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DENR

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EMB readies raps vs driver tagged in Cebu river pollution

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is preparing to file charges against an individual and his employer for the contamination of Cebu Province's Goyong River after its water turned "milky white" last August 21.

DENR Environmental Management Bureau Director William P. Cuñado said DENR-Region 7 is already "coordinating with the concerned individuals and authorities to make sure that the substance discharged to the river is removed."

"We are waiting for the results

of the tests conducted by Environmental Management Bureau [EMB] Region 7 to determine the contents of the discharge in the Goyong River. In the meantime, we will also be talking with local government authorities to make sure that this will not happen again," Cuñado said.

Goyong River, located at Barangay Don Gregorio Antigua in Borbon town, is mainly used for farm irrigation. About 80 households are living near the body of water.

A certain Elmer Pogado Degamo was identified by barangay

officials who allegedly dumped contaminated water and oil that was used to wash a flexible tank into the river.

The local officials also learned that the trucking company where Degamo is employed is the owner of the flexible tank.

The municipal government of Borbon took a water sample immediately after the reported presence of white substance in the river, while the EMB took samples a day after the incident.

The results of the water samples examined by the municipal govern-

ment of Borbon have shown that the level of chemical oxygen demand (COD) has reached 347 milligrams per liter (mg/L), indicating "contamination of inorganic waste."

EMB and Borbon town officials have called the attention of the concerned trucking company to "prevent a repeat of the incident."

"If proven that the discharged substance is hazardous or toxic, the responsible entity or person shall face charges pursuant to Section 27 of Republic Act No. 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004," the EMB said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



DENR-EMB acts to purify polluted waterway in Cebu

By Rio N. Araja

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) is taking steps to reverse the damage brought about by the improper waste disposal on Goyong River in Cebu after its water turned milky white on Aug. 21.

Director William Cufiada said DENR-Region 7 is "coordinating with the concerned individuals and authorities to make sure that the substance discharged to the river is removed."

"We are waiting for the results of the tests conducted by EMB-Region 7 to determine the contents of the discharge in the Goyong River. In the meantime, we will also be talking with local government authorities to make sure that this will not happen again," he added.

Goyong River located in Barangay Don Gregorio Antigua in Borbon town is mainly used for irrigation.

About 80 households are living near the river.

Based on the initial investigation, barangay officials identified a certain Elmer Pogado Degamo who allegedly dumped the contaminated water and oil that was used to wash a flexible tank into the river.

The local officials said the trucking company, where Degamo is employed, owns the flexible tank.

According to EMB-Region 7's preliminary assessment, "there were no traces of affected life forms, such as dead plants or animals."



Estero rangers seize 4,000 kilos of waste

DENR National Capital Region joins the world in the observance of the event and in the fight against air pollution

BY PAULA ANTOLIN

A total of 4000 kilos of assorted waste materials were seized by the *Estero* Rangers in Quezon city as reported by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Thursday.

The continuous cleanup drive being conducted by

a group of volunteers and other groups is in line with the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

The DENR Metropolitan Environmental Office-East and the Department of Sanitation-Rivers Cleaning Operations Group of Quezon City conducted a joint cleanup of a portion of Marikina River

in Barangay Old Balara in Quezon City.

The *Estero* Rangers assigned in the area together with the officials and staff of Barangay Old Balara joined hands in the removal of 300 sacks of assorted waste weighing an estimated 4,000 kilograms.

The clean-up drive coincided with the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies last Wednesday, a day designated by the United Nations General Assembly to encourage efforts

to improve air quality, protect human health and mitigate the impact of climate change.

The theme "The Air We Share" highlighted the transboundary nature of air pollution and stresses the need for collective accountability and action.

It also focuses on the need for immediate and strategic international and regional cooperation for more efficient implementation of mitigation policies and actions to tackle air pollution.



What the PH needs now to solve a water crisis

With the onset of La Niña, we cannot just wait for legislation to solve our water problems. During his State of the Nation Address, President Marcos announced the creation of a Department of Water Resources as a key legislative measure. Since it is uncertain when Congress will act upon it, we must take action now.

Water is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Last Sept. 7 during the general assembly of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), leadership council member Alyansa Agrikultura brought up the need for coordination among 32 water-related agencies in government.

What went before?

In 2018, a joint legislative-executive private sector committee was formed to address the water crisis. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) had placed the Philippines at the bottom third of 48 countries in terms of water governance.

As the committee's private sector secretary general, I followed the guidance of University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Water Center chair Patricia Sanchez and National Water Resources Board Executive Director Bill David. They helped produce a water governance

COMMENTARY

ERNESTO M. ORDOÑEZ

report comprised of seven volumes, with each volume authored by a different UPLB dean.

These formed the basis for seven water presummits around the country, culminating in an action plan by the Office of the President, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda). The three top action items decided upon were: the creation of a Department of Water; the strengthening of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) through adequate funding for 18 major Water Basin Management Councils; and the significant improvement of our 4-percent water harvesting rate.

As a result, our governance rating according to ADB improved from a score of "1" in 2013 to a "2" in 2016 and then a "3" in 2020. But our goal really is a "5." Unfortunately, the mo-

mentum was stopped because of other political priorities.

The coordination achieved during the committee's nine-month work motivated the Neda to draft an executive order creating an oversight water coordinating committee reporting to the President. This would be operating while the Water Department legislation was being considered.

