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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR shifts to digital issuance of permits for wildlife trade

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA DECEMBER 9, 2021

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has started issuing permits for the trading of flora and fauna electronically in compliance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The automated permit issuance through eCITESPH.com is expected to enhance global trade transparency and boost the campaign against global illegal wildlife trafficking. Through the new system, information can be accessed anywhere, thereby facilitating trade faster.

The electronic permitting system will be integrated into the Philippines's national single window system. As such, international trade of threatened animals and plants will easily be monitored and controlled, an official of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) said in a news statement.

More than 38,700 species, including 5,900 species of animals and 32,800 species of plants, are protected under the CITES, an international treaty signed by Philippines. The treaty entered into force in 1975. Each species is under any of three appendices depending on the degree of protection they need.

Each year, the BMB issues more than 1,500 permits on a tedious manual basis. The new automated permit issuance system eases the burden of manual work, and is also consistent with Republic Act 11032 of 2018 or "Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery."

"The system will improve control of international trade in endangered species. Automation of CITES processes will help enforce regulations, increase transparency, and facilitate processing and electronic data exchange with customs and other agencies," according to Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) Assistant Director Amelita Ortiz.

"Electronic information exchange will reduce opportunities for corruption and the use of fraudulent documents in the trading of endangered species," she said.

The DENR has been tapping information technology to enhance capacity building to produce experts in wildlife trade.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said the addition of two online learning platforms "enables the DENR to uphold its mandate of educating the people about the country's wildlife resources despite the prevailing Covid-19 [coronavirus disease] pandemic."

BMB has introduced the eTraining Course on Basic Wildlife Law Enforcement and the Wildlife Philippines Podcast.

This project is under the DENR-Asian Development Bank/Global Environment Facility Project on Combating Environmental Organized Crime in the Philippines.

The project also involves aid from the United States Department of the Interior International Technical Assistance Program-Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Project 3. Modules under this e-learning project include Wildlife Law Enforcement in the Philippines; Species Commonly Involved in Wildlife Crimes; Substantive Laws on Wildlife Resources Protection; Other Crimes against Wildlife; Roles and Responsibilities of Government Agencies in Wildlife Law Enforcement; and Procedural Laws on Wildlife Resources Protection.

The BWLE training course can be accessed at [https:// elearn.adb.org](https://elearn.adb.org).

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/12/09/denr-shifts-to-digital-issuance-of-permits-for-wildlife-trade/>



The vulnerable bats of Biak-na-Bato

AS ECOSYSTEM INDICATORS, BATS' PRESENCE MEANS THE AREA IS HEALTHY.

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA DECEMBER 12, 2021



The Madlum River and Bahay Paniki Cave are both potential tourist magnets in the Biak-na-Bato National Park.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Central Luzon (DENR-CL) announced in October the arrest of four alleged wildlife poachers, who were caught with 6,200 wrinkle-lipped bats (*Chaerephon plicatus*) they took from Bahay Paniki Cave inside the Biak-na-Bato National Park (BNBNP) in San Miguel, Bulacan, one of the oldest protected areas (PAs) in the country.

Most of the confiscated bats were already dead, although the around live 100 bats were immediately released back into the wild after the confiscation.



DENR personnel count the dead bats that were recently seized by authorities from illegal wildlife hunters in San Miguel, Bulacan.

Vulnerable species

The wrinkle-lipped bat is classified as a vulnerable species under DENR Administrative Order 2019-09, or the Updated List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories.

Bats are considered keystone species because of the important ecosystem services they provide, including seed dispersal for fruit bats and pest control for insect-feeding bats.

Bats are ecosystem indicators. Their presence in an area means the ecosystem is healthy as they are part of the food chain, and are prey to wild animals, whether they are tree-dwelling or cave-dwelling bats.

The existence of a healthy population of fruit bats ensures the expansion of natural forest, while the presence of insect bats helps protect the human population from threats of pests like dengue-carrying mosquitoes.



Bats' populations, however, are threatened by habitat loss and hunting for their meat.

In the Philippines, they are being consumed as "exotic" food or as bar chow in rural areas, such as in Biak-na-Bato.

Ecological importance

Like its bats, the BNBPN is a park of great importance.

According to DENR-CL, the more than 2,000-hectare historic BNBPN was established by then-President Manuel Quezon through Proclamation 223 in November 1937.

In the same year, it became a Game Refuge and Bird Sanctuary as mandated by Proclamation 3915.

A DENR study states that the park is home to 177 animal species, including the endemic kalaw, or Philippine hornbill, the spotted wild boar, Philippine deer, giant cloud rat, Philippine macaque, monitor lizards and swiftlets.

Unique plants, insects and caves

Biak-na-Bato National Park is one of the remaining areas in the country, representing one of the three types of habitat originally occupying only a small portion, of karst limestone forest.

Trees and plants in the area are highly restricted. They are unique species that provide habitat for a set of butterflies and insects.

As said in the DENR study, the forest at Biak-na-Bato provides shelter to endangered wildlife, such as Philippine deer and wild pigs, assorted birds, and of course, the all-important bats.

The BNBPN is studded with numerous cave formations that are home to tens of thousands of bats.

Some of its identified caves are: the Aguinaldo, Cuarto-cuarto, Bahay Paniki, Palanguyan, Tanapan, Sinuluan, Santaol, Suklib kabayo, Victoria, Kwebang Dapo, Punta Soro-soro and the Kwebang mata.

Of these, only a few caves have been classified and assessed, while the rest have yet to be explored by experts for scientific studies.

Ecotourism potential

The management of the BNBPN sees these caves as tourist attractions.

The Bahay Paniki, for one, is where thousands of bats can be seen continuously flying in a circle formation at the upper level of the cave.

Meanwhile, the Cuarto-cuarto is known for its stalagmites and stalactites that form a compartment or small rooms.

On the other hand, the Madlum Cave, Aguinaldo Cave and the other caves can offer visitors an experience and feel of historical events led by Emilio Aguinaldo, the first President of the Philippine republic.

Besides the caves, the streams and the Balaong River's crystal clear water is very ideal for swimming and fishing.

The BNBPN is suited for mountain hiking, picnicking and even for scientific study and research.

A well-known ecotourism site in Bulacan, it has facilities that can accommodate visitors who used to frequent the park before it was closed to the public due to the pandemic.



It has a pavilion, which is popular for wedding and pre-nuptial photo and video sessions.

National shrine

Biak-na-Bato is a national shrine, having played a significant role in the country's history.

It is the place where Aguinaldo and other revolutionaries established headquarters from June 1897 to November 1897 in their fight against the Spaniards.

The "Constitution Provincial de la Republic de Filipinas" was adopted and signed in the cave by the revolutionary leaders, leading to the establishment of the first constitutional republic in the Philippines, known as the Biak-na-Bato Republic.

The place was also the last stand before a truce agreement between Aguinaldo's revolutionary committee and the Spanish colonial government was signed, marking the end of active hostilities, and the exile to Hong Kong of Aguinaldo and the other revolutionary leaders.

Mineral reservation

While the BNBPN is an area set aside for conservation, Proclamation 401, signed by then-President Corazon C. Aquino in April 11, 1989, excluded certain areas from the operation of Proclamation 223. It included a 952-hectare portion that was declared as a mineral reservation.

Several portions of the park were also set aside from the operation of the BNBPN because of their historical significance.

It included two lots (Lot A-1 and Lot A-2), which were both designated as a national park, a 938-hectare portion (Lot C) and 480-hectare (Lot D), which have been declared as watershed reservations.

Ongoing programs

Emelita Lingat, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer of Bulacan who is also the concurrent Protected Area Superintendent of the BNBPN, said the park is currently a subject of various biodiversity programs, including the ongoing assessment and monitoring.

