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DENR to reopen dolomite beach on June 12

Philstar.com May 31, 2022 | 12:34pm



Families flock at the "dolomite beach" at Manila Bay, which was opened to the public on July 18, 2021. Visitors are asked to observe strict health protocols.

The STAR / Edd Gumban

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources plans to reopen the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach on June 12, Independence Day.

The re-opening of the controversial beach nourishment project was supposed to be in May, but was rescheduled due to infrastructure works in the area.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that's why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna said in an emailed statement on Tuesday.

Duterte is set to step down from office on June 30, to allow president-elect Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. to assume his post.

The opening of the dolomite beach will be held alongside the unveiling of The Heritage Canon, a World War II relic, in the Remedios area.

DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the 500-meter project, which forms part of the rehabilitation of the bay, will continue even after the Duterte administration, as issued by the Supreme Court in a writ of continuing mandamus in 2008.

Manila Bay Coordinating Office's Executive Director Jacob Meimban clarified, however, that those flocking to the beach can only visit the area, walk and view the sunset. Visitors are not allowed to swim in the waters since the quality is still not within the standards for swimming.

"Once it reopens, the DENR will allow 1,500 to 3,500 persons at a given time inside the 500-meter span of the dolomite beach to ensure that the minimum health protocols are strictly followed," it added.

Pre-registration is not required under Alert Level 1, but the DENR encouraged visitors to be fully inoculated against COVID-19 before their visit.

Earlier, the DENR said dolomite beach is intended to be reopened on June 3.

The project was first opened to the public in September 2020, and has withstood rains, typhoons and floods since then, Leones said.



Environment groups have been criticizing the project, which uses crushed dolomite or white sand, saying that it only focuses on beautification and does little in the actual rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

One month after it was launched, scientists from state university University of the Philippines opposed the project, [which led DENR labelling those from the UP Marine Science Institute as "bayaran."](#)

Dr. Laura David, institute director, said in response that they "stand by science." — **Angelica Y. Yang**



'Dolomite Beach' to reopen on June 12- DENR

Published May 31, 2022, 1:23 PM

by [Aaron Recuenco](#)

Authorities are eyeing the reopening of the controversial “Dolomite Beach” to the public on June 12, noting the significance of the date which is the Philippine celebration of its Independence Day.

Branding the Dolomite Beach as the legacy of the Duterte administration, DENR Acting Sec. Jim Sampulna said the reopening did not go on as previously scheduled as there are some infrastructures that have yet to be completed in the area.

“We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that’s why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s term ends,” said Sampulna.

The project, however, became controversial over allegations of misuse of funds and the propriety of developing the area into a tourist spot amid study that mangroves should have been planted in the area instead.

Experts also insisted that putting dolomite in the area is futile since it will eventually be washed away.

But DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas R. Leones said the 500-meter beach nourishment project, which started in 2020, has withstood rains, typhoons and floods yet remains intact.

“This proves that the dolomite beach, thanks to the assistance of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other agencies, is stable and will prevail,” he added.

Leones bared that the opening of the dolomite beach beside the US Embassy in Manila will be held with the unveiling of the World War II Heritage Cannon in the Remedios area “to encourage patriotism among the public and to signify that the battle to cleanup Manila Bay is not yet over.”

The Heritage Cannon is one of the original World War II cannons from Fort Drum Island situated at the mouth of Manila Bay.

Even after the current administration, Leones said the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach will remain part of the rehabilitation approach in cleaning Manila Bay in accordance with the writ of continuing mandamus issued by the Supreme Court in 2008.

Meanwhile, Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive Director Jacob F. Meimban clarified that the beach reopening is only for visitation, walking, and sunset viewing, and not yet for swimming as water quality is still not within the 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL) standard fecal coliform level.

Meimban is positive that the water quality will further improve by the end of the year as one station in the dolomite beach is already at 920 MPN/100 mL coliform level, as of May 13.

Before the start of the rehabilitation efforts, waters near the Manila Baywalk have registered an average coliform level of 5.75 million MPN/100 mL, based on the MBCO’s data in 2019.



Once it reopens, the DENR will allow 1,500 to 3,500 persons at a given time inside the 500-meter span of the dolomite beach to ensure that the minimum health protocols are strictly followed.

Meimban added that online pre-registration is not needed under Alert Level 1, but encouraged visitors to be fully vaccinated before their visit.



Manila Bay Dolomite Beach, bubuksan na sa Hunyo 12 — DENR

[Lolet Abania](#) | May 31, 2022



Ipinagtaggol ng DENR ang proyekto, paliwanag nila ang mga eksperto ay kanilang kinonsulta hinggil dito. Ang P389-M dolomite beach project ay makatutulong para sa flood control at mapipigilan din ang soil erosion

Magbubukas na muli sa publiko ang man-made beach na matatagpuan sa kahabaan ng Manila Baywalk sa Hunyo 12, kasabay ng selebrasyon ng 124th Independence Day ng bansa, ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Sa isang statement, sinabi ng DENR na ang reopening ng Manila Bay Dolomite Beach ay unang naiskedyul nitong Mayo subalit iniurong ito dahil sa ilang mga imprastruktura ang hindi pa natapos sa naturang lugar.

“We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that’s why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s term ends,” saad ni DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampluna.

Matatandaan na maraming environmental groups ang bumatikos sa nasabing proyekto, dahil anila sa idudulot na epekto umano sa kalusugan ng isang indibidwal ng crushed dolomite na ginamit bilang “white sands.”

Gayunman, ipinagtaggol ng DENR ang proyekto, paliwanag nila ang mga concerned agencies at mga eksperto ay kanilang kinonsulta hinggil dito. Gayundin, ayon sa Malacañang ang P389-M dolomite beach project ay makatutulong para sa flood control at mapipigilan din ang soil erosion. Unang binuksan ang Manila Bay Dolomite Beach sa publiko noong Setyembre 2021.

Kaugnay nito, ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas Leones, ang 500-meter beach nourishment project aniya, “has withstood rains, typhoons and floods yet remains intact.” “This proves that the dolomite beach, thanks to the assistance of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other agencies, is stable and will prevail,” sabi pa ni Leones.



Dolomite beach, muli ng bubuksan sa publiko sa June 12 kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng ika-124 anibersaryo ng araw ng kalayaan – DENR

By **Bombo Everly Rico** -May 31, 2022 | 7:40 PM

Muli ng bubuksan sa publiko ang kontrobersiyal na pasyalan na Manila Bay Dolomite beach sa Hunyo 12 kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng ika-124 anibersaryo ng araw ng kalayaan sa bansa ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Magugunita na inisyal na itinakda ang muling pagbubukas ng dolomite beach noong Mayo subalit ito ay ipinagpaliban muna dahil sa isinagawang pagsasaayos sa ilang imprastruktura sa dolomite.

Iginiit ni DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampluna na ang dolomite beach ay isang magandang legacy ng Duterte administration kung kayat target na mabuksan ito bago matapos ang termino ng Pangulong Duterte.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni Manila Bay Coordinating Office (MBCO) Executive Director Jacob Meimban na ang muling pagbubukas ng dolomite beach ay para lamang sa nais na bumisita, maglakad-lakad at para sa sunset viewing at hindi pinapayagan ang pagligo sa naturang beach dahil ang kalidad ng tubig nito ay hindi pasok sa standard fecal coliform level na 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL).

Positibo naman si meimban na gaganda ang kalidad ng tubig sa lugar sa katapusan ng taon habang ang isa sa station sa dolomite beach ay nasa 920MPN per 100 milliliters coliform level na batay sa datos noong Mayo 13.

Sa oras na muling magbukas ang dolomite beach ay nasa 1,500 hanggang 3,500 katao ang papayagang makapasok sa partikular na oras para matiyak na striktong maipatupad ang minimum health protocols.

Hindi na kailangan pa ang online pre-registration para sa mga bibisita sa dolomite beach sa ilalim ng Alert level 1 subalit dapat ay fully vaccinated kontra sa COVID-19.



DENR: Manila's dolomite beach reopening on June 12

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#) Published Jun 1, 2022 5:21:09 AM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 1) — The Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach is set to welcome visitors again on June 12, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced on Tuesday.

In a statement, Acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna said the event was moved on Independence Day “as some infrastructures have yet to be finished in the area.”

“We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that’s why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s term ends,” he added.

The reopening was initially scheduled in May and it was first rescheduled on June 3.

Manila Bay Coordinating Office executive director Jacob Meimban said swimming at the dolomite beach is still prohibited because the water quality is still not within the 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters standard fecal coliform level.

“Once it reopens, the DENR will allow 1,500 to 3,500 persons at a given time inside the 500-meter span of the dolomite beach to ensure that the minimum health protocols are strictly followed,” the agency said.

Online pre-registration is not required, but visitors are encouraged to be fully vaccinated before their heading to the dolomite beach, Meimban said.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the 389-million nourishment project, which began in 2020, has withstood rains, typhoons and floods, proving that it “is stable and will prevail.”

Leones also said that even after the Duterte administration, the dolomite beach “will remain part of the rehabilitation approach in cleaning Manila Bay in accordance with the writ of continuing mandamus issued by the Supreme Court in 2008.”

He added the reopening will coincide with the unveiling of the World War II Heritage Cannon in Remedios “to encourage patriotism among the public and to signify that the battle to cleanup Manila Bay is not yet over.”

The Heritage Cannon is one of the original World War II cannons from Fort Drum Island situated at the mouth of Manila Bay.

Source: https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/6/1/Manila-Bay-dolomite-beach-reopens-June-12.html?fb&fbclid=IwAR2QnG-dVklBzlm_TpB1ivgdc6fCRG9I21YmK4FnO49EOghlqKNVGtOanIU



Dolomite beach to reopen on June 12

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star June 1, 2022 | 12:00am



Members of the Manila Police District (MPD) arrive early to provide security at the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach on Tuesday (December 28, 2021) before dawn as it opens to the public for a two-day trial. The DENR sets an online appointment system for visitors wanting to experience the man-made beach front to avoid overcrowding and in observance of the minimum health and safety protocols by the IATF.

Miguel De Guzman, file

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Bay Dolomite Beach will be reopened to the public on June 12, in time for the celebration of the country's 124th Independence Day, acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna said yesterday.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) initially scheduled the reopening this month, but deferred it as some pieces of infrastructure in the Baywalk area have yet to be finished.

"The target is to open it before President Duterte's term ends," Sampulna said.

Jonas Leonen, DENR undersecretary for policy, planning and international affairs, said the 500-meter beach nourishment project, which was started in 2020, has proven to be stable despite rains and floods.

Leones said the reopening would be held together with the unveiling of the World War II Heritage Cannon in Remedios "to signify that the battle to clean up Manila Bay is not yet over."

He said the cannon is from Fort Drum Island at the mouth of Manila Bay.

Manila Bay Coordinating Office executive director Jacob Meimban clarified that swimming is not yet allowed at the beach as the water quality is still not within the 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL) standard fecal coliform level.

He expressed optimism that the water quality would improve as one station at the beach is at 920 MPN/100 mL coliform level as of May 13.