Alas, the legislation nor the executive order materialized.

Action

At the SDSN general assembly, there was agreement that this executive order should be resurrected. Coordination among the 32 water-related agencies will also result in the effective implementation of the IWRM approach done through the 18 major Water Basin Management Councils and the significant improvement of our dismal water harvesting rate.

Issues such as those raised by GRS Holdings chair Joe Simeon in his letter to Management Association of the Philippines members cannot be addressed effectively sans coordination. He said, "With the impending food shortage of China and India, there is no way to source our food except to produce in our country. We must store water so farmers can plant during the dry season."

He also suggested to:

1. Rehabilitate all river water basins in all areas in the farmland and impound water till the dry season using heavy equipment from the DPWH or private contractors;

2. Start construction of a series of Sabo dams where we can impound water from the higher to lower levels of the rivers;

3. Construct or rehabilitate irrigation canals;

4. Subsidize or finance solar power pumps with concrete water impounding tanks, where water can be stored even during the dry season;

5. Land Bank of the Philippines or the government can provide liberal financing to help accomplish the above.

Legislation is desirable, but immediate action is needed. The proposed Neda executive order must be resurrected. Otherwise, the country, which is already facing food shortage, will be in greater peril. INQ

The author is Agriwatch chair, former secretary of presidential flagship programs and project, and former undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry. Email your reactions or comments to agriwatch_phil@yahoo.com.



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₱1 T needed to ensure access to safe water supply and sanitation facilities

By JEL E. SANTOS

The Philippines expects to spend around ₱1 trillion to achieve the country's water supply and sanitation goals, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) bared during the Water Forum 2022 on Aug. 31.

"The Philippine government estimates a total investment of more than ₱1 trillion from 2020 to 2030 to achieve the country's water supply and sanitation targets," NEDA Undersecretary for Investment Programming Joseph Capuno said in his remarks ▶ **7**

₱ 1T needed to ensure access to safe water supply and sanitation facilities 1◀

delivered on behalf of NEDA Director-General Arsenio Balisacan.

"While we face an enormous challenge, we should also see an opportunity for us to invest in new approaches, tools, and ideas from the partnerships with local governments, national governments, and the private sector to ensure all Filipinos have access to safe, sufficient, affordable, and sustainable water supply and sanitation," he continued.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Acting Mission Director Rebekah Eubanks acknowledged the critical role that collaboration and innovation play in ensuring access to sanitary facilities and safe drinking water.

"We look forward to continuing

our support for government and private sector efforts to help the Philippines achieve a water secure future," she said.

The event was organized by the USAID and its Philippine partners to mark the World Water Week 2022 and find solutions to the country's water security problems.

USAID gathered over 200 representatives from the public and private sectors to work with the Water Alliance, led by the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) and the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) to develop a strategy to support the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan (PWSSMP) implemented by NEDA.

The PWSSMP serves as the coun-

try's road map for achieving by 2030 universal access to a clean, plentiful, cost-effective, and sustainable water supply.

During the event, USAID also teamed up with PDRF, Manila Water Company, and Maynilad Water Services, Inc. to launch the second round of the Philippine Water Challenge, a competition that encourages contestants to generate novel technologies and innovations to solve the country's water security challenges.

The USAID said selected proposals will receive funding and networking support to help reduce water consumption, promote water reuse and recycling, and ensure water efficiency in times of water shortages throughout the Philippines.



Sustainable reclamation in the Bay Area

ENVIRONMENTAL impact and land valuation are two of the vital aspects in reclaiming land from the sea. Such projects are mostly found in coastal cities to create new land for housing, commercial and industrial purposes. In some cases, land reclamation leads to a decrease of natural wetlands and the decline of biodiversity.

Thus, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources mandates the proponents of reclamation projects to apply for area clearance with the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB). Among the requirements are the environmental impact study and the environmental compliance certificate to ensure optimum economic development of reclaimed lands.

The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) is an attached agency under the Office of the



FINEX FILES

J. ALBERT GAMBOA

President. It was created in 1977 by Presidential Decree 1084 to serve as the clearinghouse for all reclamation projects in the country. Formerly known as the Public Estates Authority, the PRA performs both regulatory and proprietary functions, including the determination of land valuation.

Recently, the agency came under fire for greenlighting the Manila Waterfront City Reclamation Project in spite of a pending court case.

The 318-hectare project is a public-private partnership between the City Government of Manila and the Waterfront Ma-

nila Premier Development Inc. When completed, its location will be at the back of the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park right next to the US Embassy and up to the breakwater of the Manila South Harbor.

This joint venture was signed in 2017 when former president Joseph Estrada was the mayor of Manila and lawyer Edward Serapio was the secretary to the mayor. In fact, Serapio is listed as the authorized representative of the project proponent in the EMB's website.

What seems incredible is the project's total cost amounting to only P34.3 billion that translates to a measly P10,800 per square meter — way, way below market prices in the Manila Bay Area.

Incumbent Manila Mayor Maria Sheilah "Honey" Lacuna-Pangan must have the property valuation reviewed to make sure that

the city government is not short-changed in this deal. The original proponents have to explain the math involved in coming up with such a grossly undervalued amount to the disadvantage of tax-paying Manileños.

