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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Mission accomplished: Boracay rehab is completed- DENR

Published June 22, 2022, 3:52 PM

by [Aaron Recuenco](#)

After four years of flexing muscles to improve the Boracay Island, the rehabilitation and management of the world-famous beach has finally completed, the he Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said on Wednesday, June 22.

Acting DENR Sec. Jim Sampulna said the completion of the Boracay rehabilitation means that the supervision of the area is now transferred from the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) to the local government unit.

“This culmination means the responsibility will now be with the local government of Malay. Please take care of Boracay the way we did it,” said Sampulna who also chairs the BIATF.

“The challenge here is how you can maintain Boracay’s cleanliness and sanitation, including the discipline of the people,” he added.

The BIATF, vice-chaired by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), was created by President Duterte through Executive Order (EO) 53 on May 8, 2018. Its term was supposed to end in 2020, two years after its creation, but President Duterte extended its tenure until May 8, 2021, with the issuance of EO 115 on May 11, 2020.

On Sept. 14, 2021, the BIATF’s term was extended again until June 30, 2022, through EO 148, to give it more time to complete all its projects.

Sampulna assured the local officials that although the BIATF would no longer be at the frontline, the task force would continue to assist them to sustain the gains of the Boracay rehabilitation.

He added that the DENR, through its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), plans to establish a real-time monitoring system on the four-kilometer white beach of Boracay to make sure that the cleanliness of the island’s waters will be maintained.

Sampulna said It will be modeled after the Environmental Quality Data Center at the EMB executive building in Quezon City that was launched last month.

“The data center provides real-time monitoring of air and water quality, including the status of solid and hazardous waste management, facilities with environmental compliance certificates or ECCs, and online permitting system,” said Sampulna.



Rehabilitasyon ng Boracay Island tinapos na



June 22, 2022 @ 7:11 PM 12 hours ago

AKLAN – Tinapos na ng Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) sa pangunguna ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang rehabilitasyon at pamamahala ng Boracay Island apat na taon matapos ang malawakang rehabilitasyon ng sikat na tourist destination.

“This culmination means the responsibility will now be with the local government of Malay. Alagaan niyo ito, tulad ng pag-aalaga namin,” saad ni DENR Acting Secretary at BIATF chair Jim Sampulna sa ginanap na culminating activity noong June 16.

“The challenge here is how you can maintain Boracay’s cleanliness and sanitation, including the discipline of the people,” sinabi ni Sampulna sa mga lokal na opisyal na pinangunahan nina Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores at Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista.

Magugunitang ang BIATF, vice-chaired ng Department of Tourism (DOT) at Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), ay binuo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa pamamagitan ng Executive Order (EO) 53 noong May 8, 2018.

Nauna rito dapat na nagtapos ang termino nito noong 2020, dalawang taon matapos itong mabuo ngunit pinalawig ito ni Pangulong Duterte hanggang May 8, 2021 sa paglabas ng EO 115 noong May 11, 2020.

Noong Sept. 14, 2021, muling pinalawig ang termino ng BIATF hanggang June 30, 2022, sa pamamagitan ng EO 148 upang mabigyan ito ng sapat na panahon na matapos ang mga proyekto.

Kaugnay nito siniguro ni Sampulna sa mga lokal na opisyal na kahit wala na sa frontline ang BIATF, patuloy silang tutulong ng task force upang mapanatili ang mga nagawa sa Boracay rehabilitation.

Ayon pa sa Environment chief sinabi din nito na ang DENR, sa pamamagitan ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), ay may plano na magtayo ng real-time monitoring system sa kahabaan ng apat na kilometrong white beach ng Boracay upang matiyak na ang kalinisan ng tubig ng isla ay mapananatili. **Santi Celario**



BIARMG Team Behind Boracay Rehab Success

Wednesday, June 22, 2022 Journal Online



Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group (BIARMG) General Manager Martin Despi (on stage) lauds his team who has diligently performed their duties to accomplish their [goals in rehabilitating Boracay Island](#) during the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF), culminating activity on June 16, 2022. BIARMG is the implementing arm of the BIATF which will end its term on June 30, 2022. The people behind the successful rehabilitation of the popular tourist destination are (from left to right) Joannette Opeda, Engr. Axel Salvador, Jhydee Ignacio, Vicente Falviano, Micah Sevilla, Joshua Peñaranda, Atty. Roman Almalbis, and Roberto Baculinao.



DENR Inaugurates Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach

Wednesday, June 22, 2022 Journal Online



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna (4th from right) and former DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatú (3rd from left) unveil the marker of the [Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach](#) mounted on a dolomite boulder rock. The 500-meter by 60-meter beach nourishment project of the [DENR](#) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), is part of the continuous rehabilitation of the Manila Bay in accordance with the writ of continuing mandamus issued by the Supreme Court in 2008. The beach was opened to the public on June 12 coinciding with the 124th celebration of the Philippine Independence Day. Also in photo are (L-R): DPWH Assistant Secretary Wilfredo S. Mallari, DPWH Undersecretary Roberto R. Bernardo, Department of the Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo M. Año, US Embassy representative Kelia Cummins (partly hidden), and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Administrator Leonor C. Cleofas.



UNTV News and Rescue

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PUBLIC ADVISORY | Ipinababatid ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ang Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach ay sarado tuwing Huwebes upang bigyang daan ang maintenance works sa naturang pasyalan.



PUBLIC ADVISORY

Please be informed that the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach is **CLOSED** every **THURSDAY** for maintenance work.

Thank you for your kind understanding and cooperation.



Manila Bay Coordinating Office

    @DENROfficial | www.denr.gov.ph 

Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/UNTVNewsRescue/photos/a.272191939472893/847842282884972>
[2/](#)



Fact check: Photo of Manila Bay dolomite beach, murky waters is true to life

By [Cristina Chi](#) - June 22, 2022 - 6:39 PM



Screenshot of the aerial view of Manila Bay taken April 2022. (Manila Girl Tours/YouTube)

CLAIM: A pro-administration Facebook user claimed that Filipinos “full of hate against the government” intentionally took photos of the **Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach** and made the waters appear dark and dirty.

Facebook user [MJ Quiambao Reyes](#), who shares posts supporting President Rodrigo Duterte, posted a side-by-side collage of different photos of Manila Bay on June 22. One photo, taken from a high angle, shows a green-black color of the waters. Other photos were taken from a lower angle and featured waters with a lighter, more bluish color.

The caption reads:

“Pag tayo ang kumuha ng picture ng Manila Bay, maganda, maaliwalas, malinis. Pero bakit pag kumuha ng picture yung mga punung-puno ng galit sa gobyerno at kapwa Filipino (na hindi raw totoong tao), lahat na lang bumabaho, pumapangit, dumidilim. Pati yung mga puno na dapat sana ay berde naging black. “

The post with the “dirty water” image was taken from a screenshot of [a tweet](#) that said the dolomite beach’s waters looked like that of an estuary.