Before the start of rehabilitation efforts, water near the Manila Baywalk registered an average coliform level of 5.75 million MPN/100 mL in 2019.



Manila Bay Dolomite beach bubuksan sa June 12

By [Ludy Bermudo](#)(Pang-Masa) - June 1, 2022 - 12:00am



A woman takes a photo of the Manila Bay dolomite beach along Roxas Boulevard on Tuesday. The artificial white sand beach is closed to the public until Nov. 3 in observance of Undas. The STAR/Edd Gumban, file

MANILA, Philippines — Inihayag ni Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna, na muling bubuksan sa publiko ang Manila Bay Dolomite beach sa June 12, kasabay sa pagdiriwang ng Independence Day.

Anya, naudlot lamang ang itinakdang pagbubukas muli sa publiko nitong Mayo dahil sa ilang imprastruktura ang hindi pa nakumpleto.

“We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that’s why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s term ends,” ani Sampulna.

Sinabi naman ni DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas Leones, dumaan na ang 500-meter beach nourishment project, na sinimulan noong 2020, sa ulan, bagyo at baha ngunit matatag pa rin ito.

Nilinaw naman ni Manila Bay Coordinating Office (MBCO) Executive Director Jacob Meimban na ang reopening ay para lamang sa pagbisita, paglalakad, at paglubog ng araw, at hindi pa para sa paglangoy dahil ang kalidad ng tubig ay wala pa rin sa 100 most probable number per 100 mililitro (MPN/100 mL) karaniwang antas ng fecal coliform.

Naniniwala si Meimban na ang kalidad ng tubig ay lalong bubuti sa katapusan ng taon dahil ang isang istasyon sa dolomite beach ay nasa 920 MPN/100 mL coliform level na, simula Mayo 13.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/police-metro/2022/06/01/2185212/manila-bay-dolomite-beach-bubuksan-sa-june-12/amp/>



Dolomite Beach bubuksan sa Hunyo 12

By Abante News Last updated May 31, 2022



Inanunsyo ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na muling bubuksan sa publiko ang Manila Bay Dolomite beach sa darating na Hunyo 12.

Ito ay kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng ika-124 na Araw ng Kalayaan ng bansa.

Sinabi ni DENR acting Secretary Jim Sampluna na target nilang buksan muli ang naturang pasyalan bago matapos ang termino ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Aniya, nakatakda sana itong buksan nitong Mayo, subalit inurong ito sa buwan ng Hunyo sapagkat ang ilang mga imprastraktura ay hindi pa tapos. (Sherrylou Nemis)



MANILA BAY DOLOMITE BEACH MULING BUBUKSAN SA JUNE 12

by [Hya Ludivico](#) May 31, 2022



Muling bubuksan sa publiko ang Manila Bay dolomite beach sa June 12, kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng 124th Independence Day.

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting secretary Jim Sampulna, isa ito sa magandang legasiya ng administrasyong Duterte kaya't tinarget nilang mabuksan ito bago matapos ang termino ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Sa oras na muling buksan sa publiko, sinabi ng DENR na papayagang makapasok sa 500-meter span ng dolomite beach ang 1,500 hanggang 3,500 katao upang matiyak na masusunod ang minimum health protocols.

Sa ilalim ng Alert level 1, hindi na kinakailangan ang online pre-registration upang makabisita sa nasabing man-made beach, ngunit sinabi ni Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive director Jacob Meimban ang publiko na mainam na fully vaccinated na ang mga bibisita dito.

Source: https://www.dwiz882am.com/index.php/manila-bay-dolomite-beach-muling-bubuksan-sa-june-12/?fbclid=IwAR32LNDfIF113REjaddonInZEI16vKnS2MhJ5XSGkjYIXW9Nu5a_LX-ALeCo



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MANILA BAY DOLOMITE BEACH, BUBUKSAN SA PUBLIKO SA JUNE 12

Bubuksan sa publiko ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pamosong Manila Bay Dolomite Beach sa ika-12 ng Hunyo kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng Araw ng Kasarinlan o Independence Day sa bansa.

Ang artificial white sand beach ay nakatakda sanang buksan ngayong buwan ng Mayo subalit ipinagpaliban ito dahil sa mga imprastruktura na kailangan pang tapusin sa lugar.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that's why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," pahayag ni DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna.

Ayon naman kay DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones, ang dolomite beach ay sumailalim na sa 500-meter beach nourishment project na nagsimula noon pang taong 2020 at napatunayan na ang katatagan nito sa ulan, bagyo at baha.

Dagdag pa ni Leones, kasabay ng pagbubukas sa publiko ng dolomite beach ay ang pagpapasinaya naman ng World War II Heritage Cannon sa Remedios area "to encourage patriotism among the public and to signify that the battle to cleanup Manila Bay is not yet over."

Ang Heritage Cannon na nagmula sa Fort Drum Island na matatagpuan sa bukana ng Manila Bay ay isa sa mga orihinal na kanyon na ginamit noong ikalawang digmaang pandaigdig.

Paalala naman ni Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive Director Jacob Meimban na ipinagbabawal pa rin ang paliligo at paglangoy sa dolomite beach dahil wala pa sa 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) na standard fecal coliform level ang tubig nito.

Ayon sa opisyal, ang muling pagbubukas ng beach ay istriktong para lamang sa pamamasyal, paglalakad at panonood ng inaabangang sunset by the bay. - mnp



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Manila Bay dolomite beach, muling bubuksan sa publiko sa June 12

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Muling bubuksan sa publiko ang Manila Bay dolomite beach sa June 12, kasabay ng paggunita sa Araw ng Kasarinlan ng Pilipinas. Ayon sa Manila Bay Coordinating Office, pamamasyal at sunset viewing lang ang papayagang aktibidad sa lugar.

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Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pkzIf6Q9iU>



PEZA, DENR sign MOU to convert idle lands to ecozones

By Kris Crismundo May 31, 2022, 5:35 pm



ECOZONES. Philippine Economic Zone Authority Director General Charito Plaza delivers a speech during a ceremony for the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at the PEZA headquarters in Pasay City on Tuesday (May 31, 2022). The PEZA and DENR will identify idle lands across the country that can be converted into economic zones. *(Screenshot from PEZA YouTube channel)*

MANILA – The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) Tuesday that will help the former to identify idle lands across the country that can be developed into economic zones.

In her speech during the signing ceremony, PEZA Director General Charito Plaza said the partnership with the DENR aims to identify viable timberlands, agricultural lands, mining lands, and natural tourism sites that can be utilized as ecozones such as agro-industrial, agro-forestry, mineral processing ecozones, oil depots, and eco-tourism special economic zones nationwide.

“Creating different types of ecozone is the program of PEZA so we can protect the environment and locate the appropriate industries and enhance the responsible use of the land and its natural resources. This is PEZA’s way of fully industrializing the country yet protecting, not destroying, our environment,” Plaza said.

Plaza added that converting idle lands into ecozones is aligned with the goal of Administrative Order 18 issued by the Malacañang Palace in 2019, which supports rural progress through ecozone development in the countryside.

“This MOU signing will serve as an initial and broad framework of understanding between PEZA and the DENR towards the goal of identifying public lands nationwide that can be harnessed in a sustainable and environmentally-compliant manner, to spread ecozones because they are drivers of economic growth outside the National Capital Region (NCR),” she added.

The PEZA and DENR identified the Caraga Region as the pilot area of their partnership.

“As the country transition to the Presidency of President-elect Bongbong Marcos Jr., we in PEZA are positive about the economic outlook under the new President and we continue with our mandate of attracting investments and generating exports and jobs,” Plaza said.

Currently, there are 416 PEZA ecozones nationwide, of which, 105 ecozones are newly proclaimed.

There are 3,557 locators inside these ecozones, investing a total of PHP4.036 trillion since the PEZA’s inception in 1995. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1175551>



DENR lauds declaration of 5 new protected areas

Published on: May 31, 2022

By Department of Environment and Natural Resources

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has welcomed the enactment of laws establishing five more protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), which brings to 112 the total number of legislated protected areas nationwide.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte recently signed into law Republic Act (RA) 11684 or the Mt. Arayat Protected Landscape Act; RA 11685 or the Mt. Pulag Protected Landscape Act; RA 11686 or the Naga-Kabasalan Protected Landscape Act; RA 11687 or the Tirad Pass Protected Landscape Act; and RA 11688 or the Banao Protected Landscape Act.

With the legislation of new protected areas, DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna believes that “more people are realizing the importance of placing biologically important areas under the intensified protection of the Expanded NIPAS Act of 2018.”

“We welcome these recent developments in additional protected areas from our legislators. May this be the impetus of further environmental protection in more biologically important and related conservation areas,” Sampulna said.

It will be recalled that in 2018, RA 7586 or the NIPAS Act of 1992 was amended by RA 11038 or the E-NIPAS Act, which also legislated 94 protected areas under the System.

Meanwhile, DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) Director Natividad Bernardino reminded the community and the local government units near the concerned sites to “cooperate with the DENR in the sustainable management and effective administration of these newly legislated protected areas.”

The potentially active stratovolcano, Mt. Arayat Protected Landscape is located in Pampanga, while Mt. Pulag Protected Landscape, a dormant volcano and the third highest mountain the Philippines, straddles the provinces of Benguet and Ifugao.

Located in Mindanao, the Naga-Kabasalan Protected Landscape is a karst area of about 3,132 hectares covering two watersheds, Tipan and Busyawan, with perennial springs draining towards Bacalan River and then to Sibuguey Bay.



The Tirad Pass Protected Landscape is a historically important landmark in Ilocos Sur as the site of the heroism of Gen. Gregorio del Pilar during the 1899 Philippine–American War.

The Banao Protected Landscape in Kalinga is a merger of the Balbalasang-Balbalan National Park and Banao watershed area, and is home to the Banao tribe.

“Our laws would be futile if people near these areas would violate them, so we urge those who live near these areas to help the DENR in its mission to conserve these sites for the benefit of their children and grandchildren,” Bernardino said. ###



No open pit-mining activities in DavOr protected areas: DENR

By Che Palicte **May 31, 2022, 6:54 pm**



The Pujada Bay in Mati City, Davao Oriental. (PNA file photo)

DAVAO CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-11) and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB-11) clarified Tuesday that not a single open-pit mining exists within Davao Oriental's protected areas.

The agencies issued the clarification after an environmental advocacy group called on local authorities to move toward the full closure of an open-pit mining project in Davao Oriental located near the protected areas of Mt. Hamiguitan and Pujada Bay.

Davao City-based Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) said it was alarmed over reports that the Pujada Nickel Open-Pit Mining Project straddles the Mount Hamiguitan Wildlife Range, a UNESCO Heritage Site and protected by the Republic Act 9303, and the Pujada Bay Protected Seascape and Landscape.

However, DENR and MGB said the Austral-Asia Link Mining Corporation and Hallmark Mining Corporation (ALMC/HMC), both in Barangays Cabuaya and Macambol in Mati City, are nickel mines with valid and existing Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSA).

They also don't employ the open-pit mining method, according to DENR and MGB, as they use "strip or contour mining method only."