Manila's local government unit should take the cue from the 200-year experience of Singapore in land reclamation. Way back in 1822, the British colonizers dismantled a hill and packed the material along the bank of the Singapore River.

Today, this is known as Boat Quay, the site of the city-state's very first reclamation project which has been transformed into a dining and entertainment district. Just beside it is Raffles Place, the spot where the hill was broken down and carted off to build Boat Quay. It is now the high-rise financial district where

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■ FINEX FROM B1

Sustainable reclamation

I used to work in the 1990s.

Other areas of Singapore that sit on earth where there was once only water include the iconic Marina Bay Sands, the industrial hub of Jurong Island and most of Changi Airport's four terminals.

Since it became an independent nation 57 years ago, Singapore has grown in land area by 25 percent from 359 to 444 square kilometers. By 2030, the government wants the island-republic to measure almost 480 square kilometers through more land reclamation projects.

Over three decades as prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew (LKY) viewed his country as perpetually locked in a struggle against its small size.

He once said: "In a world where the big fish eat small fish and the small fish eat shrimps, Singapore must become a poisonous shrimp." Our own leaders should read LKY's book titled *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story 1965-2000* and emulate his style of governance.

The author is the chief finance officer of Asian Center for Legal Excellence and chairman of the Finex Media Affairs Committee. The opinion expressed herein does not necessarily reflect the views of these institutions and The Manila Times. #FinexPhils www.finex.org.ph.



Tulfo alarmed over rampant 'land grabbing' vs farmers

By PS JUN M. SARMIENTO

SENATOR Raffy Tulfo has expressed alarm over the supposed rampant "land grabbing" affecting the defenseless farmers in Palawan and in other far-flung areas.

Tulfo said it's high time to look into the issue and hold accountable the powerful and influential people harassing and taking advantage of the vulnerability of the farmers.

"Iyon pong pang-aagaw sa mga lupain ng mga farmers has been going on for quite some time. Very rampant po itong nangyayari ngayon sa Palawan, at ang nasa likod po nito ay mga influential personalities,"

he said.

"Pero hindi lamang po ito sa Palawan nangyayari kundi pati na rin sa buong Pilipinas. Yung maliliit nating farmers inaagawan po ng mga lupain ng mga maiimpluwensiyang tao dahil alam nilang walang panlaban itong mga pobreng farmers," he added.

Tulfo said he has received many complaints from farmers claiming that their lands were taken from them illegally through his program "Wanted sa Radyo".

Tulfo further revealed the tactic of influential people victimizing farmers.

"Ang modus po nitong influential people in Palawan, lalapitan po nila itong maliliit na farmers na naghihikahos at mayroong pan-

gangailangan, at kukumbinsihing isangla ang lupa sa kanila," Tulfo said.

"Kapag naisangla na ang lupa sa kanila, papalitan na ng mga mapansamantalang taong ito ang titulo sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagsabwatan sa Land Registration Authority [LRA]. And by the time na mayroon ng perang pangtubos ng lupa ang mga farmers, hindi na nila matutubos yung titulo dahil in most cases, mayroon ng private army na nakaharang sa lupa," he added.

Should the land grabbing issue be investigated at the Senate, Tulfo said he is ready to discuss it more extensively and invite the personalities being complained about by farmers involved in land grabbing.



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The Manila Times



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Regions in briefs

QUARRY PRODUCTS MONITORING STEPPED UP

DAVAO CITY: Thirty stations are being established by the City Environment

and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) here to monitor the transport of quarrying materials within the city. These stations are manned by 80 personnel from the Cenro. Melody Dapusala, Cenro-Mines and Geoscience section chief, in a recent radio interview, said her office monitors quarry tickets during the transport of quarry materials. A total of 113 quarry permits had been granted by the City Mining Regulatory Board (CMRB) as of Aug. 31, 2022. Out of these permits, 86 covered commercial sand and gravel; 23, earthfill; and four, limestone. Of the 86 permits, 63 were for quarrying in Davao River, 20 in Lasang River, two in Matina River and one in Bayabas Creek in Toril. Construction materials like sand and gravel, according to Dapusala, are being sourced for infrastructure projects in Davao City, such as the coastal road. She said they continue to implement mitigating measures to preserve the rivers and their environs, the reason why commercial quarrying in the city is regulated. Dapusala announced that only a few areas remain for quarry permit applications. She said Davao City should come up with a resource sustainability and geohazards assessment to determine which quarry areas still have sufficient quarry materials. The Cenro, being the secretariat of the CMRB, accepts, processes and evaluates applications for quarry permits. An ordinance prohibits all forms of mining operation in any area in the city's territorial jurisdiction. Mining of gold, copper, zinc and other precious metals are strictly not permitted. In 2020, former mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio issued an order creating an inter-agency task group to address issues and concerns on all commercial and illegal quarrying operations within the city such as but not limited to earthfill, sand and gravel, and limestone quarry materials.

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DoST arms Baguio with geohazard mapping

To recall, the northwestern part of Luzon was jolted by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake with the epicenter at Lagangilang, Abra on 27 July and Baguio City was also affected by the temblor

BY ALDWIN QUITASOL

BAGUIO CITY—The Department of Science and Technology and the local government here recently launched the “Baguio City Ground Shaking Hazard Maps” in coordination with the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The project is considered as a significant milestone for being the country’s pilot study on seismic investigation of subsurface properties using methodologies applicable to the mountainous terrain of the City of Pines.