"We also have ongoing programs for protected area suitability assessment as required under the Nipas [National Integrated Protected Areas System], and biodiversity monitoring system to guide the PAMB [Protected Area Management Board] and LGU [local government unit]," Lingat told the BusinessMirror via Zoom on December 7.

At the same time, she said they are also implementing the Landscape and Wildlife Indicator Forest and Biodiversity Protection System in the area, which is important in protecting the BNBPN's threatened biodiversity.

Wildlife, treasure hunting

Speaking mostly in Filipino, Lingat said the BNBPN is threatened by destructive human activities, such as wildlife hunting—particularly bats—and treasure hunting.

"Especially during these time of the pandemic, wherein the people lost their livelihood, the community resorts to wildlife hunting [and] treasure hunting," she lamented.

According to Lingat, the BNBPN's protection remains wanting, with only 18 personnel working to protect the more than 2,000-hectare PA.

Don Guevarra, DENR Regional Public Affairs Office 3 chief, said as part of the DENR's continuing information, education and communication campaign, environment and education lectures targeted barangays in Biak-Na-Bato to highlight wildlife protection.



Information campaign

“We conducted a lecture after the arrest of the four [wildlife poacher] suspects. We immediately intensified our campaign and went to barangays, talked to officials and their health workers and *tanod* [village guards], and discussed the importance of protecting our wildlife,” Guevarra said.

He said while some people are well aware of the importance of protecting the BNNBP’s wildlife, some are still unaware that hunting is prohibited by law, or are simply taking their chances.

Guevarra said they believe that bat hunters were engaged in wildlife trading as manifested in the huge volume of bats confiscated by authorities recently.

“After our awareness campaign, we will continue with behavioral-change campaign. We expect communities around the BNNBP to be our partners in protecting our biodiversity,” he said.

Lingat and Guevarra said the DENR is partnering with communities to become their partners in various environmental programs like the National Greening Program and ecotourism in order to help fight wildlife hunting, such as of the all-important bats in Biak-na-Bato.

Image courtesy of DENR PAO 3 Chief Don Guevarra ’s photo



DENR reopens 55 PAs to visitors, local tourists

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA DECEMBER 8, 2021

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB) has revealed that 55 of the 93 Protected Areas (PAs) that promote ecotourism are now open to local visitors as the government eases Covid-19 pandemic curbs.

Records further showed that as of November 25, 38 of the PAs remain closed due to the current quarantine restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases and concerned local government units (LGUs).

Two of the PAs in the National Capital Region are now open. These are the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center and the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park (formerly Las Piñas Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area).

In Region 1, the Paoay Lake National Park and Hundred Island National Park are now open. In Region 2, Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, Quirino Protected Landscape and Palau Island Protected Landscape and Seascape are now open to local visitors. In Region 3, only the Masinloc Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape is open to local visitors.

In the Calabarzon or Region 4A, open to visitors are the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape, Quezon Protected Landscape, Maulawin Spring Protected Landscape, Pamitinan Protected Landscape and Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.

In the Mimaropa or Region 4B, El Nido Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area is open for local visitors or as required by EOC-El Nido with antigen and vaccination card as requirements. The Naujan Lake National Park, meanwhile, is open to local tourists. The world-famous Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park allows tourism only from May to June.

In Region 5, Abasig-Matogdon-Mananap Natural Biotic Area, Bongsanglay Natural Park, Libmanan Caves National Park, and Mt. Isarog Natural Park are now open to local visitors.

In Region 6, Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park, Northwest Panay Peninsula Natural Park and Sagay Marine Reserve are open to visitors, while the Taklong Island National Marine Reserve is open only to fully vaccinated individuals.

In Region 7, open to the public are Central Cebu Protected Landscape, Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Camotes Island Protected Landscape and Seascape, Guadalupe Mabugnao Mainit Hot Spring National Park, Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape, Chocolate Hills Natural Monument, Cabilao-Sandingan Islands Mangrove Swamp Forest Reserve/Wilderness Area, Candijay-Anda-Mabini Mangrove Swamp Forest Reserve, Bantayan Island Wilderness Area, Apo Island Protected Landscape and Seascape and Balinsasayao Twin Lakes Natural Park.

In Region 8, Cuatro Islas Protected Landscape and Seascape is open for residents of Inopacan, Leyte, while Lake Danao Natural Park, Mahagnao Volcano Natural Park, Samar Island Natural Park, Guiuan Marine Resource Protected Landscape and Seascape are all open to local visitors.

In Region 9, the Jose Rizal Memorial Protected Landscape and Mt. Timolan Protected Landscape are open to local visitors.

In Region 10, open to local visitors are the Mt. Kalatungan Range Natural Park, Mt. Malindang Natural Park, Initao-Libertad Protected Landscape and Seascape.



In Region 11, partially opened are the Mt. Apo Natural Park, Pujada Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape. Open to local and foreign visitors, meanwhile, are the Mabini Protected Landscape and Seascape, Aliwagwag Protected Landscape, and Baganga Mangrove Swamp Forest Reserve.

In Region 12, some of the local beach resorts in Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape are now open, while the Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape, Allah Valley Watershed Forest Reserve and Libungan River Watershed Forest Reserve are now accepting visitors.

Finally, in the Caraga Region, both the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary and Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascape are now open to tourists.



A Philippine Pangolin Was Found in Quezon City

It was on the premises of a government office.

By [MARIO ALVARO LIMOS](#) | A day ago



IMAGE PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A male Philippine pangolin (*Manis culionensis*) was found in late November 2021 in Quezon City. This is the second pangolin found in Metro Manila this year.

The pangolin, which was named **Vertis**, was found by Joward Calle within the premises of the Department of Labor and Employment Occupational Safety and Health Center (DOLE OSHC) that is adjacent to Ayala Malls Vertis North, according to the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD). It is unclear how the pangolin came to be at the site, but the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is already investigating the matter.

Vertis the Pangolin



PHOTO BY PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

“The species was immediately placed under the custody of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR BMB) Wildlife Rescue Center,” said PCSD.

Vertis the pangolin was repatriated to Palawan on December 4, where he was ascertained to be in perfect health condition. He was released back into the wild at a secret location. He has a length of 1.1 meters and weighs 4.3 kilograms.



Assessing the Health of *Vertis the Pangolin*



PHOTO BY PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

Pangolins are usually trafficked to Manila to be eaten

When Philippine pangolins are found in Metro Manila, they are usually slaughtered to be eaten. They don't survive very long outside their habitat because of stress and the lack of a specific species of termite found in Palawan, which is a crucial part of their diet.

In the international black market, a kilogram of Philippine pangolin meat could cost up to P100,000. Vietnamese and Chinese eat pangolin meat for unproven medicinal benefits. A live and healthy pangolin like *Vertis* could fetch for as much as half a million pesos or more.

Philippine pangolins are listed as “Critically Endangered” in the IUCN Red List.

It is not the first time a Philippine pangolin was found in Metro Manila

On August 16, 2021, a [pangolin was found roaming inside Ayala Alabang Village](#) in Muntinlupa. Residents thought it was a strange lizard, until they alerted Anna Varona to help with the pangolin. Varona is an environmentalist who has had past experience with Philippine pangolins.

The pangolin was named Pandi after the pandemic. Pandi was safely repatriated to a secret pangolin sanctuary in Palawan.

“Pangolins can't be kept as pets because they die when they're not in their natural habitat,” Varona told *Esquire Philippines* back in August.

But that was not the first time a Philippine pangolin was found in the village. In 2019, another Philippine pangolin was also found within the Ayala Alabang Village. It was named Panggoy. Unfortunately, it died of stress and starvation before it could be flown back to Palawan.