DENR and MGB's joint statement also clarified that an environmental compliance certificate was issued to ALMC/HMC, based on the study of the environmental climate of the area.

In addition, they said both ALMC/HMC are under care and maintenance status and have not operated since 2016 and that their locations fall outside the Mount Hamiguitan wildlife sanctuary.

"This office acknowledges the concerns raised by various environmental groups and advocates. Rest assured that you are heard and that the DENR is likewise putting its best foot forward to keep our environment and natural resources sustainably managed," the statement said.

The DENR and MGB also underscored the importance of "responsible mining."



“Metallic minerals, such as Nickel is an essential metal used as an alloy in the production of our mobile phones, buildings, transportations, power generation, electric battery for a new generation of electric cars to name a few,” the agencies said.

Last week, the city of Mati assured the public that the mining site of ALMC/HMC comprising a total area of 17,215.49 hectares is outside the protected areas.

When the Duterte administration imposed a nationwide ban on open-pit mining in 2017, both companies halted their operation. **(PNA)**



DENR imposes moratorium on new applications for seabed quarry permits

May 31, 2022 | 12:32 am



PHILIPPINE STAR/ EDD GUMBAN

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has imposed a moratorium on the acceptance of new applications for special exploration permits or government seabed quarry permits.

The DENR issued Administrative Order (AO) 171-2022 on May 2 after President Rodrigo R. Duterte's directive to stop accepting applications for reclamation activities.

"The President directed the DENR and the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) to put on hold the acceptance of all new applications for reclamation projects in the country; and ensure that the pending applications strictly comply with all legal requirements," the order read.

Under the order, there will be a moratorium on the acceptance of all new applications for special exploration permit/government seabed quarry permits until another presidential directive is issued.

A copy of AO 171-2022 was published in a newspaper on Monday. It will take effect after 15 days.

Seabed quarrying refers to the process of extracting, removing and disposing of quarry resources found in offshore areas. It is usually considered for massive land reclamation projects.

The PRA approves bids and awards for contracts for government reclamation projects.

The DENR issues the final permit for any company planning to undertake seabed quarrying and mining.

In 2021, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) received six government seabed quarry permit (GSQP) applications, according to MGB Director Wilfredo G. Moncano.

"We have a total of 10 officially accepted GSQP applications. We are waiting for their compliance with the Area Status and Clearance before we proceed to the next stage of evaluation. If they failed to comply with the Area Status and Clearance within the prescribed period, we will be denying their applications," he said in a text message.



Mr. Moncano said that there were another four GSQP applications filed before the moratorium that were still not officially accepted.

Meanwhile, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said that the DENR's order was a step towards ensuring that the local mining and quarrying industry remain environmentally sustainable.

"There is a need to align the global best practices on mining activities, in terms of sustainability and minimize adverse impact on the environment. Increased international compliance with [environmental] standards by both international and local regulators in recent years would place more stringent environment standards, by carefully weighing the environmental damage or impact of those activities over the long-term compared to economic gains derived," he said in a text message.

"This is also consistent with the increased need to sustain the country's marine resources amid the country's importation of fish in recent months," he added.

In December 2021, the government lifted the four-year ban on open-pit mining.

In April, President Rodrigo R. Duterte had also lifted the nine-year moratorium on granting mining permits. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

Source: https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2022/05/31/451772/denr-imposes-moratorium-on-new-applications-for-seabed-quarry-permits/?fbclid=IwAR0T5og-Pek46UtImip7XJselrMAvrrAsXGfcIA8n_X_58GKq38WuHlsn14



Duterte urged to cancel quarry permits, protect environmental defenders

ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 30 2022 02:01 PM | Updated as of May 30 2022 02:02 PM

MANILA - President Rodrigo Duterte must cancel the quarry permits in the Upper Marikina Watershed and the nearby national park before his term ends, environment defenders said Monday.

The suspension of 3 quarry firms leaves the "future unclear and open to all," according to Ann Dumaliang, project manager of Masungi Georeserve Foundation.

"If we only have suspension this could leave the place in limbo. Without a categorical cancellation, that leaves the future still unclear and open to all and that this suspension can be lifted anytime," she told ANC's Headstart.

"What we've been asking is the long-term protection of the area and the statement and order of DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) that these kinds of activities can no longer happen in this land."

The quarrying firms have been "involved to na extent in supporting other illegal activities and landgrabbers in the areas," Dumaliang said.

"They have been behind at an attempt for disinformation within the community level, passed on through government at the local scene," she said.

"Just because there's no extraction on the ground doesn't mean it's safe for environmental defenders. What DENR is asking us is to live with this tension on the field."

Supporting the conservation project is a "big legacy" for the outgoing administration, Dumaliang added.

"It is one of the celebrated conservation projects globally in the last 4, 6 years," she said.

"Imagine if the DENR is able to incentivize even just 10 organizations like us, you can restore forest covers in other areas in record time. it's an idea worth replicating. There are many many studies showing how important these watersheds are to the cities, communities that are reliant on it."

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/video/news/05/30/22/duterte-urged-to-cancel-quarry-permits-protect-environmental-defenders?fbclid=IwAR2EYhi5FRJdDyLJsu_KPyzFuvokk5mhtnUrfbwCnI92IW9mNqNBA_i oHYw



DENR-NCR conducts experiential learning in San Carlos City



May 31, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-National Capital Region (NCR) arrived in San Carlos City for their experiential learning on environmentally sustainable cities and coastal resource management last week.

In a statement, the city government said that the group will be observing the San Carlos City's best practices on sustainable environmental protection and enforcement on waste treatment, septage, forestry, coastal marine managements, and its regulatory functions.

DENR-NCR Regional Executive Director Jacqueline A. Caancan, said that San Carlos is their first choice since it has been recognized locally and internationally because of its sustainable programs for the protection and preservation of the environment with its comprehensive reefs to ridge approach.

She also admired how the city was able to effectively implement and sustain its programs that made it become a model in good environmental governance.

Former DENR Assistant Secretary Corazon Davis said the city demonstrated good governance in terms of sustainability and was able adapt to climate change and balance economic development without having to compromise the environment.

She added that the city has set the standards in sustainable program implementation through effective long-term comprehensive planning where she hopes to bring back the knowledge to the National Capital Region and apply whatever would be beneficial to their communities.

City Environment Management Office staff Marietta Lomocsol and Melvin Maglayon, Conservation fellow and Community Development assistant I of the Coastal Resource Management Division, facilitated the group's site visit to the Philippine Economic Zone Association (PEZA) registered special economic zone where renewable energy plants are located.

Marine sanctuary in Sipaway Island was also visited as well as the established septage and water treatment at the island's port side and the Galing Pook Awardees Public Cemetery, Memorial Tree Park as well as the City Public Market where No-Single Plastic Use Policy is evident.



Engineer Arthur Batomalaque, CEMO Integrated Waste Management and Pollution Control division head, presented to the group on May 26, 2022 about the city's sustainable environmental programs while they also shared how highly urbanized cities handle their environment including the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Project which include cleaning-up and water quality improvement, rehabilitation of the creeks or "esteros" sewerages, and resettlement of informal settlers and education and sustainment and its nourishment through laying of dolomite sands in the shoreline.

Mayor Renato Gustilo warmly welcomed the guests during their courtesy call and proudly shared the city's best practices including the city's on-going and future development plans as well as toured them to the City Hall Annex Building and the local DRRM state-of-the-art command center. **(PR)**



Ivatans receive land titles from DENR

By [Leander C. Domingo](#) June 1, 2022



The Ivatans usually live in these sturdy homes made of stones to withstand storms that usually come their way. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A TOTAL of 61 land titles were issued to 47 patentees in the towns of Basco, Mahatao, Sabtang, and Ivana in Batanes province under the "Handog Titulo" program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Registry of Deeds (RoD) in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley).

DENR Region 2 Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said this is part of the government's effort to expedite the granting of land titles in Batanes province to qualified applicants through a joint Handog Titulo program by the DENR and RoD.

"Through the Handog Titulo under the Land Administration and Management Program of the DENR, we fast-tracked the resolution of several land cases because we understood how important it is to have land titles," Bambalan said.

She said they are encouraging the recipients to make the most of their lands through livelihood developments that will contribute to the economic growth of the island province.

Bambalan also noted that since Batanes is declared a natural park, she urged recipients to anchor their developments to the province's protected area management plan.



UNTV News and Rescue 19h · 🌐

COASTAL CLEAN-UP DRIVE, ISINAGAWA SA IBA'T IBANG LUGAR SA MINDANAO

Nagtulong-tulong sa paglilinis ng karagatan ang mga kawani ng iba't ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan sa isang clean-up drive sa iba't ibang probinsya ng Mindanao.

Ito ay sa pagtatapos ng Month of the Ocean na may temang "Protect and Restore Ecosystems and Biodiversity" ngayong buwan ng Mayo.

Pinangunahan ito ng mga tauhan ng lokal na pamahalaan, mga tauhan ng coast guard, Philippine National Police (PNP), at Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), sa tulong ng ilang volunteer.

Sa Cagayan De Oro City, umabot sa 200 sako ang nakuhang basura sa baybayin ng Lapasa-Gusa. Marami sa mga basurang nakukuha ay food wrapper, plastic wrapper, styrofoam, plastic straw, mga bote, at mga gamit nang face mask.

Sa baybayin ng Masao sa Butuan City, nakakolekta ng mahigit 100 sako ng basura na puro non-biodegradable material.

Nakapagsagawa naman ng mangrove planting sa bayan ng Magallanes, Agusan del Norte kung saan 1000 mangrove plants ang naitanim.

Sa Brgy. Glan Padidu, Sarangani, Soccsksargen, 15 sako ng basura ang nakolekta.

Sa Davao region naman, nakakuha rin ng mga basura sa ilalim ng dagat ang mga scubasurero, kagaya ng mga bote at plastic na bumabara sa ating mga coral reef.

Ayon sa DENR Region 11, bunsod ng patuloy na pagsasagawa ng underwater clean-up sa rehiyon, kaunti na lamang ang mga basurang nakukuha sa kanilang mga karagatan at nakikita na rin ang pag-usbong ng mga coral reef.

Isinasagawa ang underwater clean-up sa Samal Island, partikular na sa Talikud Island sa Marrisa at sa Mabini Protected Landscape and Seascape.

"Let's protect and restore ecosystem and biodiversity, hindi lamang po ngayong buwan ng karagatan o Month of the Ocean, kundi sana, araw-araw maging buwan ng karagatan, maging Month of the Ocean," mensahe ni DENR Regional Executive Director 13 Nonito Tamayo. /fsg (mula sa ulat ni UNTV Correspondent MJ Vasquez)



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<https://www.facebook.com/UNTVNewsRescue/photos/a.272191939472893/8370469026311770/>



A green agenda for the Marcos administration

By [John Leo Algo](#) June 1, 2022



Employees walk past solar panels at a solar energy farm owned and operated by Valenzuela Solar Energy Inc. in Valenzuela City, Metro Manila on Saturday, May 28, 2022. PHOTO BY MARIA TAN / AFP

THE Filipino voters have spoken. Now, we can turn our attention to more pressing issues the Philippines is facing. None is arguably more overlooked yet vital to national sustainable development than the green agenda.