DoST Cordillera regional director Nancy Bantog stressed that the project is one of the outputs of the “Passive Seismic Stratigraphy of Irregular Topography” program implemented by the DoST and the city government of Baguio.

BCGSHM is a compilation of maps that provides information on the levels of ground motion and site response during strong earthquakes bases on the characteristics of the underlying soil and rock layers and the effects of specific topography like Baguio City.

Bantog said that this will definitely help the local government units improve their development plan towards an earthquake-resilient Baguio City, stressing that the hazard maps can help in the rapid urbanization of the city once it is integrated with the city’s policies and the City’s Land Use Plan (CLUP).

Phivolcs said that Baguio City — as a highly urbanized city ranked — 19th in the whole country when it comes to experiencing strong earthquakes in the past because of its proximity to active faults.

The most devastating earthquake that hit Baguio including nearby provinces and regions in North Luzon was in 16 July 1990 when a magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit Nueva Ecija which was caused by the movements along the Philippine fault and the Digdig fault within the country’s fault system.

To recall, the northwestern part of Luzon was jolted by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake with the epicenter at Lagangilang, Abra on 27 July and Baguio City was also affected by the temblor.



Marcos brings home P804B in investments

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRÉSIDENT Marcos Jr. returned to Manila late Wednesday from a two-country state visit, bringing home \$14.36 billion (about P804.78 billion) worth of pledged investments that will help boost the economy and generate at least 20,000 jobs for Filipinos.

The President said the pledges are contained in 10 letters of intent and 12

memoranda of understanding from 22 Indonesian and Singaporean investors involved in renewable energy, data centers, e-commerce, broadband technology, start-ups, government housing, and agriculture, among others.

“These investments, if we put it all together, value \$14.36 billion or P804.78 billion. This will support our country’s economic recovery efforts and create more jobs for Filipinos here in our coun-

try,” Marcos said.

He reiterated that his government will do everything to ensure that these pledges will be “completed.”

“We look forward to doing the work, the detailed work that is necessary to bring all of these proposals to fruition,” he said.

Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles said that the President, before returning to the country, secured around \$6.54 bil-

lion worth of foreign direct investments from Singapore, which could translate to 15,000 jobs. She previously said that \$8.4 billion worth of pledged investments would come from Indonesia, which could generate more than 7,000 jobs.

Angeles said topping the list of Singaporean investments to the Philippines are electronic tricycles, worth about \$5

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billion, to help lessen air pollution emitted by an estimated 3.5 million tricycles nationwide; a \$1.2-billion floating solar energy project; the setting up of a data center, worth \$200 million, which will employ Filipinos from the information technology and creative industry.

She said Singaporean businessmen also expressed interest in the “blue economy” and are expected to invest between \$10 million and \$100 million in the areas of marine renewable energy, water production, desalination, electric boats, and aquaculture, while investments on “innovation platform for start-ups” and on “women in technology” will get \$20 million each.

Angeles said that in addition to foreign investments, Singapore has also approved the hiring of some 10,000 more Filipino workers: 5,000 aircraft technicians for the aviation industry; 3,000 healthcare workers in the medical industry; 1,000 skilled workers in the engineering industry; 500 workers in the Education industry; and 300 workers in the IT sector.

Marcos is set to go on another official foreign trip, to the United States within this month.

‘SUCCESS’

The President said his visits to Indonesia and Singapore have been “a success” and “very productive.” He also said these enabled him to

discuss with his counterparts the Philippines’ relations with their two countries.

With Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Marcos said he discussed cooperation in the areas of defense, security, trade and investment; importing fertilizers and increasing coal imports from Indonesia; delimitation of borders; and commitment to stronger cooperation as fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

“Notably, President Widodo and I discussed the delimitation of our boundaries, respective to our continental shelves, which I hope can become a template for resolving conflicting claims,” he added.

In Singapore, Marcos said, he discussed with Singaporean President Halimah Yacob and Prime Minister Lee Hsien regional and global issues that affect security the region, and the coronavirus disease pandemic and the recovery efforts. They also witnessed the signing of agreements on counterterrorism, personal data protection, digital cooperation, water resource management, and investment.

“We were cognizant of our roles as neighbors and partners in Asean. We all share the view that in this time of geopolitical turmoil and uncertainty, unity, mutual respect and the principle of sovereign equality should always prevail in our efforts to uphold peace and stability and an environment conducive to our continued national development,” he said.



Electric tricycle, floating solar projects top Singapore investment deals from Marcos visit

ELECTRIC TRICYCLE and floating solar energy projects headlined the deals signed in Singapore during the state visit of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., the Palace said.

The electric tricycle deal was valued at \$5 billion, Press Secretary Rose Beatrix L. Cruz-Angeles said in a statement, noting that the proposed upgrades will curtail the air pollution generated by the Philippines' 3.5 million tricycles.

"The next top Singapore investment is in renewable energy, specifically the new technology of floating solar (power plants) valued at \$1.2 billion," Ms. Cruz-Angeles said adding that the top two deals align with the government's climate change goals.

A data center project was also proposed with an estimated investment of \$200 million, while various proposals were made to invest in the so-called "blue economy" or water-related ventures, such as marine renewable energy, water production, desalination, electric boats, and aquaculture, she said.