Source: https://www.esquiremag.ph/politics/news/philippine-pangolin-in-quezon-city-a00293-20211210?utm_source=Facebook-Esquire&utm_medium=Ownshare&utm_campaign=20211210-fbnp-politics-philippine-pangolin-in-quezon-city-a00293-20211210-fbfirst&fbclid=IwAR3zGarbLxTPbNAM_1sif1bjVACiQib47GzV6NmVnN7h8MxJBSeQo8g1BIE



American wildlife scientist joins call to protect PH eagle nesting site in Davao

Published December 11, 2021, 2:48 PM

by [Keith Bacongco](#)

DAVAO CITY – A renowned American wildlife scientist has joined the call to protect the nesting site of the critically-endangered Philippine eagle in the hinterlands of Marilog district here.

Dr. James Grier, a scientist who pioneered the captive breeding of American Bald Eagles, wrote a letter addressed to Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) -11 chief Bagani Fidel Evasco urging him to cancel the cutting permit issued to a local businessman amid prior rejection from the city government.

“I am writing as a person with life-long, scientific interest in eagles, a member of the global, international community from the US, and an adviser to the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), the foundation’s precursors, and the DENR (and its precursors) nationally and locally since 1977,” read the letter, which the PEF executive director Dennis Salvador released.

Grier pointed out that “the area should be left in its natural state to the fullest extent possible, including leaving old and even fallen trees naturally in place.”

In January this year, the Watershed Management Council of the City Government of Davao has already rejected the application of a certain Ms. Ling Ling Wu Lee to cut trees inside his private property that falls within the conservation.

But in August, Evasco granted a Private Land Timber Permit to Lee, insisting that it was covered by the Presidential Decree 705.

The issuance of the permit has sparked an outcry among environmental groups in the city as they launched an online campaign to call for the cancellation of a timber permit issued to cut down century-old trees in Mounts Makabol-Alikoson Conservation Area (MMACA). The area is believed to be “an ancient nesting site” of the critically endangered Philippine eagle.

The petition calls on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Region XI to “cancel Private Land Timber Permit No. RXI-PLTP-001 2021 issued for the cutting of 121 old-growth trees within the MMACA.”

As of 3 pm of Dec. 10, the online petition posted at Change.org has already gathered at least 5,924 signatures.

In a public statement issued Thursday, Dec. 9, Evasco claimed Lee has voluntarily stopped the cutting of trees in the area since the photos of the cutting of the trees were posted on social media by purok leader Oliver Ancapoy in October.

However, it was not stated in the press statement if Evasco would sign the cancellation permit.

Furthermore, he claimed that the DENR Region 11 is not privy to the metes and bounds of the declared Conservation and Environmentally Critical Area in Barangay Salaysay based on the Davao City Watershed Code.

He claimed that at the time of the approval of the permit, the DENR-XI was “not aware of any telemetric data” regarding the nesting trees claimed by the PEF inside the contested property.

But Evasco admitted that his office, through its Conservation and Development Division (CDD), has been monitoring eight confirmed Philippine Eagle nest sites in the region, including barangay Salaysay particularly between sitios Indaohong and Taupan.



A Philippine Eagle pair needs about 4000-11000 hectares of forestland to thrive in the wild, depending on the number of prey items in the area, the PEF said.

Moreover, Grier added that he would recommend the area be considered a candidate for a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site.

“That would be beneficial not only for the eagles, habitat, other species, and watershed but also for the people and communities in the area economically. It could further highlight Davao on the world map in a very favorable manner,” he wrote.

Grier was instrumental in the captive breeding program in the country when he helped PEF hatch Pag-asa, the first captive-bred eagle, in 1992.

He added that he had been to Salsaysay in the past to help study the nesting eagles following reports by residents.

Grier's last visit to the country was in 2005 when he joined the PEF team to monitor a Philippine Eagle nesting site in Mt. Sinaka in Arakan, North Cotabato.



THROWBACK: 2019 Manila Bay rehabilitation

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 11 2021 08:00 AM



"Failon Ngayon" looks into the cleanup of Manila Bay in 2019 and explains how human settlement and urbanization helped to pollute waterways connected to the bay. The program also looks into government efforts to address the different problems related to this.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/video/news/12/11/21/throwback-2019-manila-bay-rehabilitation?fbclid=IwAR27kttJiYbla0ef-mKGhEKWxWcdubN_DkGXTinw8JPY7OGD5M3kvWxufOg



Negros greening initiative plants 10M trees in 6 years

By Mary Judaline Partlow [December 11, 2021, 12:44 pm](#)



PARTNERS. Members of the Philippine Army take part in a tree-planting activity of a Negros Island regreening initiative in this undated photo. The movement “10 Million in 10 Years for a Greener Negros” achieved its goal in its sixth year this year, four years ahead of schedule, and will not stop planting more to restore the lush forests of the island. *(Photo courtesy of 10M in 10 Facebook)*

DUMAGUETE CITY – A massive re-greening initiative in Negros Island has hit its mark this year, planting 10 million trees four years ahead of schedule.

The movement, dubbed “10 Million in 10 Years for a Greener Negros” (10M in 10), achieved its goal in just six years with a seedling survival rate of 79 percent to 85 percent and 307,552 units of carbon dioxide emissions sequestered.

The “10M in 10” was launched in 2015 by the geothermal power firm Energy Development Corp. (EDC) to restore the rich and lush forests of Negros Island.

It started with only 90 partners, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, provincial and local governments, the academe, media, and civil society organizations.

It now has 268 partners all over the island.

The movement was conceived to not just plant trees but embark on sustainable reforestation programs involving stakeholders to promote environmental protection and conservation and sustainable multi-sectoral development.

Despite the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, the reforestation partners continued with their initiatives, planting as many trees as they could on land and water.

“We have been a member of ‘10M in 10’ since 2015 and so far, we have planted over 500,000 mangrove trees in the mudflats of Tanjay City, covering 50 hectares,” Sidney Lee, project coordinator of “10M in 10” partner Allied Mangrove Planting Organizations, said during the sixth-year virtual celebration on Friday.

Lee presented a video clip of his group’s accomplishment, showing the vast expanse of mangrove areas that they covered over the past six years.

Another partner is Rene Vendiola, owner of Liptong Woodland in Valencia, Negros Oriental, a sanctuary to hundreds of rare and endangered plants and trees endemic to the area, as part of his commitment to maintaining the region’s biodiversity for future generations.



“If you count the population of Negros, we are more than a million. If each member of the family will plant five trees, then we will have five million trees. That’s already several hectares combined and that’s very helpful for the environment,” he said.

James Villaroman, EDC vice president and head of strategy and long-term planning, said they initially did not know how many partners would be needed to accomplish the “audacious goal” but they had faith in the Negrenses.

“The people of Negros Island enabled me to see their deep love for the environment and for this reason, I believed that our goal was achievable,” Villaroman said in his keynote message.

He challenged the “10M in 10” partners as they begin the next chapter of their green revolution.

“This is where your true passion for the movement’s mission will be put to the test as you all work hard to ensure that the over 10 million trees that you have planted in just six years will all grow and thrive. Or are you going to stop at 10 million trees? This is where the strong collaboration and environmental advocacy in action that Negrenses or Negrosanons are known for should stand out,” he said. **(PNA)**



ABS-CBN News

13h · 🌐



TINGNAN: Isang Olive ridley sea turtle ang bumalik sa dalampasigan ng Navitas, Panay, Capiz para mangitlog Martes.