RATING: False

Facts

Videos of the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach posted by different sources in 2021 and 2022 show that the water has a dark color similar to the post in question.

Aerial footage [posted](#) by a travel-related account in 2021 shows that the Manila Bay waters have a dark and greenish hue.

Similarly, a Youtube channel with free-to-use clips of various places in Metro Manila also posted a drone shot of the Manila Bay in 2022, where the color of the waters appears identical to the photo at [the 1:48 mark](#).

The **Department of Public Works and Highways** conducted desilting operations (removing silt from water) in 2019 and noted the soil’s dark color could be due to pollution, according to [a VERA Files report](#).



Why it matters

The Facebook post with the false claim has garnered more than 5,000 reactions and almost 200 shares.

Most comments and replies to the featured tweet accuse critics of the government of editing the photo with malicious intent.

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This story is part of the Philippine Fact-check Incubator, an Internews initiative to build the fact-checking capacity of news organizations in the Philippines and encourage participation in global fact-checking efforts.

Interaksyon is part of #FactsFirstPH, a multi-sectoral initiative promoting truth in public space and demanding accountability for falsehoods. For those interested to join the initiative, email info@factsfirst.ph

Interaksyon is also a founding partner of Tsek.ph, a collaborative fact-checking project for the 2022 Philippine elections. It is an initiative of academe, civil society groups and media to counter disinformation and provide the public with verified information.



DENR: East Asia regional cooperation provides vital strategy for PH ocean resources conservation

Published on: June 22, 2022

Updated as of June 22, 2022 3:17 pm

By DENR

QUEZON CITY -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has highlighted the significance of East Asia regional cooperation on ocean conservation to help solve the cross-cutting challenges of conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources in the region, especially in the Philippines.

DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna expressed optimism in the strategy as several seas in the country are linked by transboundary ocean management.

“Our major programs, such as the Manila Bay Rehabilitation, are directly linked to ocean-based adaptation solutions that are considered in the Philippines’ climate change pledge to the Paris Agreement and to help bolster the country’s Blue Economy,” Sampulna said.

Through the Biodiversity Management Bureau, the DENR also implements the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program, which has been identified as one of the adaptation measures in the country’s Nationally Determined Contributions in the Paris Agreement.

The strategy was highlighted in the Way Forward part of the report as presented by DENR Climate Change Service Director Elenida dR. Basug during a recent webinar hosted by the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA).

“The PEMSEA Resource Facility can provide the required technical support and can strengthen inclusive and action-oriented regional platforms,” Basug said.

She added: “The regional cooperation measures will improve the quality of life of average Filipinos, particularly in the implementation of adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies in our coastal populations, providing sustainable and biodiversity-friendly livelihood options, and ensuring food security for coastal communities.”

“When strategies and programs are implemented accordingly, the drivers and threats of climate change in the coastal and marine ecosystems will be reduced. We will achieve the sustainability of our ecosystem services,” she pointed out.

The role of East Asia regional cooperation in the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources was further discussed during the webinar, “Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue: East Asian Seas’ Response to the Global Climate Change Challenge.”

It aims to dive deep into the links between the ocean and climate change nexus in the East Asian Seas region. The activity is also in line with this year’s celebration of the World Oceans Day.

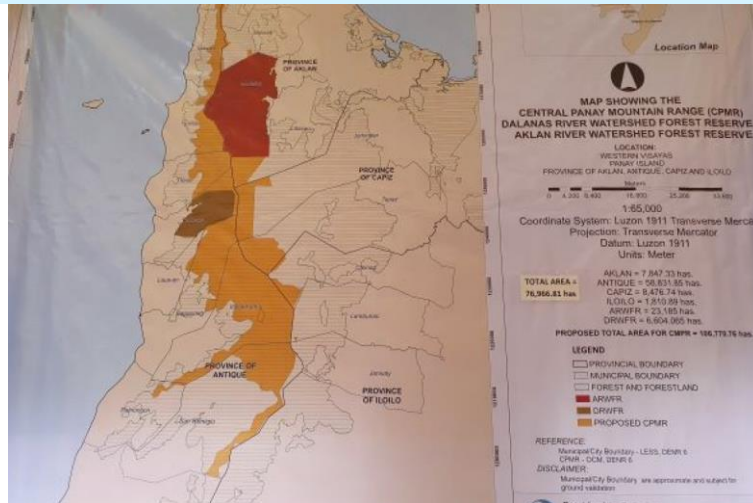
The results of the discussion are expected to shape the development of the 2023-2027 Implementation Plan of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia. (DENR)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/2022/06/22/denr-east-asia-regional-cooperation-provides-vital-strategy-for-ph-ocean-resources-conservation>

Central Panay Mountain Range inches up as a natural park

Published on: June 21, 2022

By Bernard Ceasar Susbilla



SAN JOSE, Antique (PIA) – The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) Antique is pushing for the establishment of Central Panay Mountain Range (CPMR) as a natural park under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS).

PENRO Antique sees the need to identify CPMR as a protected area because of its extensive forest cover and huge contribution to Western Visayas' overall biodiversity, as well as to prevent its deterioration from excessive human activities and resource extraction.

CPMR, considered the last frontier of biodiversity in the region, is the largest and longest cluster of mountains in Panay Island that covers a portion of the provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo and Antique which has the widest coverage at 76% or at least 58,000 hectares.

In Antique, the CPMR stretches through the municipalities of Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi, Tibiao, Barbaza, Laua-an, Bugasong, Valderrama, San Remigio and Patnongon.

CPMR is a step closer to becoming a natural park with the recently concluded Protected Area Suitability Assessment which resulted in a qualifying score of 93%.

A public consultation on June 21 was also conducted by PENRO Antique to identify the views and feedback of CPMR stakeholders which include concerned municipal chief executives, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officers (MENRO), barangay officials, community members and representatives from indigenous peoples (IPs).

DENR Region 6 Conservation and Development Chief Forester Emelyn Peñaranda said that Central Panay Mountain Range features a wide spectrum of flora and fauna, some are endemic or cannot be seen anywhere else in the country.

Among the animal species found in the CPMR are the Visayan spotted deer, Panay monitor lizard, Visayan warty pig and the Visayan leopard cat.

It is also home to some 142 identified plant species like the pitcher plant, rafflesia, and the endangered Red Laua-an.

Aside from its unique and abundant flora and fauna, the mountain range is also a cultural and anthropological asset due to the presence of indigenous peoples (IP) in these highlands, such as the Iraynon and Bukidnon.



Peñaranda highlighted the importance of protecting the CPMR to safeguard the mountain range's natural resources that

are key in mitigating extreme weather events and enhance carbon storage.

Once designated as a natural park, the Central Panay Mountain Range will be secured as a fully-functioning ecosystem that will help provide clean air and water, healthy soils, and food source to Panay and its component provinces.