While the administration of outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte was able to accomplish a few milestones related to climate and environmental action, many long-running issues in implementation, coordination among agencies and priorities of top officials negated much of the impact of these achievements.

What outcomes should the pending term of Bongbong Marcos pursue for an ecologically sound and climate-resilient sustainable development?

Energy transition

Issues related to long-term energy security loom over the Philippines. It has the second highest electricity rate in Asia, partly as it continues to rely on coal to provide half of its power generation. Oil prices have increased drastically during the past few months. Most of these fossil fuels are imported from other nations, making their prices sensitive to global market trends that have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and other crises.

It is vital for the nation to establish a higher degree of self-sufficiency in its energy sector. The most obvious solution is to further develop its renewable energy (RE) resources, which currently provides about 25 percent percent of power generation. With a decade-old RE Law being fully implemented only recently, the groundwork must be made to achieve a 35 percent share in the energy mix by 2030.

Marcos, whose home province is one of the centers of RE in the country, needs to provide leadership in steering the Philippines toward a just energy transition. His government must enhance the coal moratorium to also ban coal plants currently on the pipeline, and avoid increasing our reliance on natural gas, another fossil fuel that is also largely being imported.

Also on this agenda is preventing the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, an infamous project of his father. Such a move presents significant security risks and extremely high initial costs that consumers would ultimately shoulder, deviating resources that could instead be used for RE development.



Climate action

With the Philippines being one of the countries at highest risk to the climate crisis, the Marcos administration must prioritize increasing its resilience to this global threat. For the past decade, the country incurred over P500 billion of loss and damage due to climate change impacts. The 10 most destructive typhoons in our history have all happened since 2009.

With impacts expected to worsen due to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide still increasing, improving the capacities of local stakeholders to avoid or respond to climate-related disasters should be prioritized. As such, the Marcos administration must not establish as currently proposed in Congress the Department of Disaster Resilience, which would centralize relevant resources and functions and make actions against calamities more inefficient.

Climate change impacts are more than just about disasters. The incoming government should ease access of communities to available funding to better adapt to the changing climate, especially the People's Survival Fund. Large amounts of local funding for disaster management have been left unused in recent years, a problem that must also be addressed.

Furthermore, a clear decarbonization pathway with a net-zero commitment and an established set of mitigation programs must also be publicized soon. As part of its voluntary pledge to the global Paris climate agreement, the Philippines aims to reduce its emissions by 75 percent within the current decade. In this context, the phaseout of coal, less reliance on other fossil fuels, divestment from dirty energy and RE development become even more important.

Legislative priorities

Among the bills that should be prioritized by the incoming Congress is formalizing the phaseout of single-use plastics, a proposal which has made progress in recent years. Another is the bill for sustainable forest management that would help protect the country's remaining forests and lead to more proper reforestation and the benefits they provide for groups such as Indigenous peoples. Upgrading the House resolution declaring a climate emergency a law to further accelerate climate action should also be at the top of their agenda.

Environmental justice

Days before the elections, the Commission on Human Rights released the findings of its seven-year inquiry that presents how fossil fuel industries can be held legally liable for their role in human rights violations related to climate change impacts. The incoming government must do its part in protecting the rights of its citizens to a healthy environment, now a recognized universal right, and ensure that the most vulnerable peoples receive proper compensation for any violation.

Environmental justice must also be upheld in other aspects, such as protecting communities from pollution brought by activities related to mining, a sector which Marcos has openly expressed support for expanding. From the Indigenous peoples near the area intended for the Kaliwa Dam to fisherfolk communities near the proposed Bulacan Aerotropolis, his government must demonstrate that no one's well-being should be compromised for the sake of infrastructure development.

The success of the green agenda is influenced by politics, but climate change and environmental impacts affect people regardless of it. Marcos has a lot to prove in terms of providing the leadership in green governance that the Philippines needs. Never forget that unlike presidential debates, there is no avoiding this. Never again should anyone be left behind in the pursuit of genuine sustainable development.



John Leo is the deputy executive director of programs and campaigns of Living Laudato Si' Philippines and a member of the interim secretariat of Aksyon Klima Pilipinas. He has been a climate and environmental journalist since 2016.



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



May payo si dating Ifugao representative Teddy Baguilat sa susunod na Environment secretary sa administrasyon ni president-elect Bongbong Marcos.

NEWS 5 DIGITAL



TEODORO "TEDDY" BAGUILAT JR.
DATING IFUGAO REPRESENTATIVE
MAY 31, 2022

@TeddyBaguilatJr



I hope the first official act of new DENR Secretary is to not spend on Dolomite maintenance. 'Di naman pwede lumangoy doon. Spend na lang on mangrove [reforestation], coral reef rehab, coastal cleanup, forest protection.

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Philippine Eagle Center in Davao mulls relocation to protect birds from avian flu

ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 31 2022 07:22 PM



Photo courtesy of the Philippine Eagle Foundation

DAVAO CITY — The Philippine Eagle Foundation said on Monday that it is eyeing to transfer its center to a new and bigger location here, a move to protect the critically-endangered national birds from diseases and infections such as the avian flu.

Andi Baldonado, PEF development manager, said they have identified the 50-hectare city government-owned land in Barangay Eden as the new home of the Philippine Eagle. The area is larger compared to the current 8.4 hectares land in Barangay Malagos.

"Sa Malagos kasi, there are more and more game farms around the center. Meaning, marami nang mga manok at kung anu-anong mga other animals that are within the residence of the area. So, this makes the Malagos area susceptible to an infection. Hindi na po talaga siya ideal for long-term plans ng Philippine eagle conservation like breeding," she said.

The eagles are exposed to farm and residential activities around the area since its existing location has no buffer area.

At the height of the detection of Avian Influenza H5N1 cases in some parts of Sultan Kudarat, Cotabato, and Davao del Sur last April, PEF intensified its biosecurity measures.

Only the keepers were allowed to access the Philippine eagle and they go through strict measures such as showering and changing scrubs, whenever they come in contact with the eagles.

A one-day closure was also implemented in April during the simulation activity to prepare for possible lockdown if a bird flu case is detected in Davao City.

"A single case of avian flu in the center can potentially wipe out all 34 Philippine Eagles that we have right now. That's why we have been staying on standby for a possible lockdown again if ever there's a case that will be detected in Davao City because we cannot risk having avian flu in the only captive breeding facility for the Philippine Eagle," Baldonado said.

However, PEF needs P56 million for the new Philippine Eagle site to develop enclosures, hospitals for philippine eagle, and others.

"We hope to get support from the government. But other than that, we are also going to engage our corporate partners, donors. So we will do a fundraising drive talaga for this kasi it's a very big amount of money," Baldonado said.



Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippine Eagle Center was able to rescue 12 injured and found eagles.

The PEF is preparing for the Philippine Eagle Week on June 4 to 10, which is a nationwide celebration in commemoration of the conservation of the national bird.

The foundation will conduct an exhibit in a mall in Davao City and will intensify their campaign on the protection of the bird.

The Philippine Eagle is threatened, among others, by deforestation, hunting, and shooting.

"Even if we continue to release eagles, we find that they are still continually being trapped or shot. Actually, 1 in every 3 birds that are admitted in the center has a gunshot wound or mayroong pellet embedded in its body," Baldonado said.

The Philippine Eagle is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) with an estimated number of only 400 pairs left in the wild.

- report from Hernel Tocmo

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/31/22/philippine-eagle-center-in-davao-mulls-relocation-to-protect-birds-from-avian-flu?fbclid=IwAR0zqVWBySt9PeWSNjgji6j3EGe6TeOQuJ3grPcrKUy-BCfJhMHE_3CWvg



ADB OKs \$250-M loan to help Philippines scale up climate action

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com May 31, 2022 | 5:03pm



In this photo taken on December 29, 2021, young residents carrying their surf boards, walk past houses destroyed by super Typhoon Rai, as they head for the beach in General Luna town, Siargao island, more than a week after the super typhoon devastated the island.

AFP/Roel

MANILA, Philippines — The Asian Development Bank said Tuesday it approved a \$250 million policy-based loan to help the Philippines in its climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

In a statement, the multilateral lender said its first climate action policy-based loan will help the Philippines deliver its climate pledge. The country, in its nationally determined contribution, committed to slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030, but a bulk of this pledge is hinged on foreign funding and assistance.

“It will support the Philippines develop, deliver, and finance a holistic approach to address climate change by transitioning to low-carbon pathways, strengthening the ability of vulnerable sectors to adapt to climate change, and increasing conservation of land and marine resources,” said Ahmed Saeed, ADB vice president for East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific.

The Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of human-induced climate change, which disproportionately affect the poor households.

ADB said the program will support reforms to enhance the resilience of farming and fishing communities to the increasing impacts of climate change, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the deployment of renewable energy and sustainable transport.

“We have a climate emergency, and all countries must come together and address the causes and adapt in a way that ensures food security, protects our biodiversity, and improves the well-being of millions of vulnerable persons,” Saeed said.

Nearly half of the planet’s population are highly vulnerable to catastrophic climate impacts, according to an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that said time had nearly run out to ensure a “liveable future” for humanity.

In a report, IPCC stressed that urgent and more ambitious adaptation measures must go hand in hand with rapid and deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2022/05/31/2185055/adb-oks-250-m-loan-help-philippines-scale-climate-action>



Govt to get \$250-M climate loan from ADB

By [Anna Leah E. Gonzales](#) June 1, 2022

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$250-million policy-based loan to support the Philippines in its climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

In a statement on Tuesday, ADB said the Climate Change Action Program will help the country fulfill its commitment to help advance global efforts to stabilize the world's climate under the Paris Agreement.

The new program targets policy reforms and will help the government build planning, financing and institutional systems to scale up climate action.

It will support reforms to enhance the resilience of farming and fishing communities to the increasing impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the deployment of renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport.

ADB said the program was prepared jointly with the Agence Française de Développement, which is providing co-financing of \$172 million to the Philippine government.



Phl greenhouse gas emissions commitment

[THE CORNER ORACLE](#) - [Andrew J. Masigan](#) - The Philippine Star June 1, 2022 | 12:00am

Last year, the Philippines made its commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions. Based on a business-as-usual scenario, government estimates that the country will emit 3,340.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide from 2020 to 2030. The Philippine government made a nationally determined commitment (NDC) to reduce this number by 75 percent from 2030 onwards. It is an ambitious target by world standards.

For those unaware, a country's NDC is a detailed plan and commitment on how it will reduce emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. In the case of the Philippines, the 75 percent reduction will be derived from the agriculture, waste, industry, transport, energy and property sectors. Of the 75 percent target, 72.29 percent is conditional or dependent on access to climate finance and technologies from developed countries. After all, the Philippines has little to no technological capacities in carbon emission mitigation. The balance of the target, or 2.71 percent, will be implemented through domestic reforms.