Pinaniniwalaang isa ito sa mga baby pawikan na pinakawalan noong Marso. Ang pawikan ay nangitlog ng 127 itlog, na protektado na ng mga residente't awtoridad. (📷: CaPENRO/Elsa Cordova Abasiar) | via Rolan Escaniel

BASAHIIN ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/.../endangered-species-pawikan...>



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41 Comments 57 Shares



P25 million giant clams seized in Cebu

[Emmanuel Tupas](#) - The Philippine Star December 12, 2021 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Up to 1,686 kilos of fossilized giant clams with an estimated market value of P25.29 million were seized in Oslob, Cebu on Friday.

Jagger Vitorillo, 41, was arrested by agents of the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Barangay Poblacion at around 5 p.m. for possession of the clams locally known as taklobo.

CIDG director Maj. Gen. Albert Ignatius Ferro said Vitorillo transacted with a policeman who posed as a buyer of the threatened species worth P201,000.

Ferro said the suspect sells the clams for P15,000 per kilo.

Vitorillo is being held on charges of violation of Republic 8550 or the Fisheries Code.

Meanwhile, refined sugar valued at P16.7 million, which was misdeclared as floor mops and plastic trash bags, was seized by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) at the Port of Subic.

The BOC said the shipment was consigned to Multi-Subsonic Marketing Co.

Charges for violation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act are being readied against the persons behind the illegal shipment. – Robertzon Ramirez, Ric Sapnu



'Taklobo' worth P25 million seized in Oslob

(The Freeman) - December 12, 2021 - 12:00am



The clams, locally known as taklobo, were found in the possession of Jagger Vitorillo, 41, who was arrested by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Barangay Poblacion at around 5 p.m.

CEBU, Philippines — At least 1,686 kilos of fossilized giant clams with an estimated market value of P25.29 million were seized in Oslob, Cebu on Friday.

The clams, locally known as taklobo, were found in the possession of Jagger Vitorillo, 41, who was arrested by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Barangay Poblacion at around 5 p.m.

CIDG director Maj. Gen. Albert Ignatius Ferro said Vitorillo transacted with a policeman posing as a buyer for an P201,000 worth of the threatened species.

Vitorillo yielded at least 89 clams weighing 1,686 kilos which the suspect is selling at P15,000 per kilo.

“Our collaboration with the other government agencies and law enforcement units serves as our serious commitment to stop, if not, eradicate such illegal activities,” he said in a statement.

Vitorillo is being held on charges of violation of Republic 8550 or the Fisheries Code of the Philippines.

It may be recalled that authorities also seized at least 735 pieces of rare helmet shells, also known as budyong, in Bantayan back in October this year.

The Maritime Law Enforcement Team, Bantay Dagat and the Municipal Agriculturist-Fisheries Office have jointly conducted an operation in Sitio Tabunok, Barangay Lipayran, Bantayan where the helmet shells considered as endangered species were confiscated.

With an estimated amount of P365,000, the shells were put inside 48 sacks and were reportedly abandoned in the seashore.

The items will be turned over by the Maritime Police to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources regional office in Cebu City.

Republic Act (RA) 8550, or the Philippine Fisheries Code, as amended by RA 10654 on the Fishing or Taking of Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species provides that offenders shall be penalized with administrative fines, ranging from P500,000 to P5 million and/or upon conviction by a court of law, punished by imprisonment of 12 to 20 years plus twice the administrative fine.



Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) No. 158 prohibits the gathering, taking, collecting, selling, transporting, or possessing for sale of mollusks to the genus triton or Charonia and Cassis.

Bantayan Mayor Arthur Despi then warned violators that authorities will go after them if they continue doing illegal activities. – **Philippine Star News Service, JMD (FREEMAN)**



LOSING PARADISE

Rise of electric cars threatens Philippine forests

The transition to clean energy is pressuring mineral-rich countries like the Philippines and nickel mines like Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. to dig even more.

BY KAROL ILAGAN, ELYSSA LOPEZ, ANDREW LEHREN, ANNA SCHECTER AND RICH SCHAPIRO December 8, 2021 | 08:00:00 AM

THIS STORY WAS PRODUCED BY THE PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PULITZER CENTER'S RAINFOREST INVESTIGATIONS NETWORK AND NBC NEWS.

BATARAZA, Palawan – On Macadam Highway, mine trucks are king. Vehicles passing by this private road must yield or stop to make way for trucks carrying loads of sulphuric acid or nickel ore. Bakeries, carinderias, chaolong houses, hardware stores, money transfer agents and pawnshops skirt the seven-kilometer highway that connects the mine site to the pier stockyard by the Rio Tuba Bay. Red dust paves the road and blankets the mining town.

Built by Coral Bay Nickel Corp. (CBNC), a processing plant, Macadam Highway is Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp.'s physical link to the global supply chain. Trucks plying this route transport the ore extracted by Rio Tuba and processed by CBNC for export to Japan.

NBC News, PCIJ's reporting partner, reviewed corporate reports from the Japanese mining giant Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd. and found that the processed nickel go through refineries in Japan, where it is converted into nickel cobalt aluminum oxide cathode material for Panasonic's lithium ion batteries. (See *infographic*.)

Sumitomo Metal Mining holds roughly a 25 percent stake in the company that owns the Rio Tuba mine, Nickel Asia Corp., which is based in the Philippines.

In 2019, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) gave conditional approval to Rio Tuba's application to renew and amend its [Mineral Processing Sharing Agreement](#) (MPSA). With two of four requirements accepted as of writing, the mining firm is on the verge of a major expansion in Mt. Bulanjao, most of which had originally been designated as "core zones" or areas of maximum protection by law.

From Palawan shores to Tesla showrooms

Rio Tuba nickel supply chain



Source: NBC News review of company records and shipping records

Note: The raw nickel from Rio Tuba also ends up in the lithium batteries of plug-in vehicles manufactured by Toyota and other automakers. Exports are also made to China.

As superpowers pledge dramatic drops in their economies' carbon emissions, the clamor to adopt renewable energy (RE) technologies is pressuring mineral-rich countries like the Philippines and nickel mines like Rio Tuba to dig even more.

While carbon emissions need to be kept to a minimum to address climate change, experts are wary that the transition to renewable energy technologies will encourage the environmentally destructive industry.

The country has the second-largest nickel reserves in the world. Since Indonesia banned ore exports in January 2020, the demand for Philippine nickel and its price increased. Rates are also expected to go up even more as the nickel requirement for clean energy systems is anticipated to rise fourfold by 2025.

With Covid-19 battering most of the world's economies, the Philippine government, after leading a crackdown on erring mining firms, has turned to the mining industry to boost revenue and create jobs. In April 2021, President Rodrigo Duterte, once a mining critic, lifted a nine-year moratorium on new mining deals.

Industry experts expect new nickel mining sites to open in the coming year. Government data as of 2021 showed that three nickel companies had submitted exploration permit applications since 2019. If approved, this would bring the total number of nickel mining projects in the country to 34.

The Philippine Nickel Industry Association, a lobby group, is also developing a roadmap to identify downstream markets for nickel mining companies such as local processing and preparation of raw materials for batteries. At the moment, only two mines in the Philippines, those of Nickel Asia's, are processing extracts.

(Read [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of PCIJ and NBC News' [Losing Paradise](#) series.)



Macadam Highway is Rio Tuba's link to the global supply chain. Image by KIMBERLY DELA CRUZ, Palawan, 2021.

Nickel demand on the rise

According to a 2021 International Energy Agency (IEA) [study](#), energy transition is going to drive a huge demand for minerals and metals. In a scenario that meets the Paris Agreement goals, the agency estimates that the share of clean energy technologies to total demand will rise to over 40% for copper and rare-earth elements, 60% to 70% for nickel and cobalt, and almost 90% for lithium over the next two decades.

While copper has long been used in the manufacture of gadgets and materials for infrastructure projects, lithium and nickel are becoming synonymous with the RE boom as they become in-demand for the electric vehicle industry.



