



👍 10

1 Comment



VOTE 'GREEN'

April 13, 2022



Members of Eco Waste Coalition and Naelah Alshorbaji, Miss Philippines Earth 2021, and her court, namely Veronica Meneses (Miss Fire Philippines), Ameera Almamari (Miss Air Philippines) and Sophia Lopez Galve (Miss Eco Tourism), call for responsible voting during a demonstration in front of the Commission on Elections building in Intramuros Manila, on Tuesday, April 12, 2022. PHOTO BY MIKE ALQUINTO



Beauties to voters: Go for environmentally responsible candidates

George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 12 2022 01:27 PM



Miss Earth Philippines 2021 winners (L-R), Miss Philippines Eco-Tourism Sofia Lopez Galve, Miss Philippines Fire Veronica Meneses, Miss Philippines Air Ameera Almamari, and Miss Philippines Earth Naelah Alshorbaji pose for pictures during a protest in front of the Commission on Elections headquarters in Intramuros, Manila on Tuesday. The candidates led the protest together with representatives from Caritas Philippines, EcoWaste Coalition, and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting to urge the public to vote for candidates who genuinely care for the people and the environment.



Eagle Center strengthens measures vs bird flu



Photo courtesy of Philippine Eagle Center

RALPH LAWRENCE G. LLEMIT

April 11, 2022

THE Philippine Eagle Center (PEC) has intensified its safeguard measures in anticipation of a possible lockdown in case the Avian Influenza H5N1 (bird flu) is detected in Davao City.

The PEC, on Monday, April 11, closed the center to conduct a simulation activity to prepare its personnel for a possible lockdown.

"This allows us to respond at a moment's notice as soon as there is a detected case of Avian Flu in Davao City," PEC wrote on its Facebook post.

The center said the activity may affect its operation, but they cannot compromise the safety of the country's "national bird, endemic raptors, and other animals housed" at PEC.

PEC Communications Officer Nathaniele Nuelan told SunStar Davao on Monday afternoon, April 11, that the drill participants included the bird keepers, food stock technicians, and maintenance personnel to prepare them to effectively handle the situation.

"Mawawalan kami ng sort of generating income kasi lumalakas 'yung entry ng (We would sort of lose our generating income considering the entry of) tourists and visitors, but we want to prioritize the survival of our population here. We need to resort to these kinds of measures," Nuelan said.

He said PEC already had a short lockdown last year when the first case of bird flu in the country was detected in Nueva Ecija.

Since then, he said the center already shifted its food supply to feed among eagles from poultries to rats, rabbits, and occasionally goats.

Nuelan said they had also made adjustments on the bird's cages.

He also said that the birds will no longer be taken out of their cages and has limited the interaction of eagles among its keepers and visitors.

The PEC official said they have already coordinated with the Davao City Government, through the City Veterinarian's Office (CVO), and the Bureau of Animal Industry, which are alarmed with the threat the bird flu might pose to the critically endangered eagle.



On Monday, April 4, 2022, the municipality of Magsaysay, Davao del Sur announced that it has detected its first bird flu case in Barangay San Isidro. This is the first case of bird flu in the region.

PEF, in an earlier statement, said the detection of bird flu in Davao Region is a major threat to the Philippine Eagle as the Type A H5N1 avian influenza is highly contagious and lethal to birds, including the said Philippine Eagle.

Department of Agriculture-Davao Region Avian Flu focal person Armie Capuyan said in a virtual presser on Monday that aside from wild birds, other animals and even humans can possibly contract the virus.

“Possible na maapektuhan ng Avian Influenza na ito ang ating mga wild birds at domestic species. Hindi lang 'yung tao (There is a possibility that our wild birds and domestic species might be infected with the Avian Influenza. Not just humans), but other animals could also be affected,” Capuyan said during the One Davao on Covid-19 presser.

CVO head Dr. Cerelyn Pinili said in a recent radio interview that the city remains "bird flu free," but said it will further intensify its screening on the entry of poultries following the ongoing outbreak of the avian flu in some parts of the country.

She said the city has set up veterinary checkpoints in various city borders in Lasang, Calinan, Marilog, and Sirawan in Toril.



Going green and all in for a more sustainable future

By [Chris Ferareza](#) April 13, 2022

AS early as 30 years ago, businesses had to make a tough choice: prioritize profit or save the planet. Focusing on environmental initiatives was expensive even back then. The costs for going green were steep and corporations saw little returns in such a scenario. This pushed them to question whether adopting environmentally friendly practices posed a win-win situation.

Today, embarking on sustainability initiatives is not just a choice but an imperative. Businesses must contribute to environmentally sound measures as part of their environmental, social and governance (ESG) programs if the goal of saving our ailing planet is to succeed. The responsibility cannot be borne by advocates and individuals alone; companies should also take up the advocacy.

Following the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda on sustainable development goals (SDGs), several international agreements were inked to support achievement of these objectives. The cost is still not cheap.

The UN reported that developing countries needed to raise an estimated \$2.5 trillion per year to fill a growing SDG financial gap and achieve the 17 SDGs. This gap, according to an article by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, was projected to further widen by \$1.7 trillion in 2020.

One of the offshoots of sustainability is rooted in the financial sector. As defined by the European Commission, sustainable finance generally refers to the process of "taking due account of ESG considerations when making investment decisions in the financial sector, leading to increased longer-term investments into sustainable economic activities and projects."

The ability of sustainable finance to help spur economic growth cannot be disregarded. The European Commission suggests that aligning financial flows to support more climate resilient programs is one of the ways SDGs can be met.

Of course, business efforts to achieve sustainability are not enough. Coordinated actions between the government and the public sector are vital, with the former needing to continuously adopt legislation and policies geared toward environment restoration and incentivizing corporate initiatives toward climate resiliency.

In February, the Department of Finance (DoF) announced that it was set to offer "green bonds" or debt securities described as ESG sovereign bonds. Funds raised from the \$500-million offering would be used for climate change mitigation programs. The DoF also said that it was already in talks with various banks in preparation for the bond offer.

In line with this, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Benjamin Diokno highlighted that the DoF had recently launched the country's first Sustainable Finance Framework, intended to facilitate and streamline effective strategies that could contribute to the "mainstreaming of sustainable finance." Funds raised would be used to boost sustainability projects and climate change initiatives to meet the UN SDGs as well as the Philippine Development and Public Investment plans.

Banks and other financial institutions can use these "green instruments" to cater to clients' needs and, at the same time, contribute to sustainability. The BSP has said that financial institutions can help the country achieve the target of a 75-percent reduction in carbon



emissions by 2030 by launching innovative sustainable finance instruments.

Keeping up with commitments to achieve sustainability objectives makes the future promising for the environment and climate change programs. It is also becoming apparent that going green presents growth opportunities for businesses.

It is not only big businesses that stand to benefit from sustainable financial initiatives. The environment will further be helped by extending these programs to micro, small and medium enterprises or MSMEs and businesses in industries greatly affected by the pandemic.

One of the major reasons that make businesses think twice about utilizing and selling eco-friendly products and materials is cost. Such items are more expensive than conventional ones, mainly due to the materials needed and the more difficult process used to make them. Nevertheless, as the demand goes up and production efficiencies are achieved, it may not take long before these become more affordable.

Ultimately, companies engaged in sustainable projects and activities can benefit from financial sustainability in more ways than one, including seeing an uptick in profit. The BSP itself has said that "companies can obtain funding at potentially reduced competitive costs" and take advantage of incentives the government may provide once they embark on such green initiatives.

Making sound investment decisions means a careful balancing of corporate interests and the benefits to the environment. The reason is simple: no one lives in a vacuum. If we tend to think our actions only affect our future, it's time for a rethink. While being environmentally friendly requires additional effort and, in some cases, dents profits, environmental degradation and threats to the ecosystem always far outweigh extra business costs. Going green and all in for a more sustainable future is the way to go.

Chris Ferareza is a partner for advisory services at P&A Grant Thornton. P&A Grant Thornton is one of the leading audit, tax, advisory and outsourcing firms in the Philippines, with 24 partners and more than 1,000 staff members. We'd like to hear from you! Tweet us at @GrantThorntonPH, like us on Facebook at P&A Grant Thornton and email your comments to pagrantthornton@ph.gt.com. For more information, visit our website at www.grantthornton.com.ph.

The IMF needs to mitigate climate transition risk

The potential of countries' climate policies to damage other countries' economies has not received as much attention as it deserves. Without proper international coordination, well-intended measures in major economies could further widen the income and welfare gap between rich and poor countries.



Transition spillover risks can occur whenever climate action in one country inflicts a negative shock on the balance of payments and public debt of a commercial partner that exports fossil fuels or high-carbon goods. Bukit Merah, Singapore. Photo via Unsplash.

By [Kevin P. Gallagher](#), [Xiaobei He](#) and Irene Monasterolo

April 12, 2022

The latest [scientific assessment](#) by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change makes it abundantly clear that the costs of inaction on global warming are rising rapidly and will disproportionately fall on poorer countries that bear no responsibility for causing the problem. But what is often overlooked is that climate action itself may also have unintended negative effects in the developing world.

Scholars and central bankers usually refer to two types of climate-related financial risk: “physical risks” and “transition risks.” Whereas physical risk is a result of increases in emissions concentration, transition risks can emerge from technological shocks and from the introduction of climate policies and regulations in key economies.

Between 1850 and 1990, the United States and Europe accounted for 75 per cent of cumulative carbon dioxide emissions. Today, they [contribute](#) about 50 per cent, whereas China, India, and other emerging economies account for a growing share. Given this history, the US and Europe must act boldly to address the climate problem, charting a path for the world’s fast-growing emitters to follow.