The NDCs of countries are the basis of the Paris Agreement, which seeks to limit the increase of global temperatures by 1.5 degrees Celsius. As we are all aware, to exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold will trigger changes in the planet's atmospherical balance and this could be fatal to all life forms. Time is ticking and nations are accelerating their respective programs to meet their carbon reduction commitments.

The Philippines is behind in its commitment and this is particularly evident in the property sector. As of 2021, only 200 buildings out of hundreds of thousands of edifices around the country are certified green. Most of these green buildings are prestige properties located in central business districts.

The Philippines will do well to follow progressive countries that enact laws to mandate, enable and incentivize property developers to pursue a green strategy.

How can the law be leveraged? The law can mandate a cap on the level of carbon emissions in new buildings. Some countries even withhold the issuance of construction permits if a proposed building exceeds an acceptable carbon emission level. In addition, the law must enable easy access to green technologies, renewable power sources and sustainable construction materials. The law can also incentivize the greening of buildings by way of reduced property and environment taxes or special permission to build higher according to the extent of carbon emission reduction.

The mandate to reduce carbon footprints can apply to existing buildings as well. Renewals of business permits can be made contingent on retrofitting buildings to reduce emissions.

Suffice it to say that the private sector needs to be nudged by government for them to pursue a green strategy. Now is an opportune time since buildings built during the construction boom of the late 90's and early 2000 are due for renovation.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is a member of the World Bank Group. The IFC has a program called Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies or EDGE. EDGE is a green building certification system focused on making commercial, residential and industrial buildings more resource-efficient.

Filipino property developers can consult the IFC, through its EDGE desk, for best practices relating to the physics, mechanical equipment, water efficiency and materials – basically all ways to reduce carbon emissions. Once the edifice is built, the IFC can certify it according to



three levels. EDGE Level 1 means a building has achieved a 20 percent savings in energy, water use and embodied energy in construction materials. EDGE Level 2 means savings of at least 40 percent was realized. EDGE Level 3 means net zero carbon emissions.

Going green offers many benefits outside protecting the environment. For one, it opens access to funding. Numerous financial institutions prioritize green projects and provide incentives for property developments that adopt green strategies. Such incentives come in the form of reduced interest rates, longer payment terms and lower equity participation from the owner. Apart from this, green buildings bring prestige, which increases its desirability and allows the developer to command premium lease or selling rates.

One of the barriers in the Philippines is the idea that adopting a green strategy is both expensive and complex. While this may have been true a decade ago, new technologies have made greening new and existing buildings simpler and more affordable. In fact, EDGE has rolled-out several demonstration projects to prove this point. These demonstration projects persuaded numerous land developers, including those in the low-cost housing and industrial segment, to adopt green technologies.

The IFC claims that investments in a green strategy can be recouped in two years on the back of savings on utility bills. Savings derived thereafter translate to improved bottom line profits.

The good news is that the greening of property developments in the Philippines is gaining traction. This year, 50 projects, with a collective area of 865,000 square meters, have been EDGE certified. In the pipeline are some 1.3 million square meters more. In fact, progressive local property firms like Ayala and Phinma have already gone public with their commitments towards being carbon neutral by the year 2030.

The greening of the property sector has begun but much must be done to hasten the process. Government involvement is a must. Again, the new government of Ferdinand Marcos Junior will do well to enact laws that mandate, enable and incentivize the greening of the property sector. There is much to do to catch up with our commitment to reduce carbon emission by 75 percent.

* * *

Email: andrew_rs6@yahoo.com. Follow him on Twitter [@aj_masigan](https://twitter.com/aj_masigan)

Tobacco's environmental impact devastating – WHO

June 1, 2022



NO-TOBACCO ART Health workers and doctors stand near 321 pairs of shoes and slippers at the Lung Center of the Philippines on Tuesday, May 31, 2022. The art installation called 'World No Tobacco Day' was held to commemorate the 321 Filipinos who die every day of tobacco-related diseases. PHOTO BY JOHN RYAN BALDEMOR

THE tobacco industry is a far greater threat than many realize as it is one of the world's biggest polluters, from leaving mountains of waste to driving global warming, the World Health Organization (WHO) charged Tuesday.

The World Health Organization accused the industry of causing widespread deforestation, diverting badly needed land and water in poor countries away from food production, spewing out plastic and chemical waste, as well as emitting millions of tons of carbon dioxide.

In its report released on World No Tobacco Day, the UN agency called for the tobacco industry to be held to account and foot the bill for the cleanup.

The report, "Tobacco: Poisoning our planet," looks at the impacts of the whole cycle, from the growth of plants to the manufacturing of tobacco products to consumption and waste.

While tobacco's health impacts have been well documented for decades — with smoking still causing more than 8 million deaths worldwide every year — the report focuses on its broader environmental consequences.

The findings are "quite devastating," Ruediger Krech, WHO director of health promotion, said, slamming the industry as "one of the biggest polluters that we know of."

The industry is responsible for the loss of some 600 million trees each year, while tobacco growing and production uses 200,000 hectares of land and 22 billion tons of water annually, the report found.

It also emits around 84 million tons of carbon dioxide, it said.

4.5 trillion cigarette butts

In addition, "tobacco products are the most littered item on the planet, containing over 7,000 toxic chemicals, which leech into our environment when discarded," Krech said.

He pointed out that each one of the estimated 4.5 trillion cigarette butts that end up in our oceans, rivers, sidewalks and beaches every year can pollute 100 liters of water.



And up to a quarter of all tobacco farmers contract so-called green tobacco sickness or poisoning from the nicotine they absorb through the skin.

Farmers who handle tobacco leaves all day consume the equivalent of 50 cigarettes worth of nicotine a day, Krech said.

This is especially worrying for the many children involved in tobacco farming.

"Just imagine a 12-year-old being exposed to 50 cigarettes a day," he said.

Most tobacco is grown in poorer countries, where water and farmland are often in short supply, and where such crops are often grown at the expense of vital food production, the report said.

Tobacco farming also accounts for about 5 percent of global deforestation and drives the depletion of precious water resources.

At the same time, the processing and transportation of tobacco account for a significant share of global greenhouse gas emissions — with the equivalent of one-fifth of the global airline industry's carbon footprint.

In addition, products like cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes also contribute significantly to the global buildup of plastic pollution, WHO warned.

Cigarette filters contain microplastics — the tiny fragments that have been detected in every ocean and even at the bottom of the world's deepest trench — and make up the second-highest form of plastic pollution worldwide, the report said.

And yet, despite tobacco industry marketing, WHO stressed that there is no evidence filters provide any proven health benefits over smoking non-filtered cigarettes.

The UN agency urged policy-makers worldwide to treat cigarette filters as single-use plastics and to consider banning them.

It also decried that taxpayers around the world had been covering the towering costs of cleaning up the tobacco industry's mess.

Each year, China, for instance, dishes out around \$2.6 billion and India around \$766 million, while Brazil and Germany pay some \$200 million each to clean up littered tobacco products, the report found.

WHO insisted that more countries should follow the so-called Polluter Pays Principle, as in France and Spain.

01 JUNE 2022, WEDNESDAY



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Manila Bay dolomite beach reopens June 12

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources is set to reopen Manila Bay's dolomite beach on June 12.

DENR Secretary Jim Sampulna said the beach will be reopened to the public on June 12 coinciding with the country's celebration of Independence Day.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12.

This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration. That's why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," he said.

The agency reset the beach's reopening from May to June since several infrastructure works have yet to be finished in the area.

Undersecretary for Policy, Planning,

and International Affairs Jonas Leones said the 500-meter beach nourishment project, which started in 2020, withstood rains, typhoons and floods.

"This proves that the dolomite beach, thanks to the assistance of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other agencies, is stable and will prevail," he said.



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Dolomite beach to reopen on June 12

THE much-awaited re-opening of the controversial beach in Manila is just 12 days away.

Acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna yesterday announced that the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach will be open again to the public on June 12 coinciding with the country's celebration of Independence Day.

Sampulna said that the original plan which was May, was moved on due to some unfinished details in the area.

Online pre-registration is no longer required under Alert Level 1, but visitors are encouraged to be fully vaccinated for them to be allowed entry.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that's why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," the DENR acting chief said.

The Dolomite Beach became the subject of criticism from the opposition after its rehabilitation started at the height of COVID-19 pandemic when the country still was groping for vaccines.

DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas R. Leones said that the 500-meter beach nourishment project, which started in 2020, has withstood rains, typhoons and floods yet remains intact.

Leones added that the opening of the dolomite beach beside the US Embassy in Manila will be held with the unveiling of the World War II Heritage Cannon in the Remedios area "to encourage patriotism among the public and to signify that the battle to cleanup Manila Bay is not yet over."

Heritage Cannon is one of the original World War II cannons from Fort Drum Island situated at the mouth of Manila Bay.

Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive Director Jacob Meimban said that the beach reopening is only for visitation, walking, and sunset viewing, and not yet for swimming as water quality is still not within the 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL) standard fecal coliform level. Joel dela Torre



DOLOMITE BEACH MULING BUBUKSAN NG DENR SA JUNE 12

SINABI ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna na ang Manila Bay Dolomite Beach ay muling bubuksan sa publiko sa Hunyo 12 kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng Independence Day.

Nakatakda sanang muling buksan ngayong Mayo, iniurong ito ng DENR dahil may mga imprastraktura pa na kailangang tapusin sa lugar.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that's

why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," saad ni Sampulna.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas R. Leones, dumaan na ang 500-meter beach nourishment project, na sinimulan noong 2020, sa ulan, bagyo at baha ngunit matatag pa rin ito.

"This proves that the dolomite beach, thanks to the assistance of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other agencies, is stable and will prevail," saad ni Leones.

Sinabi rin ni Leones na kasabay ng pagbubukas ng dolomite beach sa tabi ng US Embassy sa Maynila ang pagpapasinaya ng World War



REMATE OPINION

ANG INYONG LINGKOD

NI DR. HILDA C. ONG

II Heritage Cannon sa Remedios area "to encourage patriotism among the public and to signify that the battle to cleanup Manila Bay is not yet over."

Ang Heritage Cannon ay isa sa mga orihinal na kanyon noong World War II mula sa Fort Drum Island na matatagpuan sa may bukana ng Manila Bay.

Matapos ang kasalukuyang administrasyon, ang Manila Bay Dolomite Beach, ayon kay Leones, ay manatiling bahagi ng rehabilitation approach sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay ayon sa writ of continuing mandamus mula sa Supreme Court noong 2008.

Samantala, nilinaw ni Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive Director Jacob F. Meimban na ang muling pagbubukas ng beach ay para lamang sa pagpasyal, paglalakad at panonood ng sunset at hindi para sa paglalangoy sa kadahilanang ang water quality ay wala pa sa 100 most probable number

per 100 milliliters (MPN/100mL) na standard fecal coliform level.

Positibo rin si Meimban na ang water quality ay tuluyan pang maging maayos bago matapos ang taong ito kung saan ang isang istasyon sa dolomite beach ay mayroon na lamang 920 MPN/100mL coliform level nitong Mayo 13.

Bego simulan ang 'rehabilitation efforts,' ang tubig malapit sa Manila Baywalk ay nakapagtaia ng average coliform level na 5.75 million MPN/100mL, base na rin sa datos ng MBCO noong 2019.