Electric vehicles are powered by rechargeable lithium ion batteries. These batteries have varieties, but the most popular in the industry are the lithium, nickel, cobalt, aluminum oxide (NCA) and lithium nickel manganese cobalt oxide (NMC), as they can hold a larger amount of energy over other varieties. According to the Nickel Institute, current versions of the NCA and NMC lithium batteries are composed of 80% and 33% nickel, respectively.

Because nickel can store high amounts of energy, it's part of solar power systems, which use mirrors to direct sunlight into a transmitter that can generate electricity. Some wind turbines also use nickel as protection from fluctuations in temperature.

Global consulting firm S&P Global Market Intelligence forecast demand for nickel from the battery sector to increase fourfold between 2020 and 2025, as the sector's share in the global demand for the metal to reach 15.7 percent by 2025.

Philippine mined nickel production is expected to increase further to 550,000 tons, from 2021 to 2025. "[This is] based on expectations that Indonesia's ban on nickel ore exports will continue to encourage Philippine producers to raise output," said Jason Sappor, an S&P Global Market Intelligence research analyst.



An electric car lithium battery pack. Photograph: Shutterstock

The cost of clean energy

But not everyone takes these developments as good news. The renewable energy push of much of the Western world, while helping win the battle against climate change, may mean more environmental worries for the Philippines.

Environmental activists argue that the transition to clean energy led by the push to produce batteries for electric vehicles, solar panels and other renewable storage is unleashing unprecedented levels of mineral extraction and "transition" metals. This is bad, according to them, because of the environmental destruction and human rights abuses associated with mining.

A [paper by War on Want](#), an environmental advocacy group, illustrates how these problems could worsen, citing cases in the Philippines, Indonesia, New Caledonia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"Each new green technology," the report said, "has a potential for extractivist violence and worker exploitation."

Even the IEA study notes that mining can result in the displacement of communities, loss of endangered species' habitats, water contamination, air pollution and even noise pollution. The report does highlight that it may be possible to manage these impacts by integrating environmental concerns at the early stages of project planning.



But it also emphasizes the far-ranging repercussions of the impacts of mining: “In sensitive areas, such as habitats of endemic species or traditional indigenous territories, engaging in new mining developments might present a lower societal value than maintaining healthy ecosystems.”

Palawan and the entire Philippines fit the description.

‘Digging to disaster’

It’s lamentable when corporations fail to observe the principles of fairness and justice, said environmental lawyer Grizelda Mayo-Anda. Indigenous peoples and farmers in Bataraza, she said, would probably not be able to buy Tesla cars, but they and the future generation would bear the brunt of the impacts.

“It is grossly unfair,” Mayo-Anda said. “It is an inter-generational equity issue for the future farmer’s children and indigenous people’s children and their children’s children. It’s an issue of justice.”

The idea of fairness is not lost on farmer Jeminda Bartolome who lives in Taratak, one of the barangays that would be affected should Rio Tuba’s expansion on Mt. Bulanjao proceed. Describing mining as “salot” or plague, she says the impending expansion would mean hunger and illness.

“Sila, umisip sila ng kagandahan ng kalusugan nila, pero iniisip ba nila ang kalusugan namin dito (They think about themselves, but have they thought about our health here)?” Bartolome asks. “Ano’ng gagawing paraan namin? Kung masiraan ang kabuhayan namin. Kung matibagan kami ng bundok. Dapat pantay (What are we going to do? If our livelihood is destroyed. If our mountain is flattened. It should be fair).”

William Holden, a geology professor at the University of Calgary consulted by then Environment Secretary Gina Lopez in 2017, said mining sites in developed countries like Canada do not have communities nearby. Storms and floods do not really happen there.

“The problem with mining in developing countries is the environmental impacts of it. It degrades the environment that people rely upon for subsistence and livelihoods. We see it in Peru... we see it in the Philippines,” said Holden.

In 2012, Holden published the book “**Mining and Natural Hazard Vulnerability in the Philippines**,” which extensively documented the tragedies and accidents caused by the mining industry in the country. In one chapter, the professor listed how typhoons from 1911 to the 2000s had repeatedly caused flooding in several mining sites in the Philippines. The incidents led to the contamination of bodies of water with hazardous elements coming from the mining sites. And then there are accidents solely caused by human error, like the **Marcopper spill** in Marinduque in 1996.

Holden’s book concluded that mining was not fit for the Philippines because of its susceptibility to earthquakes and torrential floods, as well as poor economic benefits gained from the industry.

“Given mining’s environmental effects and the hazards present in the Philippines, a development paradigm based upon large-scale mining is an example of digging to disaster, not an example of digging to development,” said Holden.

Shigeru Tanaka, director of Tokyo-based Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC), explained why it's difficult to do "responsible mining" in countries like the Philippines and Indonesia. The type of nickel in these countries is found just below vegetation and a thin topsoil, he noted.

"[Y]ou can't dig under. You can only dig horizontally so if you want more nickel, that means you have to destroy all the vegetation," he said. "And if you want to dig fast, because the supply demand is so high, then your reforestation speed cannot catch up with the deforestation."

Tanaka is also a member of the Ethical Keitai Campaign, a Japanese consortium of NGOs that examines supply chain due diligence trends of Japanese electronics companies.

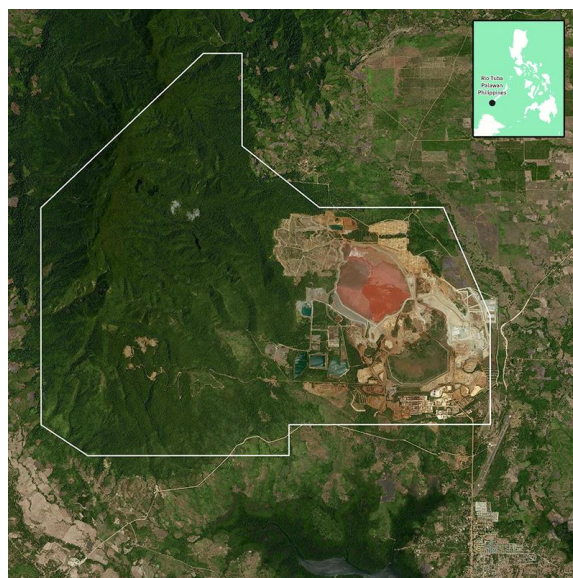
It doesn't help that most of the country's nickel is exported directly to China, which has loose regulations on the environmental compliance of mining companies. In 2016, the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals and Chemicals Importers and Exporters (CCCMC) formed the Responsible Cobalt Initiative (RCI) in a bid to address child labor concerns of cobalt mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

However, in 2017, Amnesty International reported that the Chinese business chamber had been slow in tackling concerns not just on child labor, but on other potential human rights violations of other member companies.

While Western companies have pledged to practice responsible sourcing of minerals, the same might not be expected from Chinese companies. Even companies in the rest of Southeast Asia have been silent in talks on carbon neutrality despite the region's susceptibility to the climate crisis.

"Pressure from the end-receiver of our minerals can certainly help... (But) international pressure to heighten the standards for mine performance is absent here (in the Philippines). And without that, there is no pressure to raise standards," said Jaybee Garganera, national coordinator of Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), an anti-mining group.

Representatives from Tesla and Toyota did not respond to NBC News' requests for comment. A Panasonic spokesperson declined to comment.



The image shows Rio Tuba's current site (right) and its estimate expansion area (white polygon). Satellite image: Airbus DS / Earthrise, January 2020.



Natural trade-off?

So even when global electric vehicle firms like Tesla – whose CEO Elon Musk made headlines last year when he promised a “giant contract” to any mining company that can supply him nickel mined in an “efficiently and environmentally sensitive way” – have pledged to protect the environment, stakeholders remain wary.