Together, the US, the European Union, China, and India account for more than 55 per cent of world GDP. As the leading drivers of global production and consumption patterns, their actions tend to “spill over” to other countries.

Thus, suddenly introducing policies and regulations designed to phase out fossil fuels in one of these major economies could strand not only physical assets (like oil rigs) but also workers and communities. Many other countries around the world could then face fiscal and financial instability.

Ambitious climate policies to replace fossil fuels with clean energy sources will benefit all only if they [reduce](#) these “transition spillover risks.” That will require coordination among countries and significant investments in resilience, adaptation, and adjustment support for workers and entrepreneurs in the legacy fossil-fuel industries.

Transition spillover risks can occur whenever climate action in one country inflicts a negative shock on the balance of payments and public debt of a commercial partner that exports fossil fuels or high-carbon goods.

Although spillovers are recognised in the Paris climate agreement, there has been only limited research on this form of climate risk and how best to mitigate it, leaving a significant blind spot in the pursuit of a just transition.

Fortunately, new research from the [Task Force on Climate, Development, and the International Monetary Fund](#), of which we are members, seeks to fill this knowledge gap. In the task force's [first technical paper](#), we examine the implications of the EU's proposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). In the upper bound of our estimates, we find that it would adversely affect exports and welfare in many developing countries.

For example, with the broadest implementation of the CBAM, Mozambique's economy could shrink by 2.5 per cent, Russia's by 0.6 per cent, and India's, Egypt's, and Turkey's by almost 0.3 per cent each. Thus, income and welfare inequality between rich and poor economies could worsen, further eroding some low-income countries' capacity to decarbonise.

Another [study](#) examines how carbon pricing in China (consistent with the scenarios offered by the [Network for Greening the Financial System](#)) would affect Indonesia, an emerging market with strong trade links to the Chinese economy. The authors conclude that a Chinese coal phaseout, by curtailing demand for Indonesian coal, would adversely affect Indonesia's balance of payments, fiscal position, and public debt, owing to the stranding of assets in the mining sector, which plays a key role in the domestic economy.

These findings are not an excuse for climate inaction. But they do underscore the need for more international coordination.

Climate-change mitigation and adaptation must be pursued in a manner that is consistent with maintaining financial stability, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and fostering equity within and across national borders.

As the only global, rules-based, multilateral institution charged with maintaining financial stability, the IMF [should take the lead](#) on managing transition spillover risks. As part of its global and bilateral surveillance functions, it should help member states identify the sources of short- and longer-term risks. And the IMF should work in tandem with the World Bank and other development-finance institutions to help countries mobilise the external and domestic resources needed to decarbonise their economies while also maintaining fiscal and financial stability.

Even then, though, some countries will inevitably suffer unintended consequences.

In those cases, the IMF should avoid attaching onerous conditionalities to its financing programs, as such provisions have been [shown](#) to worsen poverty and inequality and hamper long-run growth.

A better option is to rely on new mechanisms such as the proposed [Resilience and Sustainability Trust](#), which would provide short-term financing (without onerous conditions and at concessional rates) to help address balance-of-payments and liquidity challenges from transition spillover risks. Alternatively, an "Equitable Decarbonisation Fund" financed from CBAMs and domestic carbon taxes could also be used to support decarbonisation in fossil-fuel source countries.

We are now in the important decade for addressing climate change. Future economic stability, growth, and human well-being may well depend on whether the IMF will step into its role as a global coordinator for climate policy.

Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2022.

www.project-syndicate.org

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/the-imf-needs-to-mitigate-climate-transition-risk/>

Q&A: What does the UK's new energy security strategy mean for climate change?

After weeks of rumour and speculation, Boris Johnson's plan for how the UK can ensure its energy security amid climate change, a cost-of-living crisis and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has finally been published.



The four eastern cooling towers of the Drax Power Station in North Yorkshire stands prominent against the England horizon.
Image: [Jonathan Brennan](#), CC BY-SA 3.0, via [Flickr](#).

By Daisy Dunne, Simon Evans, Josh Gabbatiss, [Carbon Brief](#)
April 12, 2022

The government's energy security strategy, [released in full](#) on Thursday afternoon, is shaped by ambitious – yet vague – promises for nuclear power and offshore wind, with little mention of new measures for energy efficiency or onshore wind.

It says some 95 per cent of the country's electricity could come from low-carbon sources by 2030, ahead of the government's [existing aim](#) of decarbonising the sector by 2035.

Just days after the release of an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [report on tackling climate change](#), the strategy also commits to holding a new licensing round for North Sea oil and gas and promises to “remain open-minded” about fracking.

In its [initial assessment](#) of the strategy, the government's adviser the Climate Change Committee ([CCC](#)) says the proposals, if enacted, “would bring us closer to meeting the net-zero challenge”.

However, it adds that “it is disappointing not to see more on energy efficiency and on supporting households to make changes that can cut their energy bills now”.

Overall, experts tell Carbon Brief that, despite being framed as a response to the energy crisis, the strategy contains very little in the short-term to help struggling people with their bills or wean the nation off Russian fossil fuels.

[We have to be smarter in our planning and more efficient in our use of energy – nuclear presents a big opportunity to do that and the co-benefits of heating will reduce the cost.](#)

[Peter Bruce](#), chemist, University of Oxford

Some climate measures that enjoy high public support, such as onshore wind power and solar, receive less attention in the strategy than nuclear power, one of Johnson's “[big bets](#)” for securing the UK's future energy security.

Below, Carbon Brief analyses all the key elements of the UK’s energy security strategy and explains the origin of the various “ambitions” it contains.

Nuclear

[Many publications](#) led their pre-release coverage of the energy strategy by reporting on Johnson’s “big bet” on nuclear power.

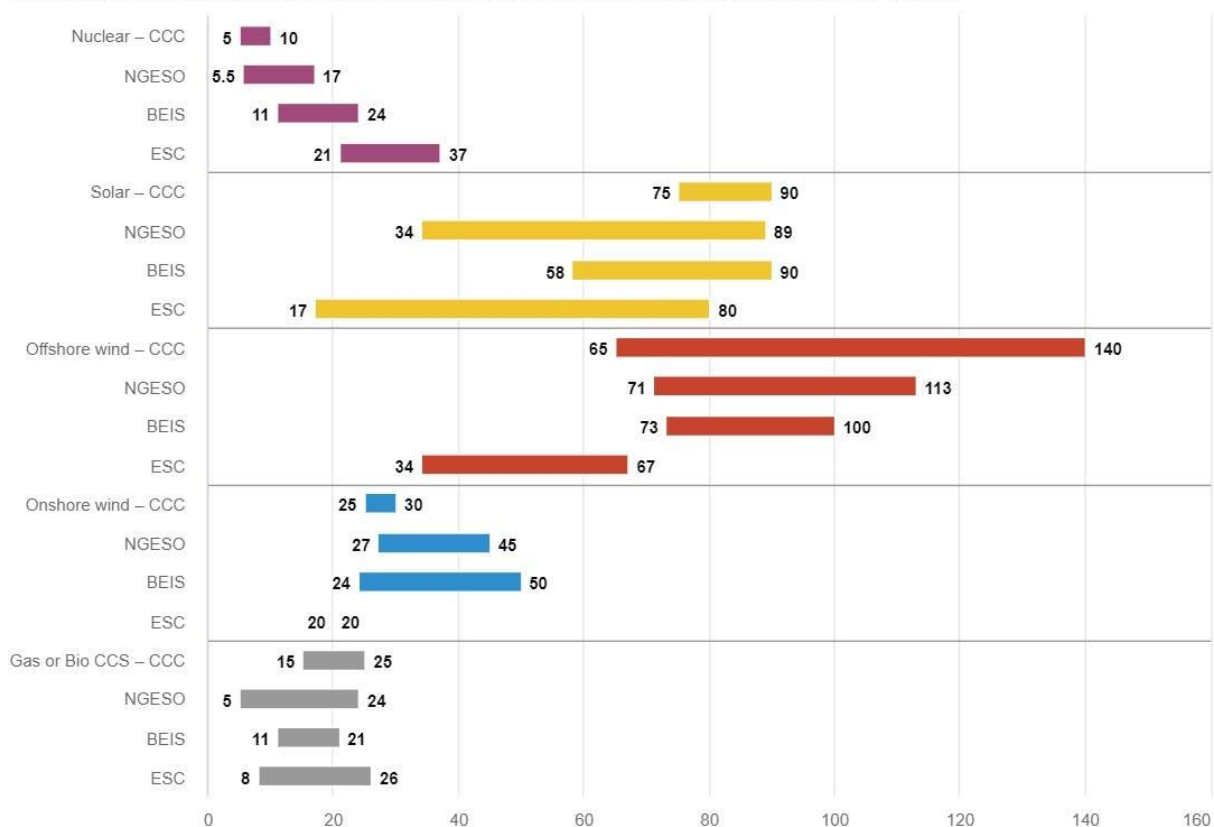
The [press release](#) for the strategy – the basis for this reporting – does not put forward clear targets for nuclear power expansion.

Instead, it says the government has “an ambition” to produce “up to 24GW” [gigawatts] of nuclear power by 2050. If achieved, this would “present up to around 25 per cent of our projected electricity demand”, the press release notes.

This ambition is more than double the 10GW of nuclear power that the CCC expects under [its central scenario](#) for how the UK can get to net-zero by 2050 in the most cost-effective manner, as shown by the purple bars in the Carbon Brief chart below. In its [initial response](#) to the strategy, the CCC says the government’s ambitions for nuclear “clearly go beyond” its own proposals.