Kapag muli nang nabuksan, papayagan ng DENR ang 1,500 hanggang 3,500 katao at any given time sa kahabaan ng 500-meter dolomite beach upang matiyak na masusunod ang minimum health protocols.

Dagdag din ni Meimban na ang online pre-registration ay hindi na kailangan sa itatim ng Alert Level 1 ngunit hinihikayat ang mga pupunta sa dolomite beach na maging fully vaccinated.



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Completion of Marawi sanitary landfill seen

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE construction of an engineered sanitary landfill in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur is expected to be finished by the end of June.

This was the commitment made by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna saying that the establishment of a sanitary landfill in barangays Malimuno and Kasanayan in Kapai, Lanao del Sur, will help "protect the health of the Maranao children and guard against groundwater contamination."

"DENR is moving forward toward the completion of an engineered sanitary landfill under its solid waste management program as prescribed in Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the

Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2001," Sampulna said in a speech read by Assistant Secretary for Field Operations-Western Mindanao Arleigh Adorable during the recent culmination program for the Marawi Week of Peace at Rizal Park, Marawi City.

Meanwhile, the land used as an open dumpsite in Barangay Papandayan will be rehabilitated and eventually be converted into good use.

Through RA 116961 or the Marawi Siege Victims Compensation Act of 2022, the DENR determined the most affected areas through social cartography or mapping as the lead agency in the Land Resource Management Sub-Committee of Task Force Bangon Marawi.

DENR Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs Michelle Angelica Go, on

the other hand, explained that RA 116961 serves as "one of the information sources for updating post-conflict needs assessment."

"These records also contributed to the mediation of claims and conflicts facilitated by the Land Dispute Resolution Committee and provided permanent shelter and allowed for the reconstruction of land records of Marawi City," said Go, who is also the head of the DENR Sub-Committee on Task Force Bangon Marawi.

The DENR also took part in facilitating the rebuilding of damaged properties while ensuring the authenticity of claims.

Under the program "Kata-gombalay," the DENR has successfully validated 3,914 property claims so far, allowing owners to undertake reconstruction.

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COMPLETION

FROM PAGE 8

"The goal and strategy to achieve the outputs of the DENR's role in Marawi rehabilitation is environmental peacebuilding, which is accompanied by achieving sustainable de-

velopment goals," Go said.

Peacebuilding is based on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/262, which states that the "overarching goal is to reduce the risk of lapse or relapse into violent conflict by addressing the symptoms, but also the root causes of the conflict."



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Septage treatment plant to rise in Batangas City

BATANGAS CITY: A septage treatment facility that can treat 80 cubic meters of wastewater per day will soon rise in Barangay San Jose Sico, Batangas City.

"As the city continues to grow in population and develop due to the proliferation of multi-scale commercial and industrial establishments, we must include in this progress the protection of our environment, particularly our water resource, by utilizing the infrastructure that will avert its contamination and degradation," said Vergel Angelo Paule, sanitation and wastewater department head of PrimeWater Infrastructure Corp.

The construction of the Batangas City Septage Treatment Facility is a joint venture of PrimeWater Batangas and Batangas City Water District (BCWD), with the support of the local government of Batangas City.

The facility is part of the comprehensive septage management program of PrimeWater and BCWD that aims to protect the health of the people and the environment by providing proper treatment and disposal of wastewater generated by consumers in the city to ensure the prevention of water pollution and contamination of the water sources.

"With the septage treatment facility in the works, we can ensure the protection of our groundwater sources from

potential contamination, thereby ensuring a safe and potable water supply for the present and future Batangueños," said Cristina Lipa, branch manager of PrimeWater in Batangas City.

The completion of the septage treatment facility with a treatment capacity of 80 cubic meters per day will serve more than 40,000 households and businesses in the city. The facility is expected to be completed within the year.

The project will also expedite desludging activities and encourage owners and users of septic tanks to comply with the mandatory desludging of septic tanks every five years, as stated in Section 8 of Ordinance 20, Series of 2018 of the Sangguniang Panlungsod and by the requirements set in Republic Act 9275 or the "Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004."

"Water is a series of services rather than a product; part of this service is to ensure that proper wastewater treatment processes are adhered to. And we can't wait to finally give our consumer a facility that will efficiently treat the wastewater for Batangas City," said engineer Romeo Sabater, vice president of PrimeWater Infrastructure Corp.

"We are confident that the strong commitment and collaboration with PrimeWater will yield immediate and future benefits for our consumers," added engineer Bernardo Hornilla, general manager of BCWD. **FREDERICK NASIAD**



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SPECIAL REPORT:

**Waste-to-energy:
Boon or bane for Phl?**

(Part 2)

By **DANESSA RIVERA**

24, 2020.

**Institutionalizing WTE
development**

Laws are also being proposed to institutionalize WTE development and expand the allowed WTE technologies in the country, particularly to remove the ban on incineration.

The Clean Air Act bans incineration, which the law defines as the burning of municipal, biomedical and hazardous wastes, which emit poisonous and toxic fumes.

In January last year, House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco said the government should consider the adoption of WTE technologies in the treatment and disposal of solid waste as many of the landfills in the country would soon be filled up.

"The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems," he said. "Before this happens, we must now look for cleaner and more sustainable methods to treat and dispose of solid waste, such as WTE."

The House of Representatives approved on third and final reading House Bill (HB) 7829 or the proposed Waste Treatment Technology Act on Nov.

The bill aims to allow the use of any WTE technology, including incineration, as long as it does not produce poisonous or toxic fumes.

With this, it seeks to amend the Clean Air Act by repealing Section 20 to allow the use of incineration for WTE purposes.

At the time, Velasco - one of the principal authors of the proposed law - urged the Senate to pass the WTE bill to help solve the country's perennial garbage problem.

The Senate version, which was authored and sponsored by Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian, was pending on second reading. But the upper chamber no longer has enough time to pass Senate Bill 1789 in the 18th Congress.

"It got overtaken by events. It was sponsored on the floor, but with six sessions days left, leaving it with no chance to be approved," Gatchalian said.

The senator, however said, he would continue to push for the passage of the WTE measure as he has been reelected for another six-year term.

"I will continue to push for it. The practical approach is to build WTE.

Turn to B6



Special Report

Waste-to-energy: From B1

The options are limited to immediately solve the garbage problem," the lawmaker said.

Empowering LGUs' waste management through WTE

During his nine-year tenure as local chief executive of Valenzuela City starting 2004, Gatchalian said solid waste management was a major problem of the city—it had no land available for MRFs.

In fact, he said, there are no MRFs in Metro Manila because it's not practical for urban areas, forcing 80 percent of LGUs to dispose their garbage in illegal dumpsites, according to DENR.

"Without MRFs, you cannot implement the 3Rs—reduce, reuse and recycle. That's where the problem is. That's why only 30 percent of our barangays have MRFs," the lawmaker said.

"To build sanitary landfills is expensive. You have to have big amount of land. You have to put polyethylene protection to prevent leaks and contamination of lands," Gatchalian said.

Based on this experience, he authored the Senate bill to primarily empower LGUs to adopt WTE as one of the several solid waste management treatment options.

"The problem with WTE is the feedstock. We have two complicated things in our system, one is the political cycle of every three years. The law addresses that. The mayor can sign long term contracts, there will be constant supply of garbage to the WTE. Second is the scale. The law addresses that by allowing LGUs to cluster together, become one big supplier of garbage," Gatchalian said.

However, the lawmaker admitted that WTE facilities still have harmful effects—similar to the impact of power generation, metal production, and fuel burning.

"I will not sugarcoat. This technology—like other technologies, such as coal, natural gas, steel, cement plants—emit harmful dioxins and furans. But these technologies also have a way to mitigate it. What's important is the technology to mitigate the harmful effects," Gatchalian said.

That's why the proposed law puts more safeguards for WTE—adding the health and environment protection in the mix.

"The DENR only answers the environmental side. But we added one layer, we added public health side. We required health impact assessment as another layer of safeguards," Gatchalian said.

Moreover, the WTE bill does not focus solely on the development of WTE facilities, but also adding a solution to the country's garbage crisis.

"The Philippines is one of the fastest growing economies. As population grows, so does garbage generation, growing at 40 percent. If we don't address this garbage issue, it will become a crisis because where will we throw our garbage," Gatchalian said.

Currently, all our garbage is thrown into sanitary landfills. But we cannot just rely on building more landfills since land is finite.

As it is, sanitary landfills generate methane, destroys ozone layer, emit furans and toxins.

The senator cited Singapore as an example. Our ASEAN neighbor is a land scarce city-state.

Singapore's National Environment Agency said its growing population and booming economy have contributed to a seven-fold increase in the amount of solid waste disposed from 1,260 ton a day in 1970 to a peak of 8,741 ton a day last year.

The country has four WTE plants, which reduce the volume of solid waste by about 90 percent, generates electricity and extends the life span of Semakau Landfill—the country's only landfill.

Harmful effects overshadow benefits

However, green groups say costs outweigh any supposed benefits of WTE—particularly the environmental, health, and climate impacts.

In July last year, environmental advocates challenged the DENR DAO on WTE development in a petition filed before the Supreme Court (SC).

The petitioners, represented by lawyers from the Philippine Earth Justice Center Inc., said the DAO 2019-21, which issued guidelines on processing biodegradable and residual waste for use in the WTE facilities, as well as on storage of wastes and by-products, do not offer a solution to managing waste and puts people at risk from toxic emissions.

Greenpeace said WTE causes health problems in nearby communities as it emits highly toxic pollutants, such as heavy metals and dioxin, which have long been linked to immune system impairment and cancer.

This technology also emits particulate matter associated with respiratory illnesses, reduced life expectancy, and increased death rates from cardiovascular diseases.

"Experts and studies on WTE have revealed serious health and environmental risks due to emissions of carcinogenic dioxins, heavy metals, and greenhouse gases, which drive the climate crisis. Such technologies lead to direct and indirect exposure to toxic substances for workers and nearby communities, which includes inhalation of polluted air and ingestion of food grown in an environment contaminated with these substances. Toxins from emissions, fly ash, and slag in a burn pile can travel long distances and deposit in soil and water, eventually entering human bodies after being accumulated in the tissues of plants and animals," Ledesma said.

In Davao City, the city government already acquired a 10-hectare lot for the proposed WTE project planned with Kitakyushi of Japan and JICA.

The proposed project will be put up in an agricultural area producing coconut, mangoes among others, Plastic-Free Pili-pinas Project regional coordinator for Mindanao Jill Banta said.

Moreover, based on interviews and data gathering, communities surrounding the proposed WTE project have no idea what the project is for as there were not enough public consultations done.

"I think even the barangay officials don't even know the potential impacts of the project and there's no resistance from communities," Banta said.

"I'm not from the barangay where the incinerator will be put up, but the impacts are projected to reach my barangay because it's still part of the 10-kilometer radius from the incinerator," she said.

So far, the proposed project has not progressed as it was reverted to the DENR upon the recommendation of the Davao Regional Council, which is currently reassessing the urban masterplan for the proposed Metro Davao area.