New nickel mining activities may invite more damage to the country’s biodiversity, and leave affected communities of mining sites without alternative livelihoods once the projects are finished. The promise of “clean” minerals is also vague as there is no clear definition for the industry, campaigners and experts said.

For Jose Bayani Baylon, Nickel Asia’s spokesperson, the idea of mining to support clean energy transition is part of how human development has been a series of tradeoffs. “I think that the reality is, unless you can grow it, or unless you can make it in a lab, you got to mine it,” he said.

Baylon said mining, if done responsibly, would fuel the country into the green economy. As for irresponsible miners, the government needs to step in and enforce rules.

Rio Tuba’s track record speaks for itself, he said. The company has won multiple recognitions, including the Best Practice in Minerals Mining award in the first Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ Mineral Awards in 2017.

“We cannot castigate a whole industry because there are some irresponsible operators and there are, especially in the third world as you should expect,” he said. “Life has been a series of tradeoffs, and we’re still trading off. But I think the trading off now is getting much better than it was.”

PCIJ met with Bataraza Mayor Abraham Ibba in Rio Tuba in October. He initially agreed to be interviewed but later refused, saying he could not talk about the issue until after the elections. PCIJ also tried to reach him in November but he did not take the call.

The Municipality of Bataraza initiated the change in the land use plan and environment zoning of Mt. Bulanjao, which triggered the issuance of a clearance needed by Rio Tuba to apply for expansion.

PCIJ also sought an interview with Palawan Gov. Jose Alvarez who chairs the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), the agency that issued the clearance to the mining company. Alvarez forwarded PCIJ’s request to PCSD staff.

PCSD Executive Director Teodoro Jose Matta said the tradeoffs were obvious given that mining would affect communities. But the national economy, which needs to recover amid the pandemic, was also one of the considerations that PCSD took in issuing clearances to Rio Tuba and other companies.

“So, where are you going to get that money? It’s these industries themselves that make that money, and I’m hoping they’re honest enough to declare their... true income,” he said.

Matta said PCSD was also putting pressure on the MGB to realign miners’ Social Development and Management Programs (SDMP), as well as on the mining companies to give more aid to the province. Under the implementing rules and regulations of the Philippine Mining Act, mining companies are required to spend at least 1.5% of their operating costs for SDMPs, which include alternative livelihoods for communities that host mining sites.

Records showed that the consolidated SDMP programs of Rio Tuba and Coral Bay amounted to P251.8 million from 2004 to 2008 and P615.8 million from 2009 to 2013. The program covered expenses for hospital services, school subsidies, walk-in community relations assistance, housing, an indigenous learning system, community development, and training.

“Yes, it has come to our attention that there should be a payoff – a trade-off between the exploitation of the environment in the community apart from the employment that the company generates, or the small businesses that ripple around these operations, and we will be pushing very hard that they give more than is prescribed under the law,” Matta said.

Nickel prices have gone up due to the high demand. “If they’re raking it in, what’s a couple of P100 million in CSR (corporate social responsibility) to help the local community?” Matta said.

Nickel Asia is one of few companies that profited during the pandemic. In fact, its profit by the end of 2020, P4.07 billion (US\$79.36 million), was the highest in four years. This was a 51% jump from the previous year's record of P2.7 billion.

Nickel Asia said it benefitted from the continued export ban in Indonesia, which holds the world’s largest nickel reserve. The company also enjoyed higher ore export prices in 2020, at US\$33.99 per wet metric tonne (WMT), 45% up from the previous year.

The Rio Tuba mine accounted for more than a quarter of Nickel Asia’s exports in 2020, at 1.98 million WMT of saprolite ore and 3.03 million WMT of limonite ore.



A signage of the a development project funded by Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. and Coral Bay Nickel Corp. Image by Kimberly dela Cruz, Palawan, 2021.

‘Projects lacked sustainability’

Economist Cielo Magno warned that without policy reforms, the growing demand for nickel would take a toll on host communities. A 2016 assessment by Bantay Kita, a coalition of civil society organizations that seeks to promote transparency in the extractive industry, found that alternative livelihoods were hardly offered in communities that previously hosted mining projects.

Magno is an economics professor at the University of the Philippines – Diliman and the civil society representative in the international board of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI). She also previously coordinated Bantay Kita and was a founding member of EITI Philippines.

In the report, Bantay Kita detailed how the SDMPs of mining companies lacked sustainability. The SDMPs the organization studied relied largely on the continuous support of mining operators to keep projects in place.

“Mining companies can extend support either directly (e.g., salary support for teachers, financial assistance to cooperatives) or indirectly (e.g., livelihood projects where companies serve as the principal end-users). In the absence of an alternative support mechanism, such projects or activities tend to fail once the mining projects are terminated and companies move out of the community,” the report said.



Even the tax regime is tilted toward miners, Magno said, noting that companies only paid 46% of the value of their mined nickel output on average.

“At the moment, the government, and the industry, are only seeing the (financial) potential for demand for nickel but they are not seeing what is the real impact of mining at the community level especially with regards to poverty alleviation,” she says.

Garganera of ATM echoed Magno’s sentiment, saying that “rational” mining should be practiced in the country. “With the climate crisis, the mining industry has to be beneficial enough for our country to be pursued... This means the industry should be ready to invest in the next generation, and we could do that with an establishment of a wealth fund that the country can use.”



Houses in Brgy. Rio Tuba in Bataraza town. Image by Kimberly dela Cruz, Palawan, 2021.

A fund that the government can tap for the development of provinces and communities affected by mining sites is being pursued in Congress, under House Bill No. 6135 or the Fiscal Mining Regime Bill.

The measure proposes a Natural Resource Trust Fund from the revenues to be collected from a margin-based royalty paid by large-scale metallic mining operations, for projects that will benefit local governments directly affected by mining activities. The bill, however, remains pending in the House of Representatives.

Another proposal that has not been discussed more prominently in the local mining community is the recycling of available metals. In April 2021, the Institute of Sustainable Futures of the University of Technology Sydney released a report detailing how recycling end-of-life electric-vehicle batteries can decrease demand for new mining.

“Recycling has the potential to reduce primary demand compared to total demand in 2040, by approximately 25% for lithium, 35% for cobalt and nickel and 55% for copper,” the report said.

Magno said investments of mining companies in the Philippines could be funneled to the development of recycling facilities that would not only decrease mining activities in the Philippines, but also generate new, alternative jobs for affected communities.

But Holden of the University of Calgary is skeptical about the Philippines’ prospect in becoming a recycling hub of used metals. “Recycling would take a global approach to be effective,” he said. “In the European Union (EU), there are already policies in place, but in developing countries, I’m skeptical.”



Under the EU’s waste management system, up to 40% of electronic waste is already recycled. In 2018 alone, for example, 94 million tons of scrap steel have been utilized by the bloc, equivalent to all automobiles circulating in France, the UK, and Belgium, said the European Recycling Industries' Confederation (EuRIC), a confederation of recyclers in the region.

The EU is in the process of increasing this number, with the adoption of the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) in March 2020. Part of the plan is to provide mandates that would require manufacturers to only design and sell electronics that are repairable and recyclable.

This is part of the EU's bid to be “climate neutral” or to be an economy that emits zero carbon emissions by 2050.

In contrast, members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) have mostly relied on the informal sector to recycle their waste, as [reported](#) by the United Nations in 2020. Recycling initiatives have also mostly focused on plastics, and not metals.

This underscores Garganera’s sentiment on the lack of pressure from the international community, especially in the Asia Pacific, to impose better practices in any industry that may harm the environment.