The chart also shows the range of capacity expected by 2050 for solar (yellow), offshore wind (red), onshore wind (blue) and gas or biomass with carbon capture and storage (CCS, grey) under scenarios from the UK government’s [Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) (BEIS), when compared with those produced independently by the CCC, [National Grid Electricity System Operator](#) (NGESO) and the [Energy Systems Catapult](#) (ESC).

The UK government ambition for 24GW of nuclear by 2050 is very high
Electricity generation capacity (GW) in 2050 in scenarios from the CCC, NGESO, BEIS & Energy Systems Catapult



UK electricity generation capacity in 2050, GW, for a range of technologies in scenarios published by the CCC, NGESO, BEIS and ESC. Source: Carbon Brief analysis of published scenarios. Chart by Joe Goodman for Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

The government's strategy does not specifically include ambitions for 2030. (In March, the [Guardian](#) reported that officials were mulling a target of 16GW of nuclear power for 2030.)

The press release is also not clear on how many nuclear reactors the government is planning for in the coming decades.

It says the government "will work to progress a series of projects as soon as possible this decade", including at the Wylfa nuclear site in Anglesey, north Wales. (A [planned scheme at Wylfa](#) is one of several to have been shelved in recent years.)

It adds the plans "could mean delivering up to eight reactors", which it claims would be the equivalent of "one reactor a year". (Several publications [misinterpret](#) this as a government pledge to build one reactor a year.)

However, the strategy itself says the possibility of eight reactors is dependent on "the pipeline of projects" and it is clear that most would not be built this decade.

The strategy repeats the government's [existing "intention"](#) to take one nuclear project to a final investment decision "this parliament" – no later than 2024 – and widely understood to be the Sizewell C scheme in Suffolk.

The strategy says that, in addition to this, a further two projects would be signed off during the "next parliament". (However, it cannot bind the winner of the next election.)

It says this ambition includes small modular reactors (SMRs) – nuclear fission reactors that are smaller than conventional nuclear reactors, but have not yet been proven to work commercially at scale.

Crucially, given [reports](#) of opposition to funding further new nuclear from the chancellor Rishi Sunak, the strategy says projects would be "subject to value for money assessment, all relevant approvals and future spending reviews". It adds:

"This is not a cap on ambition, but a challenge to the industry to come forward and compete for projects and aim to come online this decade."

The strategy also says a new government body – "Great British Nuclear" – will be established "this year" to help deliver projects. Through this body, the government will start "selecting" further UK nuclear projects – but not until 2023 – and only as a prelude to entering into negotiations for "potential" government support.

In addition, the government says it will launch its £120m "future nuclear enabling fund" – first announced in the [2021 spending review](#) – this month.

Many commentators note that large-scale nuclear projects tend to come with high costs and long development times of at least a decade, meaning they can do little to reduce reliance on Russian fossil fuels and lower energy bills in the short term.

[Dr Sarah Darby](#), an associate professor at the [University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute](#), tells journalists:

"Any nuclear project – including the untested (and non-small) SMRs – is inevitably hugely expensive, runs over time and over budget, and leaves a waste legacy that we still don't know how to deal with. Renewables are modular, flexible, cheap, not a security risk, and the government's surveys show 86 per cent public support for them."

In a statement, [Prof Peter Bruce](#), vice president of the Royal Society and a chemist at the University of Oxford, says that the UK could be using nuclear power in a "smarter" way:

“Nuclear power is already part of the energy mix in the UK, but we can be much smarter in its use. At present, 65 per cent of the energy generated is lost as waste heat – that energy can be used for industrial processes, such as producing green hydrogen, or even for directly heating homes in the local region. We have to be smarter in our planning and more efficient in our use of energy – nuclear presents a big opportunity to do that and the co-benefits of heating will reduce the cost.”

The IPCC report on how to tackle climate change [published](#) earlier this week concludes that large-scale nuclear power “can deliver low-carbon energy at scale”, but that “doing so will require improvements in managing construction of reactor designs that hold the promise of lower costs and broader use”.

It also states with *high confidence* that nuclear power “continues to be affected by cost overruns, high up-front investment needs, challenges with final disposal of radioactive waste, and varying public acceptance and political support levels”.

On SMRs, the report says with *medium confidence* that the still-emergent technology is not expected to be competitive against large reactors until 2040, as “cost-cutting opportunities” emerge. (A new [Q&A](#) published by the UK government to highlight the “benefits” of nuclear power says that “one of the world’s first SMRs...could be deployed in the UK in the early 2030s to turbocharge UK nuclear capacity”.)

In its [scenarios](#) for how the UK can reach net-zero, the CCC estimates that the cost of generating nuclear power will far exceed that of renewables in 2050.

Under its central scenario for net-zero in 2050, it estimates a cost of £85 per megawatt hour (MWh) for nuclear, with offshore wind and solar costing £40/MWh.

Offshore wind

The energy security strategy’s second “[big bet](#)” sets a “new ambition” to achieve “up to” 50GW of offshore wind power by 2030. This would be “more than enough to power every home in the UK”, the government says in its press release.

(Homes only account for a third of electricity use in the UK, but 50GW of offshore wind would generate roughly 75 per cent of current demand and more than 60 per cent of the level [expected](#) in 2030.)

Of this 50GW, the government “would like to see” up to 5GW from [floating windfarms](#) – offshore projects in deep waters where turbines are mounted on a floating structure rather than fixed to the ocean floor.

The strategy continues:

“Our history of North Sea oil and gas expertise enables us to rapidly deploy our rich expertise in sub-sea technology and maximise our natural assets. Already, just off the coast of Aberdeenshire, we have built the world’s first floating offshore windfarms. There will be huge benefits in the Irish and Celtic Sea.”

This ambition is higher than the government’s previous pledge to build 40GW of offshore wind power by 2030. This pledge was first mentioned in the Conservative’s [2019 election manifesto](#) and repeated in Johnson’s [10-point climate plan](#) released in 2020.

In its initial assessment of the energy security strategy, the CCC says that, along with nuclear power, the government’s ambitions for offshore wind “go beyond” its own proposals. The statement from the CCC adds:

“The new commitments are hugely ambitious – they would see the UK produce more electricity from offshore wind in 2030 [around 240 terawatt hours] than it has produced from gas in any year in history. Government, business and industry will need to focus relentlessly on delivery at a scale and pace as yet unseen.”

The press release for the strategy says its ambitions will be “underpinned by new planning reforms to cut the approval time for new offshore wind farms from four years to one year”.

The strategy itself adds that the government will establish “a fast track consenting route for priority cases where quality standards are met” for offshore wind.

It plans to achieve this “by amending Planning Act 2008 so that the relevant secretary of state can set shorter examination timescales”, it adds.

In a statement, [Sir John Armitt](#), chair of the [National Infrastructure Commission](#), says the government “should be credited with its scale of ambition to expand offshore wind”, adding:

“The challenge is to take these stretching targets and turn them into delivery of cheaper electricity into people’s homes as quickly as possible.”

As the chart above shows, scenarios for net-zero by 2050 involve up to 140GW of offshore wind, meaning continued expansion would be needed beyond the 50GW by 2030.

Onshore wind

Onshore wind plays a much more muted role in the energy strategy than pre-release rumours and reporting had suggested, despite the fact that it is the [second-cheapest](#) way to generate electricity in the UK after solar.

The press release for the strategy dedicates just one line to onshore wind:

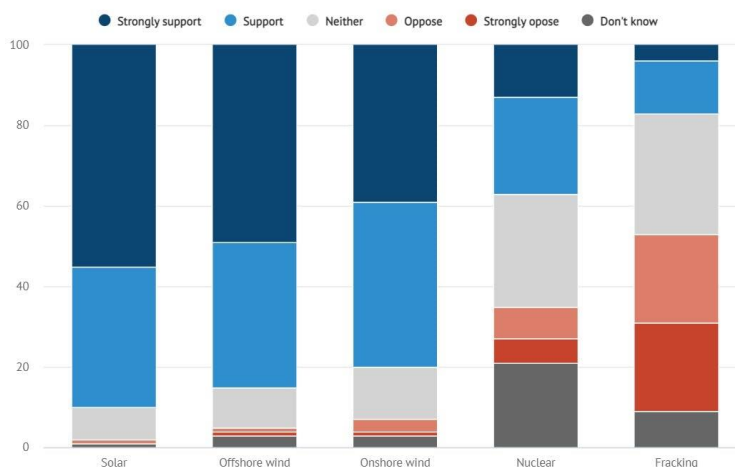
“We will be consulting on developing partnerships with a limited number of supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in return for guaranteed lower energy bills.”

The strategy itself expands on this, saying that the government “will not introduce wholesale changes to current planning regulations for onshore wind, but will consult this year on developing local partnerships”.

It also says this consultation “will consider how clear support can be demonstrated by local communities, local authorities and MPs”.

The strategy adds that “the government recognises the range of views on onshore wind”. This is despite official polling showing 80 per cent of the public support onshore wind (see below), compared with 37 per cent for nuclear and 17 per cent for fracking.

Wind and solar enjoy very high public support, unlike nuclear or fracking
Share of respondents to the BEIS public attitudes tracker, %





On 2 April, just days ahead of the strategy's release, many publications [speculated](#) that the government had plans to triple onshore wind power generation by 2035 as part of the energy security strategy.

Leaked official documents relating to the strategy from March, handed to the [i newspaper](#) and others, appeared to recommend an increase in onshore wind power from around 15GW today to 30GW in 2030 and 45GW in 2035.

The leaked document also recommended the establishment of an "onshore wind task force" to, among other things, create a "more facilitative planning policy" for onshore wind in England. (David Cameron [imposed an effective ban](#) on onshore wind in England in 2013.)

None of these plans are mentioned in the final strategy. (On 4 April, the [Times](#) reported that Johnson had dropped his plans for onshore wind in favour of new nuclear power.)