Next in the process for CPMR to become a protected area is the preparation of an Initial Protected Area (PA) Plan. (AAL/BPS/PIA Antique)



EU and the Philippines: On the right track to protect the oceans

[NOTES FROM THE EU DELEGATION](#) - [Luc Véron](#) - The Philippine Star June 23, 2022 | 12:00am

As far as I can remember, I have been in love with the sea. As a sailor who lived near the ocean in my native France, the sea has always been my comfortable respite. Working in an archipelagic country like the Philippines, where the sea is inescapable, is a wish fulfilled.

The oceans and water were the theme of the visual arts exhibition “Ebb and Flow, Return to Nature” which the Delegation organized recently to mark the EU Green Week and the UN Ocean Conference.

During our exhibition launch, I mentioned that while water is indomitable and man cannot conquer the ocean, we must do our utmost to create a regulated, safe and secure maritime environment for all nations.

These principles are central to the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific where we seek to work with our partners in the region to respond to the dynamics affecting our collective security and to boost trade and investment, economic freedom and prosperity and a sustainable approach to connectivity.

The stability of the Indo-Pacific region is certainly important not just to the EU but to the world. After all, 60 percent of maritime trade passes through its oceans, including a third through the South China Sea whose passages need to remain free and open. The EU supports a rules-based maritime order in accordance with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The EU believes that all parties should avoid unilateral actions that can endanger peace, security and stability in the region and the international rules-based order. We cannot therefore allow countries to unilaterally undermine international law and maritime security in the South China Sea.

At the heart of the EU’s maritime security cooperation with the Philippines is a program called CRIMARIO (Critical Maritime Routes in the Indo-Pacific). This program was conceptualized to enhance maritime domain awareness through information sharing, capacity building and training, international cooperation and dialogue.

Currently, the EU is supporting the Philippine Navy, Coast Guard, MARINA and National Coast Watch Council Center to contribute to the country’s maritime security.

CRIMARIO held a series of trainings for local experts and officials on how to use the Indo-Pacific regional information-sharing platform (IORIS) to develop maritime domain awareness and improve operational effectiveness of the interagency collaboration at national and/or regional level.

I am proud that the Philippines is the first ASEAN country to benefit from this initiative.

Ocean governance is another key element of the EU’s Indo-Pacific Strategy. The EU is stepping up efforts in ensuring ocean governance in full compliance with international law and with the main goal towards ensuring the sustainable management of the ocean’s resources and safeguarding biodiversity.

The EU will also continue supporting Indo-Pacific partners in achieving reforms of fisheries management and control systems.

In the Philippines, the EU has a formal dialogue to partner in improving fisheries management and control systems. The end goal is to ensure that the Philippines can effectively manage their



own fishing stocks and the fish exported to the EU does not come from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

As important as maritime protection is ensuring the conservation of the bountiful ocean resources and promoting a sustainable blue economy.

The EU has been working with its partners across the Philippines to boost coastal fisheries, to develop marine protected areas in Bohol and Siquijor and to assist mangrove restoration in South Palawan. We recently started a project to promote tuna preservation in the Mindoro Strait. In Tawi-Tawi, we have boosted renewable energy infrastructure for seaweed-producing municipalities. This will promote the seaweed value chain, which also has a huge potential for Mindanao and the Visayas.

On a larger scale, the EU is part of the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems in three marine protected areas in Southeast Asia, specifically in the Sulu Sulawesi Seascape within the Coral Triangle. Also the EU has been a strong supporter, since its inception, of the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, the intergovernmental organization hosted by the Philippines. We have worked with the Center for many years to strengthen conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the region.

One major priority for our cooperation with the Philippines in the next years will be to support a green and inclusive economic recovery. The focus of this partnership will be to reduce plastic waste by working closely with municipalities and private sector. Less plastic waste will mean less marine litter and less pollution of the oceans.

The French poet Paul Verlaine aptly captures our dramatic human relation to the ocean, source both of life and death, with these verses:

Lasse de vivre, ayant peur de mourir, pareille

Au brick perdu jouet du flux et du reflux

Mon âme pour d'affreux naufrages appareille

Tired of life, afraid of death, not unlike

A lost brig, toy of ebb and flow on the ocean,

My soul weighs anchor for a frightful shipwreck

I hear these verses are an invitation to avoid the wreck. We are the only stewards of our seas. Let us all do our best to protect them.

* * *

Luc Véron is Ambassador of the European Union to the Philippines.



SMC clears 1M tons of waste from Tullahan ahead of sched, to start clean-up of Bulacan river system this month

June 21, 2022 5 min read

MANILA — San Miguel Corporation (SMC) has reached its goal of removing over 1 million metric tons of silt and solid waste from the length of the Tullahan River ahead of the schedule drawn up with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

As of June 20, SMC's cleanup teams have rid the river of an accumulated total of 1,029,257 metric tons of silt and waste, roughly equivalent to close to 70,000 dump trucks.

Having met its target, SMC's team will soon be moving on to its next mission: to clean up rivers belonging to the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System (MMORS) in Bulacan.

"We thank the DENR for its trust and confidence in our ability to get the job done. Despite the pandemic that delayed and limited our cleanup operations, we were determined to accomplish our objectives, which included removing silt and waste, increasing the river's width and depth in shallow sections, improving navigability, and helping restore marine line," SMC president and CEO Ramon S. Ang said.

"What is critical now is getting all stakeholders to keep the river clean and free of garbage. This requires all of us working together. We can either go big or take small steps and build on our own individual efforts to manage our consumption and waste generation. What's important is we start now," Ang added.

SMC started the P1-billion Tullahan program together with the DENR in February 2020, to complement the ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation project. Work, however, was interrupted by the pandemic and only began in June, after the easing of pandemic restrictions.

SMC was one of the companies that answered the DENR's call to the private sector to clean tributaries leading to the Manila Bay, as these were identified as major sources of solid waste, including plastics.

The company is undertaking the project at no cost to the government or taxpayers, and is part of its larger sustainability initiative to clean up major river systems and coastal areas throughout Luzon—to help mitigate some of the impacts of climate change, in particular, flooding.

Already, SMC's clean-up of the Tullahan River has significantly reduced severe flooding in Navotas, Malabon, Valenzuela, and Caloocan.

Hydrographic or depth surveys conducted before and after dredging showed that sections of the river that used to only measure one to three meters in depth, are now more than three to five meters deep.



The increased depth improves river flow and capacity to carry floodwaters out to the Manila Bay. In the last two years, areas around the river have reported lesser incidences of severe flooding. Whenever there was any flooding, waters were observed to subside faster than usual.

Following the dredging plan laid out by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), SMC's river cleanup operations covered an 11-kilometer stretch from the Manila Bay in Navotas to NLEX in Caloocan City.

Since the project's start, SMC has continued to accelerate the pace of the cleanup by investing in more equipment and hiring more personnel.