"We're thinking of legal actions, but at this part of the timeline, we're organizing information and education campaigns in the surrounding communities. We're also thinking of going to JICA to request that they cancel their support and funding... given that the project violates their guidelines," Banta said.

In Cebu City, several groups had opposed the proposal of New Sky Energy Philippines Inc. to establish an incinerator based WTE project.

Among those that presented their position to the Cebu City council was the PECJ in December last year.

Without any news of development since then, the Cebu City Council approved last March a joint venture agreement (JVA) with New Sky Energy Philippines Inc. for the project and is now up for Swiss challenge.

PECJ litigation associate Kristine Joy Argallon said the city council is aggressively trying to integrate WTE even if it is not included in the 10-year solid waste management plan under the law.

The JVA was signed even if the partners have yet to identify the specific location of the WTE facility.

"There were no IEC consultations or public hearings conducted contrary to what they said in December," Argallon said



Even as the city council pushes the project as an energy project, she explained that a WTE facility uses more electricity to burn solid waste than to generate electricity.

"The benefit of the energy component of the WTE is minimal. And while it can minimize solid waste, it is converted into a different type of waste that's toxic for people," Argallon said.

Danica Castillo of Break Free From Plastic (BFFP) said WTE is only seen as a band aid solution since it needs a certain quota for garbage to do its job, which encourages the production of solid waste instead of reducing it.

"You're not addressing the waste problem. You're not nipping it in the bud," she said.

WTE facilities are also economically and financially troubling for LGUs given the tipping and transport fees alone to provide the feedstock from solid waste.

Based on PECJ's calculations, the tipping and transport fees amount to P1 million for a minimum 800 tons of solid waste to be fed to the WTE facility.

"That's how many hundreds of million pesos a year and that's 40 years if they are locked into a contract. How will we allow this to continue for 40 years? The efforts to reduce waste at source is sidelined," Argallon said.

Moreover, not all LGUs produce the same amount of solid waste that could feed a WTE plant.

Under the proposed WTE law, LGUs can cluster together to be able to meet the quota of garbage to power a WTE project.

But if an LGU imports garbage from other locations, it would produce more pollution from transporting these solid wastes from one place to another.

"In other countries, they have to import biomass/WTW to feed their plants. And that is also not environmentally correct, because if you import, you're going to transport these huge quantities of biomass and that will affect the climate because of the pollution from the transport," said Pedro Maniego Jr., senior policy advisor of Manila based climate and energy policy group Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC).

Instead, government should focus on safer, environmentally friendly practices to solve the country's waste problems.

"We're advocating for regulation and the ban of use of single plastics. We're also advocating for a zero waste lifestyle and holding polluters accountable," BFFP's Castillo said.

In a report published last March, Tokyo-based Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) said that transitioning to a circular economy could build better growth and create more value with fewer materials. ADBI is Manila-based ADB's think tank.

The Philippines, at present, has no integrated circular economy strategy or policy framework that exists in the Philippines.

While a circular economy will not happen overnight, the country needs to implement changes and reforms, institutional and policy-wise, a lawyer and legal policy consultant Gregorio Rafael Bueta said in the ADBI report.

"That is why it is necessary to have a plan or roadmap for the journey toward a circular economy. This can also begin with an assessment of the current policy landscape to see what current policies already support the circular economy; what the gaps are; and most importantly what resources are needed to make it happen," he said.

The country also requires not just a whole-of-government, but a whole-of-society approach to address the waste problem, the author said.

"Legislators and politicians, must have the political will to enact bold law and policies for a circular economy. This must be met with an equal commitment to see its full implementation and enforcement," Bueta said.

"The private sector also must be involved, as investments and innovation cannot solely be done by the government. Non-government and civil society organizations, especially those already implementing small-scale and 'backyard' circular economy programs, also play an important role. Lastly, the buy-in of citizens must be secured to ensure their participation in the system and compliance with any new regulation," he said.



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THE CORNER ORACLE

ANDREW J. MASIGAN

Phl greenhouse gas emissions commitment

Last year, the Philippines made its commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions. Based on a business-as-usual scenario, government estimates that the country will emit 3,340.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide from 2020



to 2030. The Philippine government made a nationally determined commitment (NDC) to reduce this number by 75 percent from 2030 onwards. It is an ambitious target by world standards.

For those unaware, a country's NDC is a detailed plan and commitment on how it will reduce emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. In the case of the Philippines, the 75 percent reduction will be derived from the agriculture, waste, industry, transport, energy and property sectors. Of the 75 percent target, 72.29 percent is conditional or dependent on access to climate finance and technologies from developed countries. After all, the Philippines has little to no technological capacities in carbon emission mitigation. The balance of the target, or 2.71 percent, will be implemented through domestic reforms.

The NDCs of countries are the basis of the Paris Agreement, which seeks to limit the increase of global temperatures by 1.5 degrees Celsius. As we are all aware, to exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold will trigger changes in the planet's atmospheric balance and this could be fatal to all life forms. Time is ticking and nations are accelerating their respective programs to meet their carbon reduction commitments.

The Philippines is behind in its commitment and this is particularly evident in the property sector. As of 2021, only 200 buildings out of hundreds of thousands of edifices around the country are certified green. Most of these green buildings are prestige properties located in central business districts.

The Philippines will do well to follow progressive countries that enact laws to mandate, enable and incentivize property developers to pursue a green strategy.

How can the law be leveraged? The law can mandate a cap on the level of carbon emissions in new buildings. Some countries even withhold the issuance of construction permits if a proposed building exceeds an acceptable carbon emission level. In addition, the law must enable easy access to green technologies, renewable power sources and sustainable construction materials. The law can also incentivize the greening of buildings by way of reduced property and environment taxes or special permission to build higher according to the extent of carbon emission reduction.

The mandate to reduce carbon footprints can apply to existing buildings as well. Renewals of business permits can be made contingent on retrofitting buildings to reduce emissions.

Suffice it to say that the private sector needs to be nudged by government for them to pursue a green strategy. Now is an opportune time since buildings built during the construction boom of the late 90's and early 2000 are due for renovation.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is a member of the World Bank Group. The IFC has a program called Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies or EDGE. EDGE is a green building certification system focused on making commercial, residential and industrial buildings more resource-efficient.

Filipino property developers can consult the IFC, through its EDGE desk, for best practices relating to the physics, mechanical equipment, water efficiency and materials – basically all ways to reduce carbon emissions. Once the edifice is built, the IFC can certify it according to three levels. EDGE Level 1 means a building has achieved a 20 percent savings in energy, water use and embodied energy in construction materials. EDGE Level 2 means savings of at least 40 percent was realized. EDGE Level 3 means net zero carbon emissions.

Going green offers many benefits outside protecting the environment. For one, it opens access to funding. Numerous financial institutions prioritize green projects and provide incentives for property developments that adopt green strategies. Such incentives come in the form of reduced interest rates, longer payment terms and lower equity participation from the owner. Apart from this, green buildings bring prestige, which increases its desirability and allows the developer to command premium lease or selling rates.

One of the barriers in the Philippines is the idea that adopting a green strategy is both expensive and complex. While this may have been true a decade ago, new technologies have made greening new and existing buildings simpler and more affordable. In fact, EDGE has rolled-out several demonstration projects to prove this point. These demonstration projects persuaded numerous land developers, including those in the low-cost housing and industrial segment, to adopt green technologies.

The IFC claims that investments in a green strategy can be recouped in two years on the back of savings on utility bills. Savings derived thereafter translate to improved bottom line profits.

The good news is that the greening of property developments in the Philippines is gaining traction. This year, 50 projects, with a collective area of 865,000 square meters, have been EDGE certified. In the pipeline are some 1.3 million square meters more. In fact, progressive local property firms like Ayala and Phinma have already gone public with their commitments towards being carbon neutral by the year 2030.

The greening of the property sector has begun but much must be done to hasten the process. Government involvement is a must. Again, the new government of Ferdinand Marcos Junior will do well to enact laws that mandate, enable and incentivize the greening of the property sector. There is much to do to catch up with our commitment to reduce carbon emission by 75 percent.

* * *

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BSP

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno (top row, center) with the attendees of the 21st Financial Stability Board Regional Consultative Group for Asia meeting.

Climate change, geopolitics elevate financial risk

Climate risks, rising commodity prices, the war in Ukraine, and the wild inflation swings threaten financial stability across the globe.

Financial Stability Board Regional Consultative Group for Asia tackled climate-related financial risks during a recent online FSB-RCGA meeting. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Benjamin Diokno led affair.

The meeting also convened senior representatives of financial and supervisory authorities from key Asian economies to discuss economic market developments related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including elevated and highly volatile commodity prices and the implications for financial stability.

FSB-RCGA members shared their progress on actions to address financial risks from climate change, provided updates on the FSB's overall work program,

and identified areas where RCGA members can contribute.

The FSB RCGA is co-chaired by Governor Diokno and Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Rajeshwar Rao.

Some senior officials who attended the meeting include RBI executive director Saurav Sinha, FSB Deputy Secretary-General Rupert Thorne, Bank Indonesia Deputy Governor Juda Agung, Bank Negara Malaysia Deputy Governor Jessica Chew Cheng Lian, and Ministry of Finance (India) Senior Economic Adviser Shashank Saksena. More than 60 participants from 16 jurisdictions attended the meeting.

Members of the RCGA include financial authorities from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

EDJEN OLIQUINO



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
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The Manila Times

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DoH launches smoke-free beaches campaign

BY RED MENDOZA

IN celebration of World No Tobacco Day, the Department of Health (DoH) has launched a campaign that promotes smoke-free beaches, parks, and tourist destinations across the country, starting in Boracay Island and in Aklan province.

The campaign, which is in collaboration with Viral Strategies and Smoke Free Philippines, aims to showcase tourist destinations as pilot areas for smoke-free beaches.

The Smoke-Free Beaches campaign will begin at Station 2 in Boracay, before moving to other premiere beach destinations and beaches such as in Caramoan and in Palawan.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque

3rd said the initiative was developed to protect beaches, parks and tourist destinations from the environmental ill-effects of tobacco.

"With this, we hope to further raise awareness and create new areas of impact in our overall effort to ensure the health of the Filipino people," Duque added.

He hopes that the campaign will unify the goal of the DoH in providing universal health care, which also

includes "giving families an environment that lets them enjoy healthily without exposure to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke."

Around 4.5 trillion cigarettes become waste and 4.2 million cigarette butts end up in beaches and waterways. Moreover, according to global tobacco industry watchdog Stopping Tobacco Organizations and Products (STOP), plastic and chemical contents in cigarette filters have been shown to destroy marine life and water quality.

In a related story, 321 pairs of shoes and slippers were displayed at the main lobby of the Lung Center of the Philippines to commemorate 321 Filipinos who die every day due to tobacco-related diseases.

The art installation signified the call to have stronger tobacco control legislation in order to save more lives.

Dr. Jessica Catalan-Legarda,

chairman for advocacy of the Lung Center of the Philippines, said there should be an ecosystem of policies that would make it easier for Filipinos to quit the "deadly habit of smoking."