[Dr Rebecca Windemer](#), a lecturer in environmental planning at the [University of West England](#), described the lack of policy reform included in the strategy as "extremely disappointing". She tells Carbon Brief:

"Under the current policy new wind farms can't be developed in [89 per cent](#) of local authorities in England, despite a widespread desire to do so. Changing the planning policy would enable wind farms to be developed in locations where they are wanted and also enable more communities to develop and own their own turbines."

In a [statement](#), Ed Miliband, shadow secretary of state of climate change and net-zero, accused Johnson of "completely cav[ing]" to "his own backbenchers" on onshore wind.

[Dr Bridget Woodman](#), deputy director of the energy policy group at the [University of Exeter](#), tells journalists:

"The failure to endorse onshore wind neglects the cheapest form of renewable energy and ignores rational decision making about how to deliver low-cost, zero-carbon power at a time of rapidly rising bills and an increase in fuel poverty."

While the strategy does not include clear support for the expansion of onshore wind, projects will be able to compete for government "[contracts for difference](#)" (CfDs) in an [auction](#) due to finish this summer.

The auction is currently [capped](#) at a maximum of 5GW of onshore wind and solar combined, despite the nearly 11GW of such projects that already have planning permission and could be built quickly, if given a route to market.

However, Carbon Brief understands that the government [could still choose](#) to raise the cap on onshore renewables, ahead of the auction, via a "[budget revision notice](#)".

The strategy also commits to include onshore wind in future CfD rounds. In February, the government [announced](#) that these would now take place annually.

Solar

The strategy contains some new measures to promote solar power, which is the [cheapest](#) and most popular energy technology – and the fastest to build. However, as with other aspects of the plan, experts noted that it lacks concrete proposals.

The [press release](#) for the strategy says the government will "look to increase" the UK's current 14GW of solar capacity – including both large-scale projects and rooftop solar panels – which "could" grow up to five times by 2035, taking it to 70GW.

The strategy itself is similarly vague in its ambitions, stating “we expect” a fivefold increase over this period.

An earlier version of the document, shared by the [i newspaper](#), included more specific targets, notably setting firm goals of 50GW of solar capacity by 2030 and 70GW by 2035.

However, this is missing from the final document and there are few details of what will drive the expected uptick in solar, limited to a handful of consultations and vague pledges.

[Prof Michael Grubb](#), a professor of energy and climate change at [University College London](#), said in a statement that 50GW “would be possible within a few years” with government support:

“When the government first introduced incentives for solar, the capacity rocketed from 1 to 10GW within barely three years.”

Under its [central scenario](#) for net-zero, the CCC envisages 85GW of solar power in the UK by 2050. Scenarios from other organisations, including BEIS, see up to 90GW of solar power by 2050, as the chart above shows.

In a [briefing](#) ahead of the strategy, trade association [Solar Energy UK](#) called on the government to commit to a target of 40GW by 2030 and 54GW by 2035, and the organisation [welcomed](#) the plan when it emerged.

However, its chief executive [Chris Hewett](#) tells Carbon Brief that 50GW would be feasible by 2030, if grid constraints were addressed.

The [earlier draft](#) of the strategy was clear that the way to achieve its proposed goals would be through large-scale ground-mount solar, which it referred to as “the cheapest form of electricity generation”.

It said the government would need to take forward the “vast majority” of proposed projects and show “clear support” through a communications effort.

However, as with onshore wind, such projects have caused [disquiet](#) within the Conservative party, with backbenchers – [including](#) former health secretary [Matt Hancock](#) – vocally opposing solar projects in their constituencies.

The final strategy appears to shift the focus more towards smaller-scale rooftop solar, with the [press release](#) stating that the government would “[consult] on the rules for solar projects, particularly on domestic and commercial rooftops”.

The [full document](#) lays out plans to “radically simplify” planning processes for rooftop solar with a consultation on permitted development rights.

Other measures include pledges to “consider” the best way to use public-sector rooftops, “look at” facilitating low-cost finance for solar deployment and design performance standards to make renewables, such as solar panels, “the presumption in new homes and buildings”.

For ground-mounted projects, the government says it will hold a consultation to “[amend] planning rules to strengthen policy in favour of development on non-protected land” and “[encourage] large-scale projects to locate on previously developed, or lower value land”.

These words are accompanied by the caveat that the government will “[ensure] communities continue to have a say and environmental protections remain in place”. [Juliet Phillips](#), a senior policy advisor at thinktank [E3G](#), tells Carbon Brief this wording “[leaves] the door ajar for [nimbyism](#)”.

Energy efficiency

Perhaps the most significant omission from the report is any new funding commitment to boost energy efficiency and help insulate the nation's leaky housing.

This is widely viewed as among the fastest and most cost-effective solutions to the current energy crisis, as it would reduce overall demand and, therefore, save people money on their bills as well as cutting the need for fossil-fuel imports.

The UK could reduce its consumption of Russian gas by 80 per cent this year through [measures](#) to improve energy efficiency and cut energy demand, [according to](#) thinktank E3G.

The absence of such measures in the strategy has, therefore, been described [by many](#) as a "[huge missed opportunity](#)".

Among those who have shown support for more energy-efficiency funding are [No 10 and BEIS](#) (reportedly), the [Climate Change Committee](#) (CCC), a [former Conservative energy minister](#), the [chair of the BEIS select committee](#), [various think tanks](#), [environmental NGOs](#) and [many energy researchers](#).

Despite plenty of positive language around home insulation, including the statement that "every therm of gas saved grows our energy security and brings jobs to the UK", there is no new money in the strategy to support the required renovations.

[Media outlets](#) have reported that this is due to the Treasury under chancellor Rishi Sunak opposing any new measures to support this sector.

During the 2019 general election, the Conservatives [committed](#) to:

"Help lower energy bills by investing £9.2bn in the energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals."

However, the Conservative-led governments over the past decade have a litany of unsuccessful forays into energy efficiency behind them, from David Cameron's pledge to cut the "green crap" [that saw](#) loft and cavity wall insulation rates drop by 92 per cent and 74 per cent in 2013, to the £1.5bn Green Homes Grant which ended up [being cancelled](#) after just six months in 2021.

Most recently, in his Spring Statement, Sunak [announced](#) a reduction in the VAT paid when having insulation and low-carbon technologies installed in homes. This pledge is repeated in the new strategy.

While this was portrayed as a way of saving people money, it was [viewed](#) as a policy that primarily benefited wealthy, comfortable households rather than those struggling with energy bills.

All in all, with the cost of living soaring, the 2019 manifesto pledge to "help lower energy bills" with energy-efficiency investment seems more relevant than ever.

According to the [Daily Telegraph](#), both No 10 and Kwarteng's team had advocated for an expansion of the [Energy Company Obligation](#) (ECO) scheme, which is currently the UK's main policy for improving home insulation.

As it stands, [the scheme](#), which prioritises low-income and vulnerable households, requires large energy suppliers to install insulation in low-quality housing. It [receives](#) £1bn each year, funded with a levy on energy bills, but the new [proposal](#) involved an additional £200m of public funds going into it so that it could be expanded to more households.

However, according to reports, the Treasury opposed this idea, choosing instead to stick to the spending announcements from the [autumn budget](#), which themselves were first announced last October in the heat and buildings strategy and [deemed insufficient](#) by experts.

[Ana Musat](#), head of policy at the [Aldersgate Group](#), tells Carbon Brief that expanding the scope of ECO to cover more homes would have been welcome.

She adds that any successor to the Green Homes Grant should also be accompanied by regulatory levers, such as tightened [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards](#) (MEES).

[Dr Fraser Stewart](#), a social and energy justice researcher for energy thinktank [Regen](#), tells Carbon Brief that on top of “grants and subsidies for those inclined to do work themselves”, more expansive, inclusive policies are also necessary:

“For a just transition on the scale we need and to help people crucially struggling with the crisis now, we need to reach people and communities across the spectrum.”

He proposes funding local authorities to deliver efficiency, supplementing “underfunded and poorly promoted” existing schemes, such as the [Social Housing Decarbonisation](#) fund and a national promotional campaign for these schemes.

Instead of any of these measures, the strategy reiterates many past commitments, announces a new £30m heat pump innovation competition and a new “energy advice service” that consumers can contact to help navigate the “unknown territory” of home insulation.

The document also lacks any substantial measures to cut consumer demand for energy – moves which would have the most immediate impact on saving people money and reducing reliance on Russian gas.

Pointing to her organisation’s [proposal](#) for nine measures to cut demand, including expanding the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and launching a public information campaign, [Juliet Phillips](#) from [E3G](#) tells Carbon Brief:

“Even Kwasi Kwarteng has [admitted](#) the strategy is, at best, a “medium-term” plan, rather than focused on supporting struggling households. With estimates that one in three households will fall into fuel poverty if energy bills hit £3,000 later this year – as experts are warning they might – this means the strategy totally fails to speak to the moment.”

Hydrogen

The prime minister’s final “[big bet](#)” after nuclear and offshore wind, as reported by newspapers in the run up to the strategy, is a pledge to double the UK’s target for hydrogen production to “up to 10GW” by 2030.

This builds on the previous pledge of 5GW announced in the prime minister’s [10-point plan](#) in 2020. As it stands, UK production of low-carbon hydrogen is [close to zero](#).

Experts broadly welcomed the ambition of the new target, but they noted that there was an urgent need to begin demonstrating hydrogen projects across the nation, prioritising hard-to-decarbonise areas such as heavy industry.

The strategy itself does not mention using hydrogen to heat homes, but the press release talks about this “potentially” being an option.