Dredged wastes are sorted and transported to DENR-accredited and assigned disposal sites.

Meanwhile, work to clean the MMORS in Bulacan is set to start this month. The initiative will be part of its comprehensive flood mitigation measures for the province of Bulacan, which it committed together with its New Manila International Airport (NMIA) and Airport City projects.

A study commissioned by San Miguel Aerocity Inc., has assessed the impact of the airport development on flooding, and has identified measures to reduce the province's long-standing flooding problems. It also studied the water flow affecting the airport site and areas within a seven-kilometer radius.

"This study, plus our experience and learnings in the past two years in the Tullahan River, as well as our ongoing clean-up of the Pasig River, will be a huge help to our upcoming river rehabilitation effort in Bulacan," Ang said.

SMC's river channel improvement plan for Bulacan involves the clean-up, widening, and deepening of the Alipit or Taliptip River, Sta. Maria River, and the Meycauayan River.

Meycauayan River is one of seven Philippine rivers included in the world's top 10 list of tributaries that emit the highest share of ocean plastics, according to scientific publication Our World in Data, a collaborative effort between researchers at the University of Oxford and UK-based non-profit, Global Change Data Lab.

SMC said the river rehabilitation plan will improve these rivers' capacity to carry excess rainwater following the removal of silt, trash, and other obstructions that restrict the free flow of water, and threaten marine ecosystem and traditional fishing grounds. (ai/mtvn) Photo Credit: Chos.ph

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2022/06/21/smc-clears-1m-tons-of-waste-from-tullahan-ahead-of-sched-to-start-clean-up-of-bulacan-river-system-this-month/?fbclid=IwAR3q41YXJ_QHbz-EoYGdiZiOy4BqFD56wsXowGnR0kvcVj_LsH0J-JbAdE



Mayor Vico joins call to stop quarrying in Marikina Watershed

Published June 22, 2022, 8:08 AM by [Khriscielle Yalao](#)

Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto on Tuesday, June 21, supported calls for the cancellation of quarrying agreements in the Masungi Georeserve and the Upper Marikina Watershed.



Photo from the Masungi Georeserve

Sotto said in a tweet: “Pasig City is downstream of the Upper Marikina Watershed. If we don’t protect this area and stop deforestation, flooding will continue to get worse in the coming years.”

The mayor shared a copy of the joint call to action which he signed along with Marikina City Mayor Marcelino “Marcy” Teodoro, outgoing Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi, and Municipality of Angono, Rizal Vice Mayor Gerardo Calderon.

The statement highlighted the contribution of quarrying projects to the accelerating degradation of the forest and ecosystems within the area that lead to harsher flooding and fatal landslides.

It stressed that the Upper Marikina Watershed, being a natural defense against calamities, must be “preserved from exploitation for the well-being of Filipinos and future generations.”

“We strongly urge the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to hold collective over individual interests, support conservation initiatives, like the Masungi Geopark Project, and cancel mineral production spending agreements (MPSAs) covering more than 1,300 hectares of the protected watershed. The proliferation of illegal structures and establishments inside the watershed should also be taken very seriously, with those responsible held to account,” the statement read.

Non-cancellation of the MPSAs provides a leeway for future operations that does not guarantee the watersheds’ protection from abuse.

The statement cited the MGB’s show cause orders against quarry companies that have found “gross violations” breaching the Philippine Mining Act.

They also appealed to the quarry companies “to reconsider the social and environmental impacts of their plans, and voluntarily rescind their MPSAs” in the protected area.

Other signatories included Pasig City Administrator Atty. Jeronimo Manzanero and Malabon City Administrator Voltaire Dela Cruz.



The barangay chairmen in Marikina City who also signed the call to action were Capt. Bernard Bernardo of Sta. Elena, Capt. Segundo Cruz of Calumpang, Capt. Randy Leal of Nangka, Capt. Miguel Punzalan Jr. of Marikina Heights, Capt. Rizalina Teope of Fortune, Capt. Ronnie Tiburcio of Barangka, and Capt. Mary Jane Zubiri-Dela Rosa of Concepcion Dos.

The Masungi Geopark Project began in 2017 and aims to rehabilitate deforested and degraded watershed areas. It's a non-profit project that engages with multi-sectoral environmental groups to conserve and protect the area. Forest rangers have also been deployed to monitor the activities within the park.



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#TedFailonandDJChaCha | Quarrying activities sa bahagi ng Masungi Georeserve, nagpapatuloy pa rin? Ang karamihan sa mga mayor ng mga bayan sa paligid ng Masungi Georeserve ang nanawagan sa DENR na gumawa ng aksyon laban sa quarrying.

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50 Comments 8 Shares



PH withdraws from global transparency initiative on mining, fuel

By [Pilar Manuel, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Jun 22, 2022 6:55:18 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 22) — The Philippines has exited from the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) over what it calls a “subjective, biased and unfair” quality assurance assessment process of the country’s compliance with requirements.

“The Philippines has no confidence in the ability of the EITI to undertake an impartial, transparent, and evidence-based Validation process,” said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III in a letter to EITI on June 20.

The Department of Finance heads the Philippine EITI (PH-EITI), a multi-stakeholder body which oversees the country’s implementation of the global transparency initiative’s standard.

Countries that are part of the EITI commit to disclose information along the extractive industry chain - which includes how rights to extraction of oil, gas, and minerals are awarded, how revenues reach the government, and how these benefit the public.

EITI also provides data which could aid in identifying and closing channels for corruption not only for these extractive industries but the renewables sector as well.

Dominguez stated that his agency has “repeatedly sought” details of alleged civic space issues to allow the Philippine government to address them - which he says the EITI hasn’t done.

“We refuse to be taken hostage by unverified allegations from foreigners and people who have no mandate from the electorate,” said the DOF chief.

The Philippines has been implementing the EITI since 2013 and was recognized by the initiative in 2016. The DOF noted that the country was declared the first among over 50 countries worldwide to fulfill satisfactory progress in meeting EITI requirements in 2017.

Sought for comment, EITI Board member and PH-EITI founding member Cielo Magno called the country’s withdrawal “disappointing” given its initial fine performance.

“One of the core principles of EITI implementation is the protection of civic space. This ensures accountability. There were questions about the state of civic space in the Philippines given the red tagging and violence against environmental defenders,” Magno, who represents civil society in the EITI Board, told CNN Philippines.



“I don’t think human rights protection is an imposition. It is something that we all should champion and protect. Unfortunately, the current government does not want to take any initiative to protect and strengthen civic space in natural resource governance,” she said.

The University of the Philippines associate economics professor also referred to the nation’s exit from EITI as “unfortunate,” especially with the expected rise in demand for critical minerals in the transition to cleaner energy.

“Massive extraction of minerals combined with bad governance in the sector usually lead to the so called ‘resource curse.’ That is what EITI is trying to prevent. Without EITI, there is less opportunity for the various sectors to work together and address the governance issues of the Philippines,” Magno said.