Investment pledges secured by Mr. Marcos during his state visits to Indonesia and Singapore amounted to \$14.36 billion.

Terry L. Ridon, a lawyer and investment analyst, said projects arising from these investments should be "coordinated well" with implementing agencies and local governments "to avoid waste and leakages."

"Certainly, investment pledges should always be welcomed by any government,"

he said in a Messenger chat. "But it is a different matter on whether the government can follow through and deliver on the pledges to the end-user."

Mr. Ridon called for the establishment of an investment tracker to ensure transparency and to notify stakeholders on the actual status of projects.

"This is not only for monitoring, but also to push involved agencies to work harder and ensure timely delivery of commitments," he said.

Mr. Ridon noted that the administration should be flexible with investment pledges in areas that have not been identified as priorities by government planners, particularly those that promise technology transfer.

"If these pledges do not involve massive amounts of public funds, and actually serve the public good, these initiatives can be incorporated into our existing programs," he said.

The Singapore investment pledges are expected to generate 15,000 jobs in the Philippines, according to Ms. Cruz-Angeles.

The Singapore government is expected to hire more Filipino workers for jobs based in the city-state, where 200,000 Filipino migrant workers are currently employed, she added.

The Palace said Migrant Workers Secretary Susan V. Ople has been informed by her Singapore counterpart of close to 10,000 new job orders for Filipino workers. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**



DBM raises climate change budget to ₱453 billion

By CHINO S. LEYCO

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) increased the funds for the government's climate change programs and activities next year in line with President Marcos' directive.

In a statement on Wednesday, Sep. 7, Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman said the government's climate change expenditures rose to ₱453.1 billion next year from ₱289.7 billion in 2022.

"Climate change, as they say, is already here with us to stay. The Philippines in fact is the third most vulnerable country to the impact of climate change, according to the 2017 World Risk Report," Pangandaman said.

President Marcos earlier vowed to increase the funds for climate change-related expenditures by an average of at least 15 percent yearly.

Under the 2023 proposed nation budget, climate change expenditures include avoidance of deforestation, monitoring of national and local climate change mitigation actions, conservation and protection of existing watershed and protected areas.

It also included are support to research on climate change adaptation, conduct of trainings on community-based climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, among others.

"This is in line with the budget message of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to fund climate change expenditures focused on food security, water sufficiency, ecosystem and en-

vironmental stability, human security, climate smart industries and services, knowledge and capacity development, and sustainable energy," she said.

There are eight strategic priorities of the 2023 national expenditures for climate change.

These are food security, water security, ecosystem and environmental stability, human security, climate smart industries and services, sustainable energy, knowledge and capacity development, and cross-cutting.

Implementing units are the Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Agriculture, state universities and colleges, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Foreign Affairs.

Other implementing agencies are Department of Health, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment, and Department of National Defense.

Also included are Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Tourism, Department of Transportation, and National Economic and Development Authority.

Lastly, Office of the Press Secretary, other executive offices, Civil Service Commission, and Commission on Human Rights. local government units and government corporations.



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Overcoming the struggles towards a net-zero future

CLIMATE CHANGE remains to be the biggest threat to humankind, as 2022 draws to a close, the time we have left to mitigate its worst effects is running out. The weight of the United Nations' goals of reducing global carbon emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 as stated in the Paris Agreement grows ever heavier on the global agenda.

According to scientific consensus, in order to avert the worst impacts of climate change and preserve a livable planet, global temperature increase needs to be limited to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Currently, the Earth is already about 1.1°C warmer than it was in the late 1800s, and emissions continue to rise. The Paris Agreement commitments have been made with this in mind.

The Philippines, for its part, has committed to cut greenhouse gas emissions to a 75% reduction by 2030. As a tropical archipelago, the country is set to bear the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change, from the intensified heat waves to the worsening typhoons, making disaster resilience and net zero goals critically integral to its development.

The private sector has stepped up to do their share. Industry giants like Meralco, Nestle, and the SM Group of Companies among many others announcing their sustainability commitments. The Ayala Corporation has committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gases by 2050, in alignment with the goal of mitigating global warming, while energy companies like the First Gen-owned Energy Development Corporation are making remarkable efforts towards making renewable energy readily available for the country's growing energy needs.

Recently, the Climate Change Commission alongside the Department

of Transportation and various transport groups vowed to accelerate the transportation sector's transition towards low-carbon and sustainable development in pursuit of the country's net zero commitments.

The pledge included finding and implementing sustainable pathways to limit greenhouse gas emissions from the sector, gathering of relevant transport data, promotion of clean and green technologies, and employing low-carbon strategies, policies, and programs not only to reduce or avoid GHG emissions, but to realize the common vision of sustainable transport, among others.

Furthermore, in a recent meeting with the G20, Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said that the country under the new Marcos administration is moving to expedite the country's transition from coal to clean energy.

"We will deal with the impact of climate change while bringing down energy costs through developing clean and RE (renewable energy) sources, such as hydro, geothermal, wind, and solar power," Mr. Diokno said, emphasizing the need to bring down the country's dependence on energy imports by developing renewable energy and indigenous sources.

Currently, data showed that only 29% of the country's current energy mix comes from renewables. The Department of Energy would like to bring it up to 35% by 2030 or to 50% by 2040, as outlined in the Renewable Energy Roadmap.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas also acknowledged financial stability concerns arising from climate change and other environmental and social risks that could significantly affect the country.