Moreover, according to [Adam Bell](#), head of policy at the consultancy [Stonehaven](#), the mere raising of the target would provide a boost to hydrogen in heating, as injecting it into the gas grid could provide a straightforward option for large volumes of hydrogen.

While [many experts](#) – and the recent [IPCC report](#) – suggest hydrogen should be prioritised for other sectors rather than heating, the government has currently left the door open for this application, with a decision currently delayed until 2026.

The strategy says the UK is well-placed to exploit “all forms” of low-carbon hydrogen production – referring to both “green” hydrogen made with renewable power, and “blue” hydrogen made using natural gas with carbon capture and storage (CCS).

According to the documents, “at least half” of the 10GW will come from “electrolytic” – green – hydrogen.

While the EU has opted to primarily focus on green hydrogen, the UK’s decision to pursue blue as well has been contentious, as unlike the green variety, it is not zero-carbon and would maintain reliance on gas.

[Prof Jim Watson](#), professor of energy policy at [University College London](#), tells Carbon Brief:

“I think the continuing commitment to blue hydrogen as well as green hydrogen in the UK...[is] problematic. Why is it a good idea to use gas to produce hydrogen which would be used to replace gas?”

The strategy says that to support its target it will run “annual allocation rounds for electrolytic hydrogen, moving to price competitive allocation by 2025 as soon as legislation and market conditions allow”. This builds on a business model mentioned in previous [government strategies](#).

North Sea oil and gas

In the energy security strategy, the UK government describes gas as “the glue that holds our electricity system together” and says “it will be an important transition fuel”.

The strategy says that the [North Sea Transition Authority](#) (until recently known as the [Oil and Gas Authority](#)) plans to “launch another licensing round” for North Sea oil and gas projects in “the autumn”, claiming:

“This will mean more domestic gas on the grid sooner.”

But it is worth noting that, according to official data, it takes an average of [28 years](#) for an exploration licence to lead to oil and gas production. Because of this, any licence awarded in the autumn may not be contributing to supply until the 2040s or 2050s – doing little to reduce reliance on Russian fossil fuels in the short term.

The strategy also says the government will establish “gas and oil new project regulatory accelerators” to “facilitate the rapid development of projects”. It claims this “could take years off the development of the most complex new opportunities”.

The UK government has [previously said](#) that new licensing rounds can only take place if the oil and gas sector can pass a “[climate compatibility checkpoint](#)” that “ensures” any new production is in line with the country’s goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. The new strategy reaffirms this commitment, saying the North Sea Transition Authority will take the checkpoint into account.

The final details of how this checkpoint will work in practice has not yet been announced. (Earlier this year, [Carbon Brief](#) took an in-depth look at whether new oil and gas licences can ever be “climate compatible”.)

The recent [IPCC report](#) on how to tackle climate change is among high-level scientific assessments to conclude that, globally, continued fossil fuel expansion is not compatible with

efforts to keep global warming to 1.5C, the aspiration of the [Paris Agreement](#).

In their response to the strategy, many commentators pointed out that the government's recommitment to fossil fuels comes just days after the release of the IPCC report.

Tessa Khan, an environmental lawyer and director of the campaign group Uplift, tells journalists:

"The fact that this strategy has been published just days after the IPCC made it clear that already-planned fossil fuel projects will take us past safe climate limits makes it all the more galling."

The press release for the strategy notes that the plans for a new licensing round also hinge on the government's view "that producing gas in the UK has a lower carbon footprint than imported from abroad".

[Recent analysis](#) by the CCC found that the emissions intensity of oil and gas produced by the UK is lower than the global average.

However, it is worth noting that the UK is not currently outperforming its biggest import partner, [Norway](#), when it comes to oil and gas production standards.

In addition, its current plan for slashing production emissions in the North Sea is [not ambitious enough](#), when compared to CCC scenarios for how the UK can reach net-zero.

The strategy says the government plans to "further" reduce production emissions by "driving rapid industry investment in electrifying offshore production".

Fracking

In the weeks leading up to the strategy's launch one of the most hotly debated topics among ministers and commentators has been fracking.

Banned in England since 2019, due to public outcry following [minor earthquakes](#) – of magnitude 2.9 – at a test site in Lancashire, fracking remains one of the least popular energy technologies in the country, [supported by](#) just 17 per cent of the population (see chart above).

Nevertheless, the extraction of shale gas from UK soil has been a consistently popular idea among certain right-wing factions of the Conservative party, tabloid newspapers and climate sceptics.

This has become all the more apparent since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has seen these groups seek to argue that an end to the moratorium is necessary to ensure a secure domestic supply of gas, independent of Russia.

Only two shale gas exploration wells have ever been drilled and tested in the UK. Researchers have argued that it is [highly unlikely](#) the industry will get off the ground.

Even if the England moratorium were lifted, it would take [years of drilling](#) before significant volumes of gas could be extracted, by which time – under the UK's net-zero strategy – the nation would have reduced its reliance on gas. This was a point made by the CCC in a 2021 [letter](#) to Kwarteng, in which it also said:

"The moratorium on UK shale production should not be lifted without an in-depth independent review of the evidence on the climate impact."

While Kwarteng himself has [said](#) that fracking is not the answer to the UK's energy crisis, in an apparent bid to appease backbenchers he wrote a [letter](#) to the British Geological Survey (BGS)

the day before the strategy was announced requesting a report on the current state of scientific knowledge around fracking and earthquakes.

In the letter, the business secretary wrote:

“While it remains the case that shale gas extraction is not the solution to near-term price issues, it is right as a government – given the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Putin’s regime – that we keep all possible energy generation and production methods on the table.”

The [questions](#) being explored by BGS in this review include whether there are new techniques available that reduce earthquake risk, whether modelling of such risk has improved and whether areas outside Lancashire – where exploratory wells were previously drilled – would be less prone to earthquakes.

It asks if ministers could, on the basis of improvements in the past three years, be “completely confident” about modelling of seismic events and their predictability.

When they were underway, fracking activities in the UK were placed under a system in which seismic activity that breached a certain, fairly low, threshold meant activities had to be paused. (Notably, the 2.9-magnitude event triggering the ban was well above this threshold.)

[Prof John Loughhead](#), industrial chair in clean energy at the [University of Birmingham](#) and [chief scientific adviser](#) at BEIS from 2016 to 2020, tells Carbon Brief that as far as he knows none of the factors leading to this earthquakes or the monitoring of them have changed, meaning the BGS review is unlikely to yield much:

“To the best of my personal knowledge, I don’t think any substantive new information or understanding or insight has arisen...and I don’t think there has been any significant research activity on fracking because the government said ‘we don’t want to do it’.”

In the end, the strategy says the government will “[remain] open-minded about our onshore reserves”, citing the “impartial technical review” by BGS. It adds that:

“Any exploration or development of shale gas would need to meet rigorous safety and environmental protection both above ground and sub-surface.”

Ultimately, while the inclusion of fracking appears to show some compromise with pro-fracking elements in society, Prof Michael Grubb of UCL says environmentalists “shouldn’t be too worried” about the decision:

“Whatever the government does, don’t hold your breath for shale to be – if and when anything actually emerges – anything more than an uneconomic trickle. It sure won’t help with our energy prices.”

This story was published with permission from [Carbon Brief](#).

PAGASA: 'Agaton' weakens into LPA, to merge with typhoon

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 13 2022 01:09 AM

MANILA—Agaton has dissipated into a low pressure area and is expected to merge with a typhoon outside the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR), PAGASA said late Tuesday evening.

In its 11 p.m. weather bulletin, PAGASA said the weather disturbance was spotted at 10 p.m. in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, slowly moving southeastward.

On Tuesday night through Wednesday evening, moderate to heavy with at times intense rains are still possible over Eastern Visayas, Sorsogon, Masbate, the northern and central portions of Cebu including Bantayan and Camotes Islands, Aklan, Capiz, Antique, Iloilo, Guimaras, and the northern and central portions of Negros Provinces.

Light to moderate with at times heavy rains, meanwhile, will be experienced in Mimaropa, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Quezon, and the rest of Bicol Region and Visayas, PAGASA said.



Gusts reaching strong breeze to near gale in strength may still be experienced over Eastern Visayas, Central Visayas, Caraga, Misamis Oriental, and Camiguin, the state weather agency said.

Agaton's remnant circulation is expected to move eastward towards the Philippine Sea and merge with Typhoon Basyang, which is currently outside the PAR.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/13/22/agaton-weakens-into-lpa-to-merge-with-typhoon>

13 APRIL 2022, WEDNESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

DENR issues memo to strengthen MPAN

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

IN an effort to improve the coastal and marine environment, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and two other state agencies have issued a joint memorandum circular that aims to strengthen the establishment of marine protected area networks (MPAN), restore damaged coastal ecosystems, and enrich coral reefs and marine habitats.

Aside from DENR, the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) were the signatories of the said joint memorandum, which mandates them to collaborate for the improvement of the coastal and marine environment.

Dr. Vincent V. Hilomen, DENR-SMARTSeas PH national project manager, said that the eventual approval of the joint policy guidelines on establishing and managing MPANs will be valuable in biodiversity conservation efforts.

The DENR-SMARTSeas PH Project, or "Strengthening Marine Protected Areas to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines", is a six-year

initiative of the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) aimed to accelerate the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and MPANs to include more marine key biodiversity areas (KBAs) to reduce and arrest the rapid degradation of marine and coastal habitats.

Hilomen explained that the joint memorandum ensures that biodiversity conservation is given priority equally along with economic development.

"There will be a value for a government policy that [considers] conservation equally important to development and progress. Many of the degraded coastal and marine habitats resulted from the relentless push for development and progress with a little afterthought of the higher costs to the environment," said Hilomen.