Still, Dominguez assured the country can still ensure transparency in the extractives sector given it has the process, systems, and manpower to do so.

“The government will continue to champion better resource and revenue management, and ensure that resource utilization remains open, accountable, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of Filipinos,” he said.



Strategies in creating climate resilience

HARVARD VERITAS

By [Glenn S. Banaguas](#) June 23, 2022

CLIMATE change is believed to be an environmental peril that has impacted governance, human security, fishery, agriculture, environment and economic growth. It has created a disheartening encounter in society. It leads to worsening air quality, adverse impacts on food and water supply and quality, and more frequent and extreme weather events, which profoundly impact security.

Some useful strategies have been suggested to address the impacts and risks of climate change. And they are as follows:

1. Area: Governance

Impact:

Extreme weather events such as droughts, sea level rise, flooding can disrupt efforts to strengthen stakeholders and increase participation of marginalized groups.

Adaptation options:

- Incorporate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management schemes into governance systems.
- Engage civil society groups or organizations in participatory fora to address their vulnerability and identify adaptations to climate impacts.
- Examine existing laws and regulations for opportunities to improve governance and resilience to climate variables.

2. Area: Human security

Impacts:

- Increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases (e.g., malaria, dengue)
- Increased risk of malnutrition due to decreased food availability and quality, and ill-health effects of reduced access to clean drinking water
- Increased risk of death from extreme weather events
- Increased need for post-disaster relief and reconstruction, increased pressure on disaster management systems

Adaptation options:

- Broad-scale immunization
- Early warning systems and public information
- Increase access to primary care and preventive care
- Improve disaster preparation and emergency response
- Capacity building of local communities to assist in relief actions
- Use of insurance, bonds, and other risk-sharing measures to finance relief and reconstruction
- Manage risk to reduce impact



3. Area: Fishery

Impacts:

- Decrease in fisheries production
- Climate processes and extreme weather events will increase in frequency and intensity
- Warming is more intense in surface waters
- Changes in fish distributions
- Shifts in ocean salinity are occurring
- Oceans are becoming more acidic with probable negative consequences to many coral reef and calcium-bearing organisms

Adaptation options:

- Creating resilient ecosystems, human and governance communities through decreasing the exposure of the sector by increasing the aquatic systems' resilience; decreasing the communities' sensitivities to change; and increasing the sector's adaptive capacity
- Supporting intersectoral collaboration (e.g., integrating fisheries and aquaculture into national climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (DRM) strategies and supporting integrated resource management, such as integrated coastal zone or watershed management, water planning)
- Promoting integrated monitoring and information systems — incorporating scientific and local knowledge sources and improving general awareness of climate change within and outside the sector
- Promoting context specific and community-based adaptation strategies
- Avoiding "mal-adaptations" (e.g., overly rigid fishing access regimes that inhibit fisher migrations, adaptation actions that would increase fishing effort in an over-fished fishery)
- Embracing adaptive management, decision-making under uncertainty and the precautionary approach
- Promoting natural barriers and defenses rather than hard barriers that would impact the ecosystem

4. Area: Agriculture

Impacts:

- Increased temperature results in higher yields in some areas but lower yields due to higher rate of evapotranspiration and water deficits
- Increased incidence and range of pests and diseases, extreme weather events cause flooding, crop loss and erosion, drought results in reduced crop yields.

Adaptation options:

- Genetic improvement to produce drought-tolerant crops, translocation of crops, and changes in cropping patterns
- Afforestation to condition soils
- Improve water infiltration, and provide shade, increase water use efficiency, diversification into non-farm activities, crop insurance and micro-edit schemes



5. Area: Environment

Impacts:

– Higher temperatures and drought lead to increased incidence of forest fires changes in temperature and precipitation can cause changes in flora and fauna ranges and potential losses of biodiversity, and extreme weather events can damage coastal ecosystems, coral reefs and mangroves

Adaptation options:

- Seawalls, beach nourishment, regulation to discourage development in coastal and other threatened areas
- Forest management to reduce potential for forest fires, set aside protected areas for threatened species
- Afforestation and reforestation
- Community management of forest and natural resources to ensure sustainable harvest and regeneration

6. Area: Economic growth

Impacts:

- Damages and losses to livelihood assets
- Straining of traditional coping systems
- Increased debt burden and long-term poverty alleviation efforts
- Reduced foreign local investment in areas vulnerable to climate variability and change impacts

Adaptation options:

- Diversification of livelihoods
- Local value addition
- Improved access to markets and finances
- Technology transfer
- Use of carbon trading opportunities to increase revenue while putting in place measures that reduce emissions

7. Area: Energy

Impacts:

- In some areas, may reduce energy demand because of higher temperatures, decreased hydropower potential due to reduced precipitation
- Increase energy demand for air conditioning, damage dams due to flooding

Adaptation options:

- Enhance dam structural parameters, change siting of hydropower, incorporate future reduced generation capacity in design, integrated water resources and disaster management
- Improved energy efficiency,



– Widen water channels and periodic draining of vulnerable lakes

In order to attain a certain level of security, different stakeholders must bring unique perspectives, skills, solutions, and a wealth of knowledge to the challenge of strengthening resilience and addressing climate change. They need to be engaged as partners in building climate resilience rather than being regarded simply as beneficiaries of initiatives. The IPCC's latest report recognizes the value of diverse forms of knowledge such as scientific, indigenous and local knowledge in building climate resilience. Advances in the climate financing programs can connect local stakeholders to the higher-level policy, technical and financial assistance that they need for pertinent development impacts.

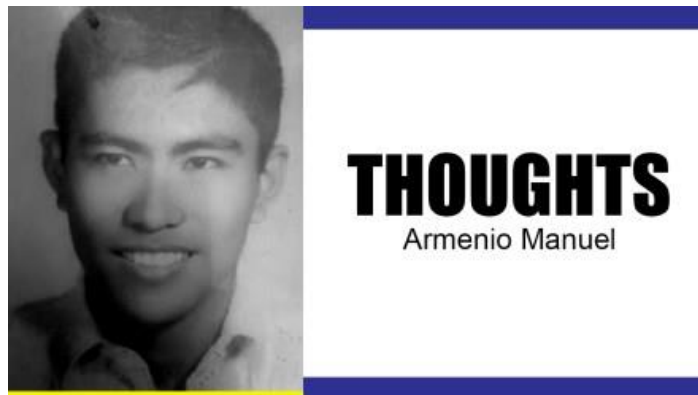
Sci. Dpl. Glenn S. Banaguas is a UN Sasakawa laureate for disaster risk reduction. He is an honoree of The Outstanding Filipino (Tofil), NAST Outstanding Young Scientist of the Philippines, United States-Association of Southeast Nations (US-Asean) Science and Technology fellow, European Union-Asia Climate diplomat, Asean science diplomat, Royal Society-The World Academy of Sciences awardee; and Asia Leaders awardee for sustainability leadership.