“Policy-wise, I have very low confidence on any agreement at the Asean level that can be meaningful and relevant to environmental and human-rights concerns... They [practice] non-interference policy,” Garganera says.

For the environmental activist, he would rather hope for better regulation from authorities in the Philippines. Existing laws and policies are beneficial if implemented properly, he said.

“Standards for extractives will not improve [in the Philippines], unless our internal mechanisms to monitor and [check] accountability of mining operations are set at a higher standard than what we are doing right now,” he said. **END**

Company turns plastic wastes into furniture

posted December 11, 20

Mondelez Philippines embarked on a program to reduce the impact of its plastic packaging on the environment.

It teamed up with the Plastic Flamingo, a social enterprise, to turn over outdoor furniture made from recycled plastics to the Parañaque City government. The recycled items show proof of recyclability of plastics, and how supporting the circular economy for this material can benefit the environment and livelihood.



Mondelez executives turn over recycled plastic outdoor furniture to Parañaque City officials.

The problem of plastic waste ending up as marine litter is a complex one and poses a threat to the environment. The Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability, along with its members like Mondelez Philippines, committed to supporting efforts to manage plastic and packaging waste and reduce the country's waste footprint.

“We recognize the responsibility that each one of us has in ensuring plastic waste does not end up in nature,” said Mondelez Philippines corporate and government affairs country manager Joseph Fabul.

According to the 2021 Zero Waste to Nature roadmap by PARMS, reducing marine litter will involve three major steps—design for circularity, support waste recovery processes and facilitate investment into diversion pathways.

This means reducing packaging use and re-designing it for greater recyclability, making manufacturers part of the waste recovery process and supporting government capabilities and strengthening the recycling industry for plastics as well as other materials. It supports the circular economy of plastics, where plastic is viewed as a valuable material like wood and glass and can be reused continuously.

Mondelez Philippines joined PARMS in implementing the roadmap and signed the industry pledge to ensure that by 2030, the company can collect and divert the same amount of plastics that it uses for its products.

The company also abides by its global commitments to reduce the amount of packaging they use, to make 100 percent of its packaging recycle ready and labeled with recycling information and to reduce virgin plastic use in rigid plastic packaging by 25 percent or a 5-percent reduction in virgin plastic in its overall packaging.

“We all have a role. For consumers, it can be deciding to buy in bulk rather than small pieces if they can afford it, and make sure to dispose of their waste properly. For companies like ours, it means being mindful of our packaging use and supporting the collection of what we put out in the market,” said Fabul.



“In 2019, we started our journey to learn how we can support waste collection, launching a project to collect just 1,000 kilos of plastic waste with the Plastic Flamingo the following year. By 2021, we have expanded this to 42,000 kilos, and have turned a part of this collected waste into recycled furniture for the use of our home city of Parañaque,” said Fabul.

The project earned funding through the global Sustainable Futures platform of Mondelez International. Sustainable Futures aims to incubate, finance and build partnerships in the impact investment space through co-funded climate projects and a new social venture fund.

Working with other organizations in 2021, Mondelez Philippines collected and diverted 172,489 kilos of plastic wastes. The amount is equivalent to the weight of as many as 86 automobiles.

For 2022, the company aims to collect more, in line with its 2030 commitment with PARMS on recovery. Additionally, Mondelez Philippines’ parent company is on a mission to ensure 100-percent zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The recycled furniture turned over to Parañaque City includes a picnic bench, bike rack, waste cube, bench and dining set. The Plastic Flamingo collects plastic waste from communities and processes them into eco lumber, shaped similarly to wood that’s used for construction, while providing livelihood for its collectors and processors. The lumber is used to build the furniture, as well as other structures.

Consumers are also encouraged to buy the recycled items from the enterprise, from which funds collected will be reverted back to funding more plastic collection. The recycling model highlights the value that plastic has, how it can be continuously reused and does not have to end up as waste.



US, Europe scientists to map fungal networks, determine climate role

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS DECEMBER 12, 2021



Mycelium, or fungal network, growing upon a tree.

BERLIN—Scientists from the United States and Europe announced plans recently to create the biggest map of underground fungal networks, arguing they are an important but overlooked piece in the puzzle of how to tackle climate change.

By working with local communities around the world the researchers said they will collect 10,000 DNA samples to determine how the vast networks that fungi create in the soil are changing as a result of human activity—including global warming.

“Fungi are invisible ecosystem engineers, and their loss has gone largely unnoticed by the public,” said Toby Kiers, a professor of evolutionary biology at Amsterdam’s Free University and co-founder of the non-profit Society for the Protection of Underground Networks that’s spearheading the effort.

“New research and climate models are providing irrefutable evidence that the Earth’s survival is linked to the underground,” she said.

Experts agree that tracking how fungal networks, also known as mycelia, are affected by climate change is important for protecting them—and ensure they can contribute to nature’s own mechanisms for removing carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, from the air.

Fungi can do this by providing nutrients that allow plants to grow faster, for example, or by storing carbon in the trillions of miles of root-like mass they themselves weave underground.

But Karina Engelbrecht Clemmensen, a fungal expert at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences not involved in the project, caution that while having better fungi maps would be useful for future conservation efforts, it was unclear how the researchers planned to go about that vast challenge.

“This is not trivial on a global scale,” she said.

Clemmensen and others also noted that many fungi don’t provide any benefits to plants or grow as underground networks, yet their role in climate change also merits investigation.

Some fungi actually produce carbon dioxide as they break down organic matter for food—potentially contributing to global warming if they release more CO₂ into the atmosphere than they capture.



“When you talk about carbon cycles you really want to start thinking carefully about decomposers,” said Anne Pringle, a professor of botany and bacteriology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “A massive and coordinated effort to collect biodiversity data on a global scale is badly needed and will be very welcome,” she added, saying “there are good reasons to include all kinds of fungi in that effort.”

The impact that a hotter planet will have on the spread of harmful species likewise needs to be considered.

“When you’re talking about food security in a changing climate, you really want to think about fungal diseases and how they might become more or less prevalent on the planet,” said Pringle, who isn’t involved with the new project.

Kiers said the group, whose efforts are supported by a \$3.5-million donation from the Jeremy and Hannelore Grantham Environmental Trust, chose to focus its mapping project on mycorrhizal fungal networks because of the crucial symbiotic relationship they have with plants.

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Gov't prepared for Omicron variant entry: DOH

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora December 11, 2021, 5:56 pm



MANILA – The government assured it is prepared for the entry of the more transmissible Omicron coronavirus variant, the Department of Health (DOH) said Saturday.

In a Laging Handa briefing, DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire admitted the new variant has a high chance of entering the Philippines.

"From the start, *hindi natin sasabihin* definitely *na hindi makapasok. Ang pinag-uusapan natin diyan ay kung kailan* (From the start, we said we cannot definitely say that it won't be able to enter. The question here is when it will enter)," she said.

"So the chances are there. *Malakas po ang tiyansa na maaring makapasok dito sa atin at tayo naman po ay nagpre-prepare* (there's a big chance it will get here and we are preparing)" she added.

Vergeire reminded the public to get vaccinated and continue observing health and safety protocols, regardless of the variant.

As of this posting, no case of Omicron had been detected in the Philippines yet based on the result of the whole genome sequencing released December 9.

"[T]here was no sample positive for the Omicron variant. *Na-isama po natin dito iyong isang arrival from South Africa kung saan lumabas po iyong sequencing result na ito po ay isang variant na B.1.1.203. Hindi po siya Omicron. Hindi rin po siya iyong mga variant na binabantayan natin dito sa ating bansa* (We already included those who arrived from South Africa. The results included one variant the B.1.1.203. It's not Omicron nor one of the variants that we are monitoring)," Vergeire said.