The joint efforts of the three agencies will help government hurdle the difficulties of putting up MPA and MPAN amid coastal residents' usual opposition against these.

MPAN is a collection of individual MPAs or reserves operating cooperatively and synergistically under the SMARTSeas.

"One of the greatest challenges that we are experienc-

ing in establishing MPANs is still the acceptance of the community. There are several instances where the communities resist to set aside a portion of their waters for protection purposes because they think that access to their fishing areas will be limited," said Hilomen.

Hilomen further stressed that it is important that government capacitates its MPA/MPAN workforce to empower them in harnessing cooperation from communities in establishing the MPA/MPANs.

"A thorough discussion of the benefits from protection and consultation with the community from the onset is a must. The involvement of the community in protection is critical," he added.

The DENR's SMARTSeas PH project is funded under a \$28.53 million co-financing scheme between the government and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It also received a GEF grant of \$8 million.

The SMARTSeas PH has so far capacitated at least 70 key DENR regional and field staff through on-line distance learning.

Hilomen disclosed that this is the first-ever of its kind of capacity-building activity in the DENR.

The increased compe-

tencies included identification and approaches to resolving threats to the marine environment.

The establishment of three MPANs led to the development of nearly 90 management bodies of MPAs and MPANs that have demonstrated increased competencies for management effectiveness.

SMARTSeas has also developed a better monitoring and evaluation system for MPAs and MPANs, which provided an important guide to monitoring management progress across the country.

Protection of coastal ecosystems under the MPA includes patrolling, surveillance of habitats, the conduct of direct activities, and repair of signages, other facilities, gears, and equipment.



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE





BenguetCorp. Resources Management Corporation (BRMC) is a recipient of a plaque of recognition for attaining the highest score of 94.47% in the Tenement, Safety and Health, Environment and Social Development (TSH-ES) Monitoring. Photo shows Benguet Corporation's Pamela Gendrano, Asst. Vice President for Environmental Compliance (fourth from left) and BRMC's Engr. Glenn Duka, Vice President-Resident Manager (third from left) together with BRMC's Safety, Health and Environment Team.

DENR CITES BRMC

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Mines and Geosciences Bureau Regional Office No. III (MGB-R3) awarded to Benguet Corporation's wholly-owned subsidiary, Benguetcorp Resources Management Corporation or "BRMC" (formerly Benguetcorp Nickel Mines, Inc.) a plaque of recognition for attaining the highest score of 94.47% in the Tenement, Safety and Health, Environment, and Social Development (TSHES) Monitoring, and a certificate of recognition for having the best recorded improvement on its operations CY 2020 vs CY 2019, both under the Metallic Category.

/Page 15

ang problema sa ilegal na droga at nakapagpatupad sana ito ng mga programa at istratehiya upang mas palakasin pa ang ICAD, kung nakipag-pulong lang ito sa apat na clusters ng ICAD.

Tuluyang napikon si Pang. Duterte kay Robredo at sinibak ito sa ICAD nang imbitahan ni Robredo na magpunta sa Pilipinas si UN prosecutor Phelim Kine.

Ayon naman kay Kine,

'packed and ready to go' na siya sa Pilipinas kung saan ang una niyang gagawin ay "arestuhin" si Pang. Duterte, dahil sa umano'y "libo-libong biktima" ng drug war.

Noong Oktubre 2019, bago itinalaga ni Pang. Duterte si Robredo sa ICAD, nagsalita si Robredo sa United Nations (UN) kung saan sinabing nitong aabot sa "27,000" ang mga namatay sa drug war.

DENR

TOP PAGE

The DENR cited BRMC during the Stakeholders' Summit held on April 8, 2022 at the Royce Hotel, Clark Freeport, Pampanga.

BRMC was also commended by MGB-R3 for its efforts in keeping its permitted area in Sta. Cruz, Zambales safe and conducive for work through a cer-

tificate of recognition for attaining two million Man Hours Worked Without Any Lost Time Accident Up until the End of CY 2021.

These recognitions and awards underscore the long-term commitment of Benguet Corporation to safe and environmentally friendly mining operations within and outside the host communities in Sta. Cruz, Zambales where it operates.



Sections of Pasig and Tullahan rivers now wider, deeper—SMC

SAN Miguel Corp. (SMC) on Tuesday said its initiative to clean up and rehabilitate the Tullahan and Pasig rivers and help mitigate flooding throughout Metro Manila has gained ground.

San Miguel President and CEO Ramon S. Ang said that after 22 months of cleaning up major segments of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system, and nine months of activities at key sections of the Pasig River, the company's most recent hydrographic surveys show significant improvements in both rivers' depths and carrying capacity.

Ang said the Tullahan River's depths at areas along the 10-kilometer stretch the company's cleanup teams have worked on, are now between three to five meters, compared to one to two meters previously.

This is due to the removal of silt and solid wastes from the river's depths, which restrict both the water's flow and capacity, contributing to increased flooding.

For the Pasig River, Ang said completed sections now measure five to six meters deep from the previous two to three meters.

"Essentially, what we've accomplished is to remove the silt and wastes that have made these rivers shallow and increase their ability to receive water from upstream channels, particularly during heavy rain or typhoon season, which is when



SAN Miguel uses advanced and specialized equipment that include a weed harvester to remove floating garbage and watery hyacinths. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

severe flooding in many areas in Metro Manila occur."

Ang said that for the company's Pasig River rehabilitation initiative, aside from continuing operations in Manila along the vicinities of Pandacan and Paco, activities are also now focused at the shallow Marikina River junction in Pasig City, the area where the Marikina and Pasig Rivers meet. Pasig river waters flowing into this area come from the Laguna Lake, via the Napindan floodgate.

"The Marikina River junction area is particularly critical as it acts like a bottleneck, restricting the flow of water flowing from the Marikina river. This causes the massive flooding we always see in upstream areas," he said.

"Once we deepen these areas, water will flow more freely and there will be less cases of overflow in areas that typically experience them."

To date, the combined total of silt

and solid wastes removed from the Tullahan and Pasig Rivers stands at 1,221,206 metric tons (MT). Out of this total, 876,296 metric tons come from the Tullahan River, where Ang said teams on the ground estimate to hit the one million mark by June this year.

San Miguel has allotted a P1-billion budget for the program that was launched in 2020.

For the P2-billion Pasig rehabilitation effort, the company is currently extracting at least 3,000 MT per day to meet its new 75,000-MT per month goal. There are now two groups in operation in Manila and Pasig City. In March alone, these two groups removed 78,200 MT.

SMC is upping its daily extraction target to at least 5,000 MT per day in June as more equipment arrive. This is to meet its 125,000-MT per month goal and a total of three million metric tons in two years. *VG Cabuag*



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



AG
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

04-13-22

III

PAGE

DATE

Puyat: Boracay remains coliform-free

The tourism chief said that travel restrictions due to Covid-19 have also given Boracay a breather from tourism-related activities after its waters were described pre-cleanup as 'filthy' and a 'cesspool'

BY RAFFY AYENG
@tribunephil_raf

Water condition around island paradise Boracay in Aklan remains clean and free from coliform bacteria since the 2018 environmental cleanup in the famed tourist destination.

Secretary Tourism Bernadette Romulo-Puyat told *Daily Tribune's* TV and digital show *Gising Na!* that the tested coliform levels at Boracay ranged from 15 to 20 most probable number (mpn) per 100 milliliters, lower than the 100 mpn/100ml considered as normal.

Secretary Puyat said that President Rodrigo Duterte, since the temporary closure of Boracay four years ago, has pushed the tourism, local government and environmental departments to ensure ecological laws are followed at tourist attractions.

"When he ordered the closure of Boracay in 2018, the coliform level was at close to one million [mpn], very far from the normal 100. So he decided to close it for six months. He only decided to reopen it when the coliform levels went down to 15," she explained.

To attain the best water quality at Boracay, Puyat said the government ordered all the restaurants and hotels operating along the beach to have sewage treatment systems installed instead of directing their raw sewage straight to the sea.

"So now, the water coliform level remains at 15-20. We owe it also to the Boracay Interagency Task Force which always ensures that the water is free from waste. And this is now being implemented in all other major tourist destinations in the country," the Tourism chief said.

She said that travel restrictions due to Covid-19 have also given Boracay a breather from tourism-related activities after its waters were described pre-cleanup as "filthy" and a "cesspool."

The President has been vocal in support of sustainable tourism that is untainted by corruption.

"Of course, it is important to promote sustainably or create a culture of sustainable tourism as the most imperative mandate for the DoT (Department of Tourism). It's big not only in the Philippines but all over the world. Secondly, he always reminds us, cabinet members, to alienate ourselves from corruption," she said.



'PAGNINILAY PARA SA HALALAN 2022' – Pro-environment beauty titlists (left to right) Miss Philippines Earth Naelah Alshorbaji, Miss Fire Philippines Veronica Meneses, Miss Eco Tourism Sofia Lopez Galve, and Miss Air Philippines Ameera Almamari join a gathering on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, in front of the Commission on Elections (Comelec), which called on the electorate to carefully discern and select pro-people and pro-environment candidates in the May 9 polls. Representatives of Caritas Philippines, Eco Waste Coalition, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV-Archdiocese of Manila) and Samahan ng mga Mangangalakal ng Scrap sa Capulong joined them. (Manny Llanes)



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Editorial

To curb inflation, accelerate climate change response

INFLATION is one of the hottest of hot-button political issues, and for good reason, as it affects everyone in a direct way. We have all watched as prices for most of the things we buy on a daily basis have crept upward over the past few weeks, and while some causes of this are obvious and acknowledged by economic policymakers — namely fuel prices affected by global factors — one other significant driver of inflation has seemed to escape notice.