Climate change: Challenge to PH

June 22, 2022 4 min read

Photo credit: ITU



We often hear climate change, defined as a distortion in global or regional weather patterns, is throwing impacts that are great, including annual losses in Gross Domestic Product, and shifts in rainfall patterns and distribution in the Philippines.

Others include droughts, threats to biodiversity and food security, sea-level rise, public health risks, and endangering vulnerable groups like women and indigenous people.

This change in climate patterns has been apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.

Climate experts are solemn while admitting that the planet is warming up at a steady pace, the reason being the increase in human-caused greenhouse gases, which has led to health, ecological and humanitarian crises.

But the experts say the fight against climate change is a real opportunity to transition to a low-carbon society, creating jobs, innovation, and social justice locally and internationally.

We may ask: What has the Philippines done to address this weather episode, which is gobbling up a good slice of the country's GDP, which today is \$450.340 billion (nominal, 2022 est.) \$1.110.

A report issued in 2019 by the Institute for Economics and Peace says the Philippines is the country most vulnerable to climate change.

Between 1958 and 2014, the Philippines experienced a 0.62°C increase in yearly average mean temperature, with the rate of change increasing over time. Climate change has resulted in an increase in the amount and intensity of rainfall, with more rainy days observed in recent decades.



According to the report, high temperatures and heavy rainfall are typical of the Philippines' humid equatorial climate. The average annual rainfall is 2,348 mm, but this varies greatly by location, ranging from 960 mm in southeast Mindanao to over 4,050 mm in central Luzon.

The year-round average temperature in the Philippines is 24°–27°C, with the hottest month being May and the coldest month being January. Humidity levels average around 82 percent, due to warm trade winds, lush vegetation, and abundant rainfall, according to the report.

The dry season in the Philippines occurs from December to May, followed by a rainy season from June to November. A second rainy season occurs from December to February on the eastern and northern coasts. Recently, the Philippines has seen wetter conditions during the dry season.

The Philippines, composed of 7,641 islands, is one of the world's most typhoon-prone regions, averaging 19–20 typhoons annually, with 7 to 9 making landfall.

The Philippines' sea levels are rising faster than the global average, posing a greater risk of storm surges and threatening the permanent submergence of low-lying areas, the report says.

Typhoon season in the Philippines is July–October when 70 percent of typhoons develop. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) issues typhoon warnings to the general populace.

The five-year running average indicates that more typhoons occur during El Niño events. El Niño events, which occur every 2 to 7 years on average, cause less rain and typhoon activity. La Niña events, which are less common, result in heavier rainfall and more typhoon activity.

The strongest typhoon in history was super typhoon Haiyan, also known as Yolanda in the Philippines, which had winds of up to 314 kms per hour, killed 6,300 people, and displaced millions.

You may ask: What are the impacts of climate change in the Philippines?

Climate change events include sea-level rise, increased frequency of extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and heavy rainfall which experts say all pose a threat to the Philippines.

Sea levels in the Philippines are rising at roughly twice the global average rate. When particularly powerful storms, such as Typhoon Haiyan, hit land, the higher sea level contributes to storm surges of up to 15–20 feet.

Storm surges are expected to affect 14 percent of the total population and 42 percent of coastal residents. Informal settlements, which make up 45 percent of the Philippines' urban population, are particularly at risk from flooding due to precarious infrastructure, limited access to clean water, and a lack of health insurance.

This is due to the country's vulnerability to natural dangers like typhoons and droughts, reliance on climate-sensitive natural resources, and extensive coastline, which are home to major cities and most of the 110 million-plus population.

They add that coastal flooding also poses the greatest threat to the urban poor, many of whom live in makeshift shelters. (ai/mtvn)



Metro Manila Is Expected to Get 4°C Hotter by 2050, Thanks to Climate Change

Climate change is going to be brutal to Asian cities.

By [ANRI ICHIMURA](#) | 11 hours ago

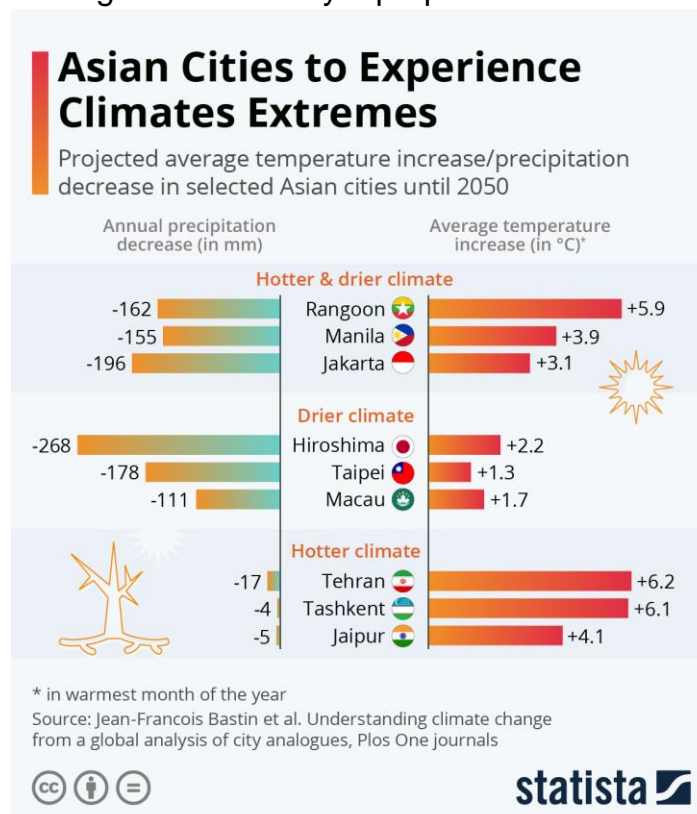


IMAGE Unsplash

If you feel like summers are getting hotter, you're not alone. A few decades ago, the studies on climate change seemed like faraway concepts. But just a few years later, and the scientific warnings of global warming have become a daily reality for those who live in hot climates like the Philippines. And it might only get worse.

According to a new study by scientists from [ETH Zurich](#), a Swiss research university, Metro Manila will be one of the few cities in 2050 that will experience climate conditions that are "not currently experienced by any existing major cities." The researchers believe that 22 percent of the world's 500 major cities will experience severe and drastic changes incomparable to existing cities, and Metro Manila is one of these locations.

Because of changes in weather and climate, the study predicts that Madrid's climate in 2050 will resemble Marrakech in 2022, Stockholm will resemble Budapest, London to Barcelona, Moscow to Sofia, Seattle to San Francisco, and Tokyo to Changsha. But cities like Manila might undergo changes that existing cities are not yet prepared for.