"While no net zero target is set yet, the Philippines has committed in Nationally Determined Contributions to reduce emissions by 75% below business as usual by 2030 (compatible with two degrees), which is the highest of Southeast Asian countries, but only 2.7% of this is unconditional, one of the lowest in the region."

"These risks, such as physical and transition risks, could result in significant societal, economic, and financial risks affecting the banks and stakeholders. Furthermore, the BSP acknowledges the important role of the financial industry in achieving sustainable development in the Philippines. In line with this, the BSP issued the Circular on Sustainable Finance Framework on 29 April 2020," the central bank wrote in its Sustainable Finance Roadmap.

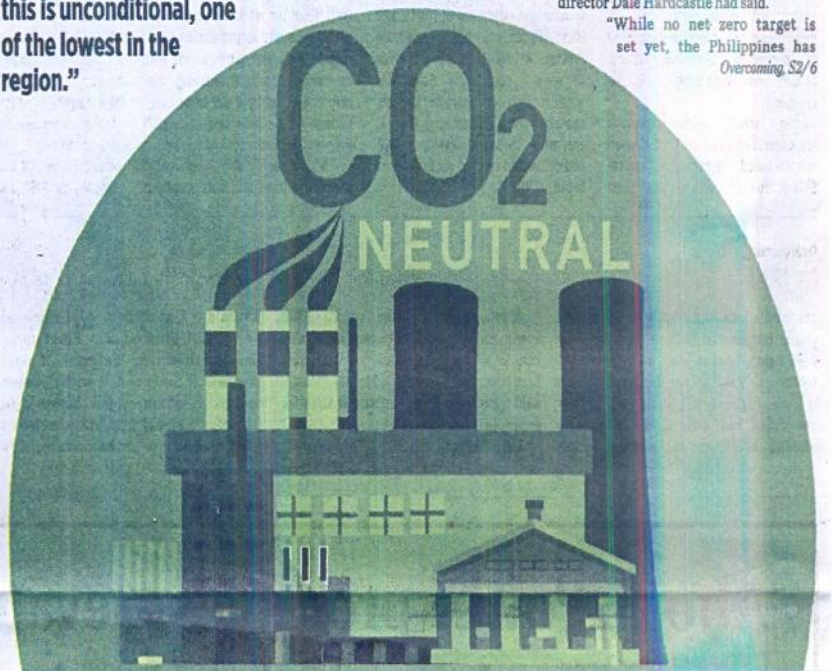
Yet, with the threat looming ever closer, the question remains: is this

enough? In a report last year titled, "Southeast Asia's Carbon Markets: A Critical Piece of the Climate Puzzle", global management consultancy Bain & Co. found that while the number of global corporations with net zero goals soared by 200% to over 1,500 companies, of which nearly a quarter are from Asia Pacific, few executives and leaders have set clear plans to deliver on them.

In the case of the Philippines, the country "has set strong emissions targets, but there is a need to put words into action," Bain & Co.'s Global Sustainability Innovation Center partner and co-director Dale Hardcastle had said.

"While no net zero target is set yet, the Philippines has

Overcoming S2/6





Growing business commitment in accelerated race to net zero

MORE THAN a mere move, the effort of businesses towards achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions or carbon neutrality is now seen more as a race to mitigate the heightening impacts of climate change. For over two years, more and more businesses have stepped up to do their share in assessing, reducing, and offsetting their carbon emissions.

According to its 2021 annual report, 2,253 companies covering over a third of global economy market capitalization were working with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), a global body that enables businesses to set emissions reduction targets in line with the latest climate science. This is a large acceleration compared to 918 companies recorded in 2020.

SBTi added that companies with approved targets are reducing emissions at an accelerating pace. In 2020, these companies collectively reduced scope 1 and 2 emissions by 12%, which resulted in a total-emissions decrease of 29% between 2015 and 2020, compared to a 25% reduction between 2015 and 2019.

Scope 1 emissions cover direct emissions from owned or controlled sources, while scope 2 emissions cover indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heating, and cooling consumed by the company.

"An annual 4.2% emissions reduction is required for 1.5°C-aligned science-based targets. A typical SBTi-approved company has been

even more ambitious than the 1.5°C trajectory, with a linear rate of 8.8% scope 1 and 2 reductions a year during the period with approved targets," SBTi added in its report.

The previous years have also seen corporations going public with their net-zero ambitions.

The Climate Pledge, co-founded in 2019 by Amazon and Global Optimism, has been inviting well-known companies to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, or 10 years ahead of the United Nations' timeline.

As stated on their website, signatories to the said pledge must agree to measure and report greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on a regular basis; implement decarbonization strategies in line with the Paris Agreement through real business changes and innovations; and neutralize any remaining emissions with additional, quantifiable, real, permanent, and socially beneficial offsets.

Since last March, The Climate Pledge has had more than 300 signatories. Among the companies that joined this pledge are consumer electronics retailer Best Buy, technology companies IBM and Microsoft, consumer goods companies Procter & Gamble and Unilever, software company Salesforce, wireless network operator Verizon, container shipping company Maersk, enterprise software developer SAP, and connected car and audio services brand HARMAN.