According to recent research, the impacts of climate change have a profound effect on food prices here in the Philippines, almost as large as the impact of fuel prices, if not more so. Thus, in order to control inflation, the government must accelerate its climate mitigation, adaptation and energy transition efforts on the agricultural and agribusiness sector.

The general situation of the climate in this part of the world is that average annual temperatures are now about 3 degrees Celsius higher than they were during the 1950-1980 period, and the temperature range — the difference between the average annual high and average annual low temperatures — has widened by about 2 C. Over the past several decades, average annual rainfall has gradually declined, but episodes of extreme rainfall or higher-than-average rainfall months have become more frequent. In other words, the climate is steadily becoming drier, but more volatile.

One of the recent analyses by Oxford Economics estimates that the increasing climate volatility has raised food producer prices in Southeast Asia by 6 percent over the past decade. On top of that, short-term price spikes follow nearly every calamity, and to all of this is added inflation from other factors, such as fuel prices.

Addressing the problem requires a multi-pronged approach, some of which is described in the various studies and some which can be inferred from their conclusions. The Oxford Economics analysis, for example, raises the issue of agricultural support from the government. Here in the Philippines, that is rather high, amounting to about 2.5 percent of GDP (gross domestic product), which is considered a good thing, but it is not efficiently used — if it were, nagging farm sector poverty and volatile food prices would not be economic norms for the country.

One recommendation along these lines is to improve the amount and efficient payout of crop insurance. Doing so would allow farmers to replace lost production more quickly and reduce inflation due to supply deficiencies caused by climate-related crop losses. The same study also recommends that the Philippines (along with other vulnerable countries in the region, particularly Indonesia) increase the share of government spending for social relief targeting the lowest economic bracket of the population, which is proportionally affected the most by food inflation. The Philippines currently spends about 0.5 percent less of its GDP on these efforts than comparable middle-income countries.

More direct action than those described above should focus on energy supply and demand for the agricultural sector because energy costs result in pass-through costs to consumers and consequently higher inflation, and of course, energy has a significant impact on the environment as well. On the demand side, energy demand can be reduced by improving farm productivity, reducing or eliminating the reliance on chemical fertilizers and improving farm-to-market connectivity to reduce transportation costs. On the supply side, transitioning from conventional sources of electricity to micro-grids and renewable sources — such as solar or biomass and other forms of waste-to-energy — will provide more reliable and lower-cost energy and ease inflation pressure. Scaled-up systems can provide some or all of the energy demand for agricultural and food processing operations as well.

Other adaptation measures, albeit ones that would be considered more drastic, would involve adjusting agricultural output to the environment. This means opening up new areas for farming and diversifying the Filipino diet so that rice, an extremely climate-vulnerable staple, does not make up the biggest part of it.

All of these various actions will come at a cost, naturally, and might even result in short-term price spikes as the energy transition and other measures are being implemented. The results over the longer term, however, will more than make up for it, and even the short-term impact can be significantly minimized through efficient and properly targeted social support.

13 APRIL 2022, WEDNESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



New Covid-19 cases in PH hit plateau: DOH

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor **April 12, 2022, 2:52 pm**



(File photo)

MANILA – The number of new Covid-19 cases in the country is exhibiting a plateau, a health official said Tuesday.

In an online media forum, Department of Health (DOH) Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said there were 1,903 new infections recorded for the week of April 5 to 11.

"Na tinataya na 271 cases per day, mas mababa po ito ng 26 percent kung ikukumpara noong nakaraang linggo (Which averages 271 cases per day, lower than last week's tally by 26 percent)," she added.

The country's positivity rate, or the percentage of people testing positive during a certain period, has gone down to 1.6 percent from last week's 1.8 percent.

As the number of new infections plateau, the health system capacity nationwide remains at low risk.

The total Covid-19 Bed utilization rate is 16.6 percent while the intensive care unit bed utilization rate is at 18.4 percent.

More than half of the admitted cases in hospitals are classified mild and moderate while only 11.8 percent of total Covid-19 admissions are severe and critical.

Vergeire urged the public to continue adhering to the minimum public health standards and get vaccinated and boosted against Covid-19 to keep the number of infections on a downtrend.

Those who are travelling during the Holy Week are reminded to bring essential items such as a face mask, vaccination card, hand sanitizer, water, emergency medicines, umbrella, and handkerchief to protect themselves from falling ill and contracting the coronavirus. **(PNA)**



66.6M Filipinos fully vaxxed vs. Covid-19; 12.5M with booster

By Lade Jean Kabagani April 12, 2022, 4:49 pm



"ResBakuna Kids and Tourists" in Baguio City; April 9, 2022 (Photo courtesy of NTF Against Covid-19)

MANILA – The Philippines has so far fully inoculated 66,652,616 against Covid-19, with 12,477,480 of them already with booster or additional shots.

Based on the latest data from the National Task Force (NTF) Against Covid-19, a total of 5,165,927 are waiting for their second doses while among the pediatric vaccinees, 9,901,584 aged 12 to 17 and 2,478,590 aged 5 to 11 have at least one dose.

In his report to President Rodrigo Duterte late Monday night, NTF chief Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said vaccination slowed down in the past months, attributed mostly to the election period that split the attention of local government units (LGUs) and religious events.

"Nakikita po natin na itong mga dahilan pong ito, 'yung Ramadan, 'yung Holy Week, and also 'yung election rallies ay talagang magpapababa sa ating pagbabakuna dahil ang atensiyon po ng mga LGU ay nandoon na po sa election at saka mga tinatawag nating mga holy celebration po natin (We see that the causes are the Ramadan and Holy Week and also the election rallies that are really slowing down the vaccination because the attention of LGUs is in the elections and the so-called holy celebrations)," said Galvez.

He said there's a "relatively high vaccination coverage" among the 18 to 59 age group, with almost 80 percent of the fully vaccinated aged 60 years old and above.

"Mr. President, ito po ang dahilan kung bakit napakaganda po ng ating sitwasyon ngayong mga araw na ang lahat ng mga lugar na nasa minimal risk na po tayo lahat (Mr. President, this is the reason why we have a good situation in recent days and that all the areas are at minimal risks)," he added.

Galvez said the government is now ramping up efforts to provide booster shots to at least 40 million, accelerate the provision of second doses to 11.5 million in the pediatric age groups, and fully vaccinate the remaining 20 percent of 1.8 million senior citizens.

He reiterated there's enough supply of vaccines for all sectors. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1172076>



Duterte warns against COVID-19 resurgence

[Alexis Romero](#) - The Philippine Star April 13, 2022 | 12:00am



Shoppers fail to observe social distancing at a public market in Taytay, Rizal.

Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — President Duterte has warned the public of a possible resurgence in COVID-19 infections driven by religious and political gatherings, noting that the Philippines is “not yet out of the woods” even if it remains at minimal risk.

Duterte said there is a “distinct possibility” that the country would deal with another surge in COVID-19 cases and that it remains unclear if the new variants are more “powerful” or weaker than the previous ones.

He admitted that since the Philippines is not a rich country, it “cannot afford to meet another wave of pandemic.”

“We have so many crowds lately, religious, political, and you can see that people are very close to each other. And the medical experts, or the doctors even, are really worried about the closeness of human beings with each other – I mean physical – because it might cause another surge,” the President said in a pre-recorded public address aired Monday night.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the possibility of another uptick in cases is not far-fetched.

“Because of all of the activities that are happening, the campaign sorties, we have the Holy Week, we continue to remind our countrymen that the possibility of having another increase or rise in the number of cases is not far-fetched,” Vergeire said.

“It may happen if we continue to have such activities and there is no compliance with our safety protocols, and in other areas, the vaccination rates are really low,” she added.

Duterte said there is no assurance that vaccinated persons would be “totally free” from the virus but everyone should get inoculated “or else we will not be able to solve the problem.” He said a “good number” of Filipinos remain unvaccinated.

“So ‘yan ang inaano ko. Iyan ang habulin natin because kung pagka ganito na mag-surge na naman tayo (That’s what I am worried about. We have to reach them because if we are like this, we would have another surge),” the President said.

COVID-19 policy chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. admitted that the observance of Holy Week and Ramadan as well as election rallies would hamper vaccination efforts since the attention of local governments would be on political and religious activities.



Interior Secretary Eduardo Año noted that under existing government guidelines, only vaccinated persons can join indoor religious services, regardless of the alert status of an area.

Duterte cited the need for the public to continue observing health and safety measures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

“We don’t go into a nervous state but we just have to be very careful and I’d like you to maintain the protocols that have been proven to help us a lot in combating the virus,” he said.

No kissing of images

Vergeire reminded the public to avoid kissing religious images to prevent the transmission of the virus. She also discouraged devotees from joining crucifixion rituals to avoid tetanus and infections.

She said the Philippines remains at minimal risk for COVID-19 with low health care utilization rates.

A total of 1,903 new infections were reported from April 5 to 11, lower than the 2,565 recorded the previous week. Only 18.4 percent of intensive care unit (ICU) beds and 16.4 percent of non-ICU beds are in use.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III previously said the government was ready for another surge in COVID-19 cases.

The Department of Health (DOH) attributed the decline in COVID-19 cases to high vaccination rate and surge in infections early this year.

At a press briefing yesterday, Vergeire said infections are “currently on a plateau.”

There is surge in cases in some neighboring countries such as Vietnam, China and South Korea.

Data showed the average daily case of COVID-19 per day this week is 26 percent, lower than the previous week’s.

Vergeire noted “one assumption” why the country is not experiencing spikes in cases is the “immunity brought about by the January-March infections” as well as widespread vaccination.

“Those who got vaccinated and infected, they still have the immunity,” she added.

But she cautioned that “it cannot be guaranteed when that immunity will last.”