You will find more infographics at [Statista](#)



By 2050, the capital of the Philippines is projected to become 4°C hotter on average during the summer, while also having eight percent less rain per year. Manila isn't alone in these changes—we've always known that climate change will hit tropical areas harder, Southeast Asia is no exception. Jakarta is expected to become 3°C hotter with 196 millimeters less in rainfall, while Rangoon will become 6°C hotter with 162 millimeters less in rainfall.

While Southeast Asia is expected to become both hotter and drier, the temperate cities in East Asia will likely become drier by 2050. Hiroshima is expected to lose 268 millimeters in rainfall, Taipei will lose 178 millimeters, and Macau will lose 111 millimeters. Over in the Middle East and South Asia, the already sweltering cities of Tehran, Tashkent, and Jaipur are expected to become even hotter, with Tehran and Tashkent expected to become 6°C hotter and Jaipur expected to become 4°C hotter.

Given how complicated climate change is, the study aims to present these changes using comparisons to existing cities in order for governments to understand how their cities will change and take the necessary actions to prepare for the future. In cities like Madrid, Spain can look to Marrakech and Morocco to observe how the city deals with warmer and drier climates. However, for the 22 percent of cities with no present-day equal, like Manila, the challenge will be a steeper hill to climb. The world is changing drastically, and cities could become unrecognizable by 2050.

Source: https://www.esquiremag.ph/culture/lifestyle/metro-manila-hotter-climate-change-2050-a00304-20220622?utm_source=Facebook-Esquire&utm_medium=Ownshare&utm_campaign=20220622-fbnp-culture-metro-manila-hotter-climate-change-2050-a00304-20220622-fbfirst&fbclid=IwAR08LAUGoH7I3j6tkUSqoz0rbLfwDzgJMijzj9kH3XYSsOFO7DbfesAgxyw



Criminal case for improper waste disposal

By [Persida Acosta](#) June 23, 2022

Dear PAO,

My driver was caught throwing cigarette butts on the sidewalk and was accosted by a personnel of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority who introduced himself as an environmental enforcer. Subsequently, he was charged for violation of Republic Act 9003. Is the filing of a criminal complaint even necessary? It was just a small piece of waste anyway. I hope your office can advise me if the law really criminalizes such a small action considering the resulting inconvenience for my driver.

Jiri

Dear Jiri,

To answer your question, we shall take a look at the pertinent provisions of RA 9003 which is known as the "Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000." This law prohibits certain acts related to inappropriate waste management and provides penalties thereto.

Among those included in the list of prohibited acts under Chapter VI, Section 48 of the law is:

"(1) Littering, throwing, dumping of waste matters in public places, such as roads, sidewalks, canals, esteros or parks, and establishment, or causing or permitting the same;"

From this provision, it is clear that the act of your driver in throwing away cigarette butts on a sidewalk, which is considered a waste matter, squarely falls within the list of identified prohibited acts under the law. In short, what your driver did was unlawful.

Since your driver committed a prohibited act, the provision on fines and penalties shall be applied to him. According to Section 49 of the same chapter of RA 9003:

"(a) Any person who violates Sec. 48, paragraph (1) shall, upon conviction, be punished with a fine of not less than Three hundred pesos (P300.00) but not more than One thousand pesos (P1,000.00) or render community service for not less than one (1) day to not more than fifteen (15) days to an LGU where such prohibited acts are committed, or both;

"xxx

"The fines herein prescribed shall be increased by at least ten percent (10%) every three (3) years to compensate for inflation and to maintain the deterrent function of such fines." (Emphasis supplied)

A conviction is necessary in order to apply the imposable penalty for the violation of this law. However, there has to be a criminal court proceeding which requires the filing of an actual criminal complaint against the violators of this law. Thus, the filing of a criminal complaint against your driver is a necessary consequence of his violation and part of the judicial process to impose the penalty provided by the law. Also note that the amount of the imposable fine increases every three years as stated therein.

We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice is based solely on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated.

Editor's note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney's Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to dearpao@manilatimes.net

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/06/23/legal-advice/criminal-case-for-improper-waste-disposal/1848359>



At the Marinduque Wildlife Sanctuary, stunning crawlers abound

Published June 22, 2022 6:31pm

Because of how Marinduque is shaped, the island-province located in MIMAROPA is known as the heart of the Philippines.

And in the heart of the Marinduque lies its Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Marinduque Wildlife Sanctuary (MWS) is a sprawling area of mountainous terrain that covers some 9,700 hectares within five municipalities, or some 23 barangays.

Rain or shine, MWS holds quite the wildlife — and no, we don't mean huge majestic beasts or enchanting creatures. We critters. Incredible, out-of-this-world critters crawling on the ground.

In an episode of "Born to be Wild," Doc Nielsen Donato, together with Dr. Doreen Mascareñas of the Marinduque State College, visited the protected area to survey the richness of life it has to offer.

Weather was dark and gloomy, but MWS showed off. Immediately, Doc Nielsen found blue worms amid dry fallen leaves,

Blue worms are glossy skinned earth worms that boast of tips that are color blue. They don't just crawl on the ground, blue worms can breathe in water too.

And perhaps a testament to their penchant for water: Blue worms come out of the wood work when it's raining. When it's hot and sunny, they squirt out acid from pore-like holes on their back.

Blue worms feast on rotting organic matter, and when they poop it out, they return the nutrients to the ground, making for healthier and better fauna. This somehow explains the lushness of the MWS forest.

But that's not all. Apart from blue worms, Doc Nielsen also spotted pit vipers, lithe, vibrant green snakes with arrow-shaped heads. According to Doc Nielsen, pit vipers often live on trees but in the occasion they saw the snake, it was crawling on the ground, thanks to the rainy weather.

Pit vipers have hemotoxic venom, which means it can paralyze and kill smaller preys. What happens when they bite humans? They can cause necrosis, or the death of body tissues. Wild things, pit vipers are.

According to Doc Nielsen, the pit vipers in MWS are still pretty young, "an indication na nagpaparami pa sila," he said.

Dr. Doreen Mascareñas said MWS has been declared a protected area since 2004. "Kailangan talaga ingatan itong gubat na ito. Habitat ito ng mga important wildlife," she began.

"Pasalamat nga kami na declared siya as protected area kasi kung hindi, malamang kinaingin na talaga ito ng mga tao."

Kaingin, also known as slash-and-burn, is a destructive kind of farming comprised of burning trees to clear land and leaving soil exposed and easily eroded with rainfall. It is one of the major challenges of MWS along with wild life hunting, timber poaching and sporadic gold panning.

According to Mascareñas, declaring MWS a protected area was such an important move from the government because the five municipalities within the protected area — the 28 barangays — actually get their water from MWS.



If the ecosystem of the MWS crumbles, what happens to the water supply of the municipalities?

Besides, Mascareñas warns of strong flooding had MWS not been declared a protected area.

So much of life within the MWS depends on its crawling critters. Blue worms returning nutrients to the soil, which helps the trees grow lush, which then not only prevent erosion and landslides from occurring during the rainy season but also prevent strong floods.