Investors and companies have also grouped together for Climate Action 100+, which is considered the world's largest investor engagement initiative on climate change. The initiative has 615 signatories as of 2021, accounting for a record US\$ 65 trillion in assets under management.

"These investors are engaging with 167 of the world's biggest listed corporate emitters and driving faster corporate climate action in line with the global goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 or sooner," Climate Action 100+ said in its 2021 Progress Report.

The report also highlighted companies' faster and more ambitious

climate commitments resulting from investor engagement through the initiative.

Bloomberg New Energy Finance analysis from September 2021, which builds on Climate Action 100+'s Net-Zero Company Benchmark, found that 111 focus companies have set net-zero targets for 2050 or before, compared to just five in 2018 after the initiative's launch.

"To demonstrate the scale of impact, it is estimated that these net-zero targets - which Climate Action 100+ investors have played a significant role in securing - will reduce GHG emissions by 9.8 billion metric tons annually by 2050, roughly equivalent

to China's annual emissions," the initiative added.

Philippine companies have also stepped up to join the global race to net-zero targets.

In October last year, Ayala Corp. announced its pledge to work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Each business unit of the group is expected to have its own regularly-updated net-zero roadmap.

Moreover, Globe Telecom, Inc., which is under Ayala Corp., is the first Philippine company that committed to the SBTi. More recently, Globe was included in the list of top 200 Climate Leaders in Asia Pacific, based on a special report developed by the Financial Times, Nikkei Asia, and Statista.

Among Globe's initiatives in reducing its GHG emissions, it has deployed over 8,500 green network solutions such as fuel cell systems, direct current-hybrid generators, free cooling systems, and lithium-ion batteries.

In line with the multinational's push, Nestlé Philippines is targeting net-zero as well by 2050. The company seeks to achieve the target by switching to renewable energy and implementing circular economy practices.

Office developer NEO, meanwhile, has achieved five-star certifications for net-zero carbon energy in three of its buildings under the Philippine Green Building Council's Advancing Net Zero Philippines Program, which verifies a development's net-zero carbon energy emissions.

Both Nestlé Philippines and NEO are supported by power distribution company AbotizPower in their net-zero targets. Both companies use 100% clean and renewable energy from AbotizPower's MakBan geothermal power plant.

Last August, building materials company Cemex Philippines announced its plan to be a net-zero company by 2050. It also introduced in its portfolio a new low-carbon and eco-friendly product line.

In just a few years, triggered by the coronavirus pandemic, targeting net-zero is now more seriously considered by organizations. Yet, with all the commitments and plans, achieving net-zero seems to be a starting point for better goals.

Economics researcher Oliver Miltenberger of the University of Melbourne and environmental policy expert Matthew D. Potts of the University of California, Berkeley stressed that while the world can keep global warming in check if emissions reach net-zero by 2050, there is still a need for GHG removal beyond net-zero emissions targets. The "real act of climate cleanup" is thus seen to only begin when more than net-zero emissions are eliminated.

"While net-zero is a critical step toward addressing climate change, it must be achieved smartly. And, importantly, it can't be the end goal," the researchers wrote in *The Conversation*. — Adrian Paul B. Conoza



Steps to reducing one's carbon footprint

THE WORLD has left enough carbon footprints, yet the path towards net zero is not an easy one. It stipulates major shifts across industries and nations.

But individuals as consumers should also partake in this vital journey for the planet. It could begin by looking at their carbon footprints and taking steps to reduce them, and then invite others to also help further the world towards net zero.

Carbon footprints, of course, vary from one consumer to another. Some people have larger carbon footprints than others, while some have lesser. A consumer's carbon footprint is commonly defined as the total amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated from their activities. So how could they reduce theirs?

Perhaps the first step could be paying more attention to one's surroundings. What has been happening with the environment? Having the knowledge and understanding of the state of the planet — GHG emissions, climate change, and their effects — could enlighten individuals on why it is crucial to take action now.

As consumers become more aware of the environment, they could also look into themselves and be conscious of their practices. Try estimating one's carbon footprint. Which activities significantly contribute?

A consumer's carbon footprint is usually determined through the amount of emissions generated from the energy used at home, the food they intake, their travels, and the products they purchase and use. As consumers recognize the "too much" across these areas (such as eating

too much meat, especially beef, but very little on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and nuts; relying too much on one's car in short distances even when it is possible for them to just walk; and keeping the lights or the television on even no one is currently using them), they could find ways to lessen or adjust their consumption to reduce their carbon footprint.

Aside from their lifestyle choices, consumers could also lessen their carbon footprint through practices such as waste management. Responsible recycling, for instance, can help reduce GHG emissions as it decreases energy use needed to create a new product.