“We will reach a point where the immunity will wane. Nothing is certain. We don’t know when this immunity will last and when cases will increase again,” she said.

Vergeire added it is important for everyone to be always ready and to continuously comply with minimum public health standards against COVID-19.

In his public address, Duterte also said it was “reckless” of some countries to lift the face mask mandate.

Duterte said he would retain the face mask requirement since the Philippines “can hardly afford to meet another wave of pandemic.”

“I’ll just state my case – there is no way that masks will not be required. It will be a part of the protocol for a long time until the last day of my office. That’s my order and you have to follow that,” Duterte, who will step down from the presidency on June 30, said.



Vergeire said Hong Kong's hospital health care system was overwhelmed because many of its elderly population are not vaccinated.

The United Kingdom, meanwhile, eased some restrictions and removed the face mask mandate, resulting in an increase in cases, she added.

"That's why experts are saying we are blessed because we were able to overcome already and we are done with the challenge posed by BA.2," Vergeire said.

"Perhaps because they are already complacent, because it was a reckless move to not – to stop urging people to wear masks," Duterte said, reacting to Vergeire's remarks.

"Remember that COVID is here to stay. It becomes irrelevant, then we won't be afraid of it. Everybody is vaccinated and we do not have to worry about contamination again because each body is fighting the virus. But they said a good number of Filipinos remain unvaccinated," he said.

"So let me just appeal to everybody: get vaccinated or else we will not be able to solve the problem."

Meanwhile, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said only three areas, all of them in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), are under granular lockdown as of April 9.

DILG Secretary Eduardo Año said for the first time, no area in Metro Manila is under localized lockdown.

"The three (areas under granular lockdown) can be found in the Cordillera Administrative Region and are situated in three towns and three barangays and only three households and six individuals are affected," Año said during a meeting with President Duterte aired on Monday.

"If the numbers continue to go down, that means our countrymen will be safe. But we still need to get vaccinated, especially for regions with low vaccination rates," he added. – Sheila Crisostomo



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



National COVID-19 Case Bulletin

April 11, 2022

Official DOHgov
@DOHgovph

Healthcare Utilization

(as of April 10, 2022)

16.4%
Non-ICU Bed Utilization
4,045 out of 24,689 non-ICU beds used

18.4%
ICU Bed Utilization
542 out of 2,951 ICU beds used

707
Severe and Critical Admissions
12.6% of total COVID-19 admissions

Vaccination Accomplishment

(as of April 10, 2022)

74.05%
% Coverage of Target Population*

76.12%
% Coverage of Target A2 Population**

Fully Vaccinated Individuals
66,652,616
+526,654 vaccinated on Apr 4 to Apr 10

Individuals with Booster/Additional Dose
12,477,480
+322,913 vaccinated on Apr 4 to Apr 10

(added on Apr 4 to Apr 10)



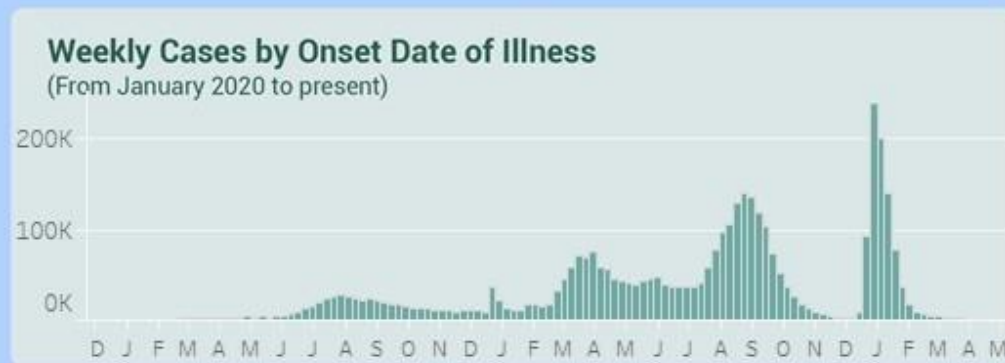
COVID-19 Cases

(as of April 10, 2022)

+1,906
New Cases
Daily Average Cases = 272
(29% lower than cases on Mar 28 to Apr 3)

New Severe and Critical Cases
+0
(0.00% of new cases)

Deaths Verified During The Past Week
+428



*Target population refers to 80% of the total population (90,005,357 individuals)
**Target A2 population refers to 85% of the total Senior Citizen population (8,721,357 individuals)

DOH HOSPITAL HOTLINES
For health concerns and emergencies, you may access here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines

DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

- 1555
- 0915-777-7777
- 02-886-505-00
- 0919-977-3333

bit.ly/OHCCHotline

DOH TELEMEDICINE CONTACT DETAILS

bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine

<p>SeeYouDoc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ seeyoudoc.com 📞 SeeYouDoc 	<p>Telimed and Medgate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ medgate.ph/shop/telimedplan/purchase 	<p>HealthNow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📞 healthnow.ph/ ✉ help@healthnow.ph 📱 HealthNow
<p>KonsultaMD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ konsulta.md 📞 KonsultaMD 	<p>MedCheck</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ medcheck.com.ph/find-a-doctor/SeeYouDoc 	
<p>CloudPx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ cloudpx.ph/ 	<p>TelAventusMD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ TelAventusMD@aventusmedical.com.ph 📞 TelAventusMD 	



healthypilipinas.ph



Take care of your mental health!
DOWNLOAD THE APP TODAY

Available on Google Play, App Store, and AppGallery



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19? I-chat na sa KIRA!
VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH
KONTRACOVDPH: kontracovid.ph

13 APRIL 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS

ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IycLMn5vx4Y>

#ManilaBayUpdate #Dolomite #BattleForManilaBay

MAS LALO KANG MAMAMANGHA! GOLDEN SAND PLUS GOLDEN SUNSET ONLY IN MANILA BAY!

7,821 views • Apr 12, 2022

👍 421 🗨 DISLIKE ➦ SHARE ✂ CLIP ≡+ SAVE ...



engr. berto

194K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#ManilaBayUpdate #Dolomite Beach
#BattleForManilaBay

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDprT-gHlh4>

MANILA

DOLOMITE SAND HABA AT LAWAK MANILA BAY TODAY DRONE SHOT

5,500 views • Apr 12, 2022

197 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



KUYARONS TV
100K subscribers

SUBSCRIBE

manila bay today
#manilabay
#dolomitebeach

SHOW MORE







Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=royVUo1aFDM>

MANILA BAYWALK DOLOMITE BEACH

MANILA BAY MAY PALATANDAAN NA! HALOS WALA KA NG MAKITA BAKAS NG NAKARAAN! Miz July

2,483 views • Apr 12, 2022

 160  DISLIKE  SHARE  CLIP  SAVE ...



Miz July

69.8K subscribers

SUBSCRIBE

Manila Bay Update, April 11, 2022

maraming salamat po, keep safe everyone

#SaveManilaBay

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atkFDx_89CA

#manilabay #4k

MANILA BAY UPDATE APRIL 12, 2022

5,415 views • Apr 12, 2022

👍 124 🗨 DISLIKE ➦ SHARE 💰 THANKS ⌵+ SAVE ...



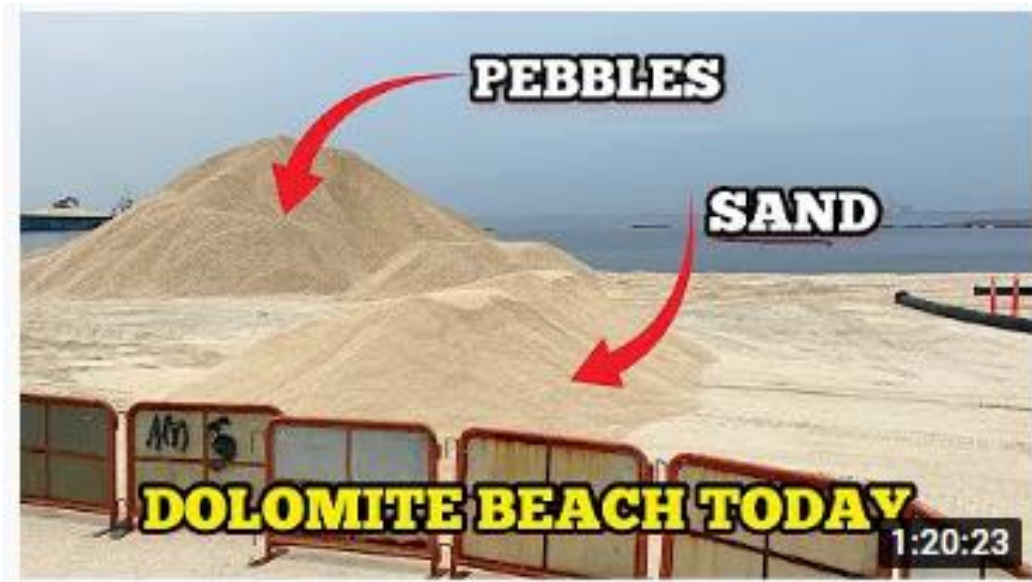
BTV Pinas
73.7K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay
#4k

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qxLs33a_3Y

DOLOMITE SAND & PEBBLES SA PHASE-1!

4,608 views • Streamed live 20 hours ago

340 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



enr. berto
194K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ic56kddkWMI>

MANILA BAY UPDATE APRIL 12.2022 papatungan Ng panibagong dolomite sand totoo ba ito.bagong tambak

2,056 views • Apr 12, 2022

👍 76 🗨 DISLIKE ➦ SHARE ✂ CLIP ≡+ SAVE ...



BOSS MARLON OCAMPO VLOG
4.92K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

SHOW MORE