She also reported that the five returning overseas Filipinos (ROFs) from South Africa who were earlier tagged as missing have been located.

They yielded negative reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction test results but will undergo retests.

Two unlocated ROFs from South Africa, meanwhile, were reportedly from Regions 4-B and 10 and had negative Covid-19 test results upon arrival.

"[D]umating po sila pareho ng November 22. So *hanggang sa ngayon*, our local governments are still locating these two passengers (They both arrived on November 22. So until now our local governments are still locating these two passengers)," Vergeire said.

Vergeire assured the government closely monitors the entry of all foreigners and Filipinos. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1162481>



Omicron variant not yet detected in Philippines

(Philstar.com) - December 11, 2021 - 4:25pm



Residents wait for their turn to be vaccinated inside a mall in Manila City, on November 29, 2021, as the Southeast Asian nation launched a three-day vaccination drive targeting nine million people as young as 12 in an effort to accelerate the roll-out of jabs, amidst the threat of heavily mutated coronavirus variant Omicron

AFP/Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — Health authorities have yet to detect the potentially more infectious Omicron variant, but acknowledged that it is only a matter of time until the much-feared coronavirus variant arrives in the country.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said that as of December 9, samples that underwent whole genome sequencing were all cleared for Omicron, including the sample from a traveler from South Africa, where the variant of concern was first detected.

“Lumabas po iyong sequencing result na ito po ay isang variant na B.1.1.203,” Vergeire said. “Hindi po siya Omicron. Hindi rin po siya iyong mga variants na binabantayan natin dito sa bansa. Ito po ay hindi variant of concern or variant of interest.”

(The sequencing results revealed that this is the B.1.1.203 variant. This is not Omicron. This is also not one of the variants that we are monitoring here in the country. This is not a variant of concern or variant of interest.)

The World Health Organization said 57 countries have so far reported the Omicron variant, which is feared to be more infectious although more data is needed to determine this and its severity.

Since the WHO designated Omicron as a variant of concern, the Philippines tightened its borders anew and required all travelers to get tested before arrival, undergo quarantine once they get to the country and get tested again while isolating.

But local health authorities recognize that border controls will not keep Omicron out.

“From the start, sinabi na natin na hindi naman po masasabi at hindi natin sasabihin definitely na hindi makapasok. Ang pinaguusapan natin diyan, kung kailan as to when it will enter the country,” Vergeire said.

(From the start, we’ve been saying that we cannot say and we will not say that it will definitely not enter. What we’re talking about here is when it will enter the country.)

She added, “The chances are there. Mataas po ang tsansa na makapasok dito sa atin. At tayo naman po ay nagpe-prepare.”



(The chances are there. There is a high chance that it will enter our country. And we are preparing for that.)

The Philippines is one of the worst-hit by the pandemic in Southeast Asia, but has rapidly reopened its economy as the number of new infections drop to 17-month lows from a peak of over 26,000 in September. — **Xave Gregorio**



LUGAR NA NAKASAILALIM SA LOCKDOWN SA NCR, BUMULUSOK NA LAMANG SA 1

written by [Gilbert Perdez](#) December 11, 2021



Inihayag ng Philippine National Police (PNP) na isang lugar na lang sa Metro Manila ang nasa ilalim ng granular lockdown dahil sa COVID-19.

Batay sa report ng PNP, isang residential building sa Quezon City ang naka-lockdown dulot ng banta ng virus.

Nasa 24 na residente ang nakatira sa gusali na kasalukuyang binabantayan ng apat na pulis at apat na

force multipliers.

Mas mababa ito ng 96.96% kumpara sa 33 areas na isinailalim sa lockdown noong Nobyembre a-10.

Samantala, binanggit din ng PNP na sa kabuuan ay nasa 42 lugar ang naka-granular lockdown sa buong bansa na nakakaapekto sa 48 families o katumbas ng 136 individuals.



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**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 637

DISYEMBRE 11, 2021

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

0.4%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
11,373

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

97.8%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
2,774,891

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.77%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
50,096

MGA BAGONG KASO **356**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **878**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **135**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **2,836,360**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING DISYEMBRE 9
DATOS NGAYONG DISYEMBRE 11
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG DISYEMBRE 9

1.1%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

35,320

BILANG NG
TINEST

HALOS
46.0%
ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

D UMISTANSYA NG
ISANG METRO AT LIMITAHAN
ANG PISIKAL NA
INTERAKSYON SA IBA

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

KALAGAYAN NG MGA
AKTIBONG KASO

ICU BEDS (3.7K TOTAL BEDS)
 23% Utilized

ICU BEDS (1.3K TOTAL BEDS)
 26% Utilized

902 Asymptomatic

ISOLATION BEDS (19.8K TOTAL BEDS)
 24% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.7K TOTAL BEDS)
 20% Utilized

4,328 Mild

WARD BEDS (12.3K TOTAL BEDS)
 14% Utilized

WARD BEDS (3.8K TOTAL BEDS)
 22% Utilized

3,747 Moderate

VENTILATORS (3.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
 14% Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
 17% Utilized

1,991 Severe

405 Critical



UPDATE AND MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Ang **pagbabakuna** ay hindi lamang nagbibigay ng iyong sanggalang laban sa nakakamatay na COVID-19, kundi pati na rin sa mga mahal mo sa buhay. Maliban dito ay dapat lang na ipagpatuloy natin ang pagsunod sa **Minimum Public Health Standards** kahit saan man tayo naroroon. Kasabay nito ang ating pagiging alisto sa mga sintomas. Sa oras na makaramdam ay agad makipag-ugnayan sa **BHERTS** o sa **One COVID Referral Center** na maabot sa **1555, (02)886-505-00, 0915-777-7777, o sa 0919-977-3333**, para sa karampatang gabay.

Para sa iba pang pangangailangang medikal, puntahan ang <http://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine> upang malaman kung papaano maabot ang serbisyo ng ating **Telemedicine Service Providers**, at ang <http://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines> para maabot ang ating mga ospital sa lalong mabilis na panahon.



Ihahanap ka namin ng lugar para mag-isolate o magpagamot, tumawag lang sa sumusunod:

SMART: 0919 977 3333
GLOBE: 0915 777 7777
TEL NO: (02) 886 505 00



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?

I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH

MESSANGER: Department of Health PH

KONTRACOVID PH: kontracovid.ph



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App

O Gamiting ang WEBAPP

at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

OfficialDOHgov

@DOHgovph

doh.gov.ph

(02) 894-COVID / 1555

12 DECEMBER 2021, SUNDAY



DENR

NEWS

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VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsVX6gahFzU>

#denr #Manilabay #junriellander

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MANILA

PHASE 2 DOLOMITE BEACH TINAMBAKAN | MANILA BAY UPDATE 12-11-2021

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manila bay update.
Pagtatambak ng gray sand sa phase 2.
Inaasahang makukumpleto sa unang quarter ng taong 2022 ang manila bay rehabilitation project.
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Miz July
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maraming salamat po, keep safe everyone
[#SaveManilaBay](#)

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MANILA

AIRCON AT HALAMAN NILAGAY NA MANILA BAY DOLOMITE BEACH

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aircon at halaman nilagay na public comfort room manila bay dolomite beach
#manilabay



Please click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_60FtBXJLU

#PROTECTTHEOCEAN #SAVETHEOCEAN #LOVETHEOCEAN

ASTIG TO! CR LANG PO ITO HIGH CLASS PUBLIC RESTROOMS MANILA BAY @Ka Zammy Tv

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Ka Zammy Tv
2K subscribers

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MANILA

DOLOMITE BEACH LIVE HETO NA

4,313 views • Streamed live 14 hours ago

200

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SAVE

...



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