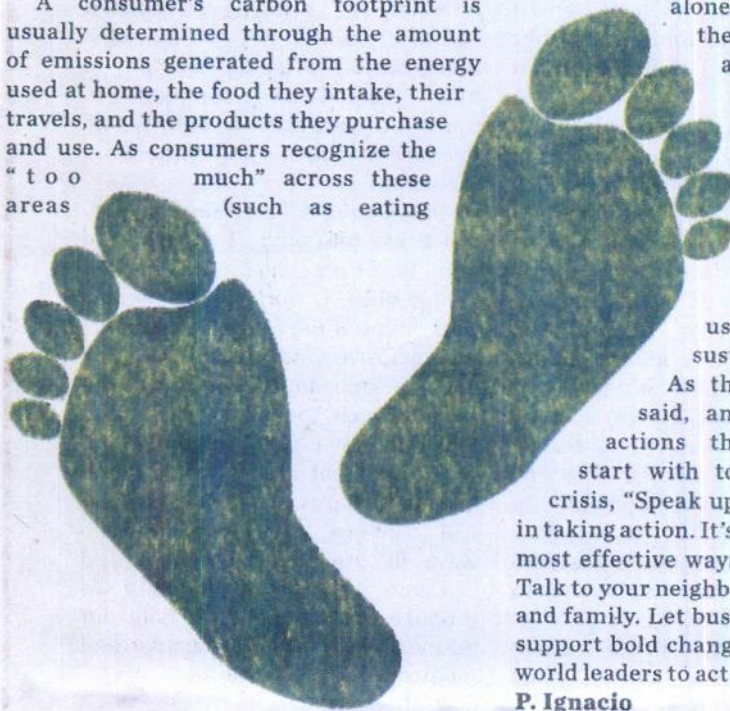
As consumers understand and take some steps to reduce the impact of their consumption on the environment, they could also invite others — their families, friends, and communities — to join in this path towards reducing our carbon footprint. They can raise their awareness about the state of the planet, the significance of climate action, and the steps they could take to lessen their carbon footprints.

But then, of course, changing some of the choices and practices of consumers to reduce their carbon footprints is just a part of the climate action. They cannot

shoulder the responsibility alone. Corporations and the government have a significant part in reducing the world's carbon footprint and eventually reaching net zero.

Hence, as consumers and individuals, they could take a stand and use their voices to call for sustainable development.

As the United Nations has said, among its 10 impactful actions that individuals could start with to address the climate crisis, "Speak up and get others to join in taking action. It's one of the quickest and most effective ways to make a difference. Talk to your neighbors, colleagues, friends, and family. Let business owners know you support bold changes. Appeal to local and world leaders to act now." — **Chelsey Keith P. Ignacio**





TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Public Notice

LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

It is hereby given that the DENR-CENRO at Cádiz City will accept oral or written offers not later than ten (10:00) o'clock A.M. on December 6, 2022 for the lease of the tract of land herein below described:

1. P.L.A No. 064518-52
Location: Barangay Punta Sabang, Manapla, Negros Occidental
Description: A portion of forebare area as shown and described on Lot Plan PB-064518-000052

Boundaries:
 N.- Oulmaras Strait
 SE.- Oulmaras Strait
 W.- Oulmaras Strait
 S.- Lot 206, Cad. 108, Manapla Cadastre

Area: 47, 158 square meters
Appraisal Value of the Land: P 108, 486, 40.00
Appraisal Value of Existing Improvements: None

The right to lease the land will be awarded to the person offering the highest annual rental which shall not be less than three per centum (3 %) of the value of the land plus one per centum (1 %) of the value of the proposed and/or existing improvements in order that a person may be entitled to participate in the bidding, he must be qualified public land applicant and must before the commencement of the same, make a deposit equivalent to at least three (3) months rental. Only deposit in cash, money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check or manager's check can be accepted. A person bidding in representation of another may do so under a duly executed power of attorney. During the bidding, the bidder has to make an additional deposit every time his bid is raised to complete the three (3) months rental, otherwise, such bid as raised shall not be accepted. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

MAMAD T. BARDAROSA JR.
Dir. CENRO Office

ARRENDAMIENTO DE TERRENOS PÚBLICOS

Se da por la presente que el DENR-CENRO de la Ciudad de Cádiz aceptará ofertas orales o escritas a más tardar a las diez (10:00) de la mañana, el 6 de diciembre de 2022 para el arrendamiento de la extensión de tierra aquí descrita a continuación:

1. P.L.A No. 064518-52
Ubicación: Barangay Punta Sabang, Manapla, Negros Occidental
Descripción: Una porción del Área de la costa como se muestra y se describe en el plano del lote PB-064518-000052

Límites: N.- Estrecho de Oulmaras
 SE.- Estrecho de Oulmaras
 W.- Estrecho de Oulmaras
 S.- Lote 206, Cad. 108, Catastro de Manapla

Superficie: 47, 158 metros cuadrados
Valor de tasación del terreno: P 108, 486, 40,00
Valor de tasación de las mejoras colindantes: Ninguna

El derecho a arrendar el terreno se otorgará a la persona que ofrezca el alquiler anual más alto, que no podrá ser inferior al tres por ciento (3%) del valor del terreno más el uno por ciento (1%) del valor de las mejoras propuestas y/o existentes. A fin de que una persona pueda tener derecho a participar en la licitación, deberá ser solicitante calificado de suelo público y deberá antes del inicio del mismo, realizar un depósito equivalente a al menos tres (3) meses de alquiler. Solo se puede aceptar depósito en efectivo, giro postal, orden de tesorería, cheque certificado, cheque de caja o cheque de gerente. Una persona que pague en representación de otro puede hacerlo bajo un poder notarial debidamente ejecutado. Durante la licitación, el postor tiene que hacer un depósito adicional cada vez que se eleva su oferta para completar los tres (3) meses de alquiler; de lo contrario, no se aceptará la oferta planteada. Se reserva el derecho de rechazar cualquiera o todas las ofertas.

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