"Raising taxes on tobacco products and banning their advertising, promotions, and sponsorships are just some of the policies needed to create a healthier environment for Filipinos," she added.

Dr. Glynna Ong-Cabrera, project director of the DoH Quitline program, said that quitting smoking is not just a matter of personal responsibility, noting that tobacco companies continue to sell and market these products.

She added that tobacco products are designed to make it difficult for smokers to quit, which could put them at risk in developing tobacco-related diseases that could lead to death.



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Miracle fuel hydrogen can make climate change worse

A WORLD desperate for a climate-friendly fuel is pinning its hopes on hydrogen, seeing it as a way to power factories, buildings, ships and planes without pumping carbon dioxide into the sky.

But now scientists are warning that hydrogen leaked into the atmosphere can contribute to climate change much like carbon. Depending on how it's made, distributed and used, it could even make warming worse over the next few decades, even if carbon poses the bigger long-term threat. Any future hydrogen-based economy, they say, must be designed from the start to keep leaks of the gas to a minimum, or it risks adding to the very problem it's supposed to solve. Some ideas now being tested, like shipping hydrogen in pipelines built to hold natural gas or burning it in individual homes, could cause an unacceptable level of leaks.

"The potency is a lot stronger than people realize," said Ilissa Ocko, a climate scientist with the Environmental Defense Fund, a non-profit group. "We're putting this on everyone's radar now not to say 'no' to hydrogen but to think about how we deploy it."

Hydrogen doesn't trap heat directly, the way CO₂ does. Instead, when leaked it sets off a series of chemical reactions that warm the air, acting as an indirect greenhouse gas. And though it cycles out of the atmosphere far faster than carbon dioxide (CO₂), which lingers for centuries, it can do more damage than CO₂ in the short term. Over 20 years, it has 33 times the global warming potential of an equal amount of carbon dioxide, according to a recent UK government report. Over hundreds of years, carbon is more dangerous, due to its longevity.

Hydrogen's warming potential was never a problem before, as its use was largely limited to oil refineries and chemical or fertilizer plants. But now governments

worldwide are investing billions to build a hydrogen economy, seeing the gas as one of the only options for decarbonizing many industries that can't easily run on electricity. President Joseph R. Biden has set aside \$8 billion to build at least four "hydrogen hubs" where the fuel will be produced and used, and states are gearing up to compete. US utility companies that now deliver natural gas see it as a savior, announcing more than two dozen hydrogen pilot projects in the last two years.

"Now is when decisions are being made, and money's being spent," Ms. Ocko said. "We can get ahead of this issue now, so it doesn't become a problem."

She and others sounding this alarm insist it's no reason to give up on hydrogen. Rather, hydrogen's heat-trapping power means any future system for producing, distributing and using the gas must be built to minimize leaks.

"There is great potential using hydrogen to save a lot of emissions of carbon dioxide, but it's really important to keep the hydrogen leakage rates down," said Nicola Warwick, lead author of the UK study and a National Centre for Atmospheric Science research scientist at the University of Cambridge.

The hydrogen industry acknowledges the problem, even if companies disagree on the potential scope. Dave Edwards, with industrial gas company Air Liquide, said the effects of hydrogen leaks on the atmosphere should be far less than the traditional fuels they displace. Running cars and trucks on hydrogen fuel cells would have less atmospheric impact than running them on gasoline and diesel, even if the system for making and delivering that hydrogen leaks.

"It doesn't mean it's not still important, it doesn't mean we don't need to understand more about it, but our first

impression is it's much, much smaller," said Mr. Edwards, a director with the company and its chief hydrogen advocate in the US. Hydrogen leaks, he said, "are manageable problems to address."

Hydrogen has big advantages as a clean fuel. Burn hydrogen in a turbine, and it will generate power without carbon dioxide. Run it through a fuel cell, and it will produce electricity with water vapor as the only exhaust. Unlike solar and wind power, it can be stored in large amounts for when it's needed. While the vast majority of the hydrogen produced today is stripped from natural gas, in a process that releases carbon dioxide, it can also be separated from water using renewable power, with no emissions but oxygen.

But for all its benefits, hydrogen can also slip easily through equipment designed to contain larger molecules like the methane in natural gas.

Once it escapes, much of the leaked hydrogen will be absorbed by microbes in the soil. Some of what's left in the air will react with a substance that helps remove methane from the atmosphere. That's a problem, because methane is itself a powerful greenhouse gas, with more than 80 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide over 20 years. The reaction between hydrogen and that substance — known as the hydroxyl radical, or OH — leaves less of the OH available to react with methane. So methane entering the atmosphere will stick around longer and do more damage than it would have if the hydrogen hadn't been there.

Leaked hydrogen has other warming effects as well. In the troposphere, the atmospheric layer closest to the ground, triggers a chain of chemical reactions that produce more ozone, another

greenhouse gas and a key component of smog. Much higher up, in the stratosphere, the hydrogen leads to an increase in water vapor, which has the overall effect of trapping more thermal energy in the atmosphere.

These reactions happen over a short time span — a handful of years. Excess carbon dioxide, in contrast, builds up atmospheric heat over centuries. But with temperatures quickly rising worldwide, scientists say short-term drivers of climate change can't be ignored.

"These decades matter," said Steven Hamburg, EDF's chief scientist. His group has been trying to raise the issue of hydrogen's warming potential with anyone who'll listen, briefing academics, businesses and the US Department of Energy. His colleague, Ms. Ocko, estimates they've met with some 200 people to date. For EDF, it's a logical extension of the group's work trying to direct public attention to short-term climate pollutants like methane and black carbon, which often get overlooked in the focus on carbon dioxide.

Many utility companies are experimenting with blending hydrogen into their existing natural gas pipelines, sprawling networks that feed everything from power plants to household stoves. To Hamburg, that's a recipe for leaks. He also warns that mass-producing hydrogen from fossil fuels could even lead to a short-term increase in warming, if the systems for making and transporting the hydrogen leak enough hydrogen and methane. There would still be a long-term benefit from cutting carbon dioxide emissions, but over the span of a decade or two, a leaky hydrogen system based on fossil fuels could cause more warming than business as usual. —

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link bit.ly/Hydrogen060122

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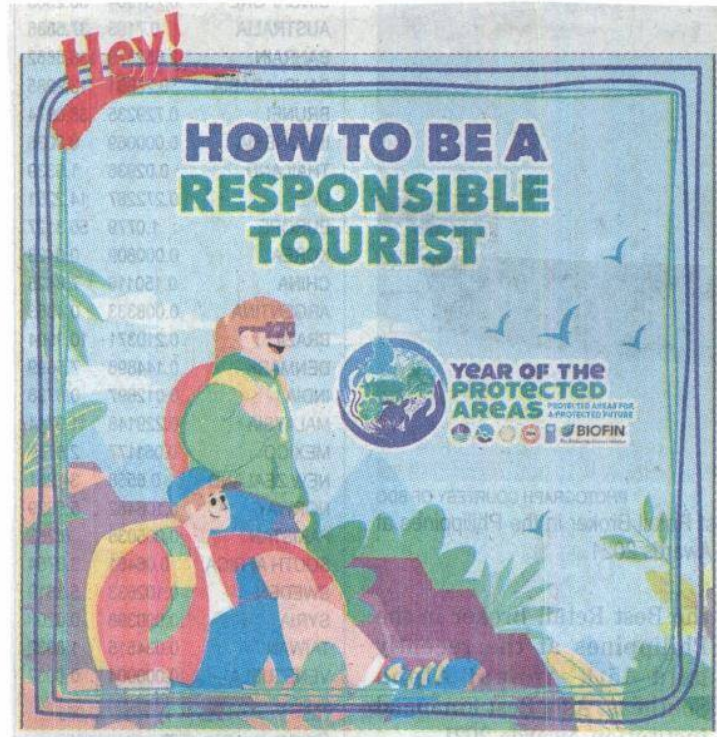
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NCR, rest of Luzon show slow uptick in Covid-19 cases: DOH

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor **May 31, 2022, 3:08 pm**



MANILA – The National Capital Region (NCR), its neighboring provinces and the rest of Luzon show a slow uptick in Covid-19 cases in mid-May 2022, a health official said Tuesday.

In an online media forum, Department of Health - Health Promotion Bureau Director Beverly Ho noted that the so-called plus areas of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal and the rest of Luzon are exhibiting a decline in cases in the past days while infections in the Visayas and Mindanao remain in a flat trend with low case counts.

The slight increase in cases brought about an increase in the positivity rate which is now at 1.2 percent.

“Eight out of 17 regions like NCR, CAR, Regions 1,3, 4A, 6, 7 and 9 had increased positivity rate mula 0.1 to 0.6 percentage points. None of the said regions exceeded the 5 percent positivity rate threshold,” Ho said.

The country remains under low risk classification for Covid-19 currently logging one to two weeks positive growth rate.

“Specifically, 13 out of 17 regions with positive two-week growth rate are in the low risk classification while NCR and six other regions show increase in cases in the past week or positive one-week growth rate,” Ho said.

The national healthcare utilization rate remains low risk at 16.81 percent to 17.20 percent. **(PNA)**



PH detects 5 new Omicron BA.2.12.1 cases

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published May 31, 2022 2:36:53 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, May 31) — The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday reported five new cases of the Omicron subvariant BA.2.12.1 in the country.

All five were detected in the Western Visayas region, said Dr. Beverly Lorraine Ho, director of the Disease Prevention and Control and Health Promotion Bureau, in a media briefing.

According to Ho, three are returning overseas Filipinos (ROFs) from the United States and are living in the same household. The other two are tagged as local cases and are also residing under the same roof.

The DOH said all are fully vaccinated. They also haven't shown any symptoms after completing home isolation and are now considered recovered.

Meanwhile, the department has identified a total of seven close contacts of the five new cases -- two were exposed to the local cases, while five to the ROFs.

These seven close contacts have likewise finished isolation and are tagged as recovered.

“Makikita niyong hindi nakakadulot ng kritikal at malubha na kondisyon ang panibagong variant na ito dahil rin bakunado ang ating mga pasyente ngayon,” Ho said.

[Translation: You can see that this new variant didn't cause a critical and severe illness also because our patients are vaccinated.]

To date, the country has confirmed a total of 22 cases of BA.2.12.1.

A total of 18 were local cases, including 12 from Puerto Princesa, four from Western Visayas, and two from Metro Manila. The remaining four are ROFs residing in Western Visayas.

Meanwhile, the DOH added it has identified 33 more close contacts of the country's first Omicron BA.4 case, a now-recovered Filipino who came home from Qatar earlier this month.

The 33 are passengers in the same plane he took going home. The DOH said it is still verifying their vaccination status and testing details.

Earlier, the department said the BA.4 case had [three close contacts from his household](#). They are now completing quarantine, but are all fully vaccinated and are asymptomatic.

Source: <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/5/31/PH-five-new-Omicron-subvariant-cases.html>

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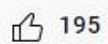
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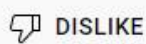
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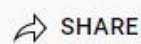
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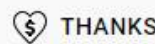
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