— LA, GMA News

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/835634/at-the-marinduque-wildlife-sanctuary-stunning-crawlers-abound/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1Uay7FhXIgMwZIORESEzx1kgweZtbQvQjaMzmAO8upGz6tlFpAevhrp0A



Group launches study on mercury-free option for lamps, batteries, medical devices

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JUNE 22, 2022



Environmental watchdog Ban Toxics has formally launched on Wednesday a new study on mercury-free alternatives for batteries, lamps, and medical measuring devices in the Philippines.

The “Mercury-Free Alternatives in the Philippines: Batteries, lamps, and medical measuring devices” was released as part of the celebration of the fourth week of June as the National Poison Prevention Week by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 1777 s. 2009 to raise awareness on the preventive aspects of poisoning prevention at home, school, work, and in the general environment.

At a news briefing to highlight the new report, Jam Lorenzo, BAN Toxics’ Policy and Research Associate shared the gains in the phase-out of mercury and mercury-tainted products, particularly batteries, lamps, and medical measuring devices with the emergence of mercury-free alternatives.

Geri-Geronimo Sañez, Chief of the Hazardous Waste Management Section of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), meanwhile presented a short overview of mercury and its health impacts as well as the Philippines’s commitments to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

In his talk, Sañez highlighted the risks of exposure to mercury, a toxic heavy metal, particularly its adverse effects to human health. “Exposure to mercury can severely cause health problems, like neurological dysfunction,” he said.

The DENR-EMB, he said, strictly monitors industrial facilities to ensure compliance with the ban on mercury. However, he said when it comes to consumer products, the mandate falls on the authority of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Bureau of Products Standard (BPS), citing the case of mercury-tainted whitening lotions that have been reported to being sold online.

According to Lorenzo, for mercury measuring devices, citing the 2018 Philippine Mercury Inventory Report, due to the ban on mercury-containing medical measuring devices in health-care facilities, there are no significant imports of thermometers and sphygmomanometers in the country.

Such is also consistent with the findings where trade data have shown that the market has shifted to digital alternatives.

The mercury inventory report utilizes thermometer and sphygmomanometer stocks to calculate annual mercury inputs due to the lack of imports for mercury-containing medical measuring devices.



Meanwhile, battery products imported by the Philippines are mostly mercury-free lithium batteries.

Major battery distributors in the country have also shifted to mercury-free alternatives for silver oxide, zinc-air, and alkaline batteries.

Meanwhile, for lighting products, the report said fluorescent bulbs and other mercury-containing lighting products are still widely available despite the diminishing demand in favor of LED alternatives. "Mercury-free HID lamps, in particular, remain a concern, with the two major suppliers of lighting products in the Philippines only selling mercury-containing HIDs," the report said.

On a positive note, the report said a majority of household and consumer-level lighting products sold and available are of LED varieties.

Funded by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the study presented trade data obtained from relevant government agencies, as well as the results of monitoring major e-commerce platforms. The results of the study are validated by cross-referencing relevant documents and conducting a validation workshop involving multiple government agencies.

The study also highlighted the Philippines's progress in managing mercury-added products, with distributors and manufacturers of batteries, lamps, and medical measuring devices successfully shifting most, if not all, of their business to safer alternatives.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury was ratified by the Philippine government on July 8, 2020. It is an international agreement established to protect human health and the environment from emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds caused by human activity.

The sale of mercury-added products was made punishable by law through the issuance of the Chemical Control Order for Mercury and Mercury Compounds-DENR Administrative Order 2019-20 (CCO-DAO 2019-20).

On June 13, 2022, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Philippines issued FDA Circular No. 2022-003 which totally banned mercury-added medical devices such as thermometers, sphygmomanometers, and dental amalgams for dental restorative procedures.

"We commend the efforts of the Philippine government in reducing mercury-added products in the market. The next challenge is fully shifting towards safer alternatives and this can be achieved through the continued cooperation of private industries, civil society organizations, and the government," Lorenzo said.

For the protection of human health, BAN Toxics encouraged the public to switch to mercury-free lamps, batteries, and medical devices, and dispose of used mercury-containing products and devices safely.

BAN Toxics further promotes sound waste management to minimize mercury pollution from lamps, batteries, and other medical devices.

"We further urge the industries and manufacturers to comply with the existing implementing rules and regulations of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regarding the proper storage, transport, management, and disposal of mercury-containing wastes."



Water resources authority pushed

The Freeman June 23, 2022 | 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — A proposed ordinance that aims to create the Provincial Water Resources Authority (PWRA) whose task is to enhance the preservation and maximization of the water resources in Cebu province is being pushed before the Provincial Board.

The proponent of the measure, Atty. John Ismael Borgonia, PB member representing third district, said in the draft ordinance that the PWRA will oversee the administration and enforcement of the provisions of this Code in the Province of Cebu.

Under the proposal, the powers and functions of the PWRA shall include, but shall not limit to, the formulation and establishment of a systematic and comprehensive plan to develop all water resources to include the bulk water supply system in the island of Cebu, as well as to determine and establish areas that can be efficient source for local water utilization and for bulk water supply from a municipality, city, or a cluster of local government units for any part of the province.

To add, it shall also prescribe rules and regulations governing the utilization and distribution of water and the creation of water utilities and transmission lines among component municipalities and cities of the province covering water distribution projects.

Aside from the creation of the Water Resources Authority, the proposed ordinance, which is titled as the “Water Code of the Province of Cebu of 2022,” also aims to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

Furthermore, it shall also adopt and establish rules governing the appropriation, utilization, conservation, protection and distribution of water resources in the province.

Bulk water distribution of water to all parts of the island of Cebu might also be possible should the ordinance be approved by the Board.

The ordinance also aims to assist and aid all component local government units in the establishment, development and operation of local water utilities.

Likewise, it aims to ensure that all water-related activities and undertakings by both the government and private sector in the Province of Cebu will be in compliance with the Clean Water Act, adopting and implementing plans for protection, conservation and rehabilitation of watersheds including identified recharge points based on the river basin approach.

It is stated in the draft ordinance that the usage of water will be directed for the following: agriculture, energy, water supply, commercial, tourism, transportation, and environment.

Development of surface water resources as the main source of water supply will also be given priority by the Province of Cebu.

Conservation of the ground water sources and regulation of its further use and exploitation will also be pursued.

As for its appropriation, an initial amount of two million pesos shall be appropriated for the operation of the Water Resources Authority of the Province of Cebu.

The said budget shall be included in the Annual Budget of the Province of Cebu if applicable.

The ordinance is already referred to the concerned committee. — Rubie Mae T. Sollano and Chiel Martina Y. Condor, JMD (FREEMAN)

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2022/06/23/2190312/water-resources-authority-pushed>

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Task force ends rehabilitation of Boracay Is.

DAYS before President Rodrigo Duterte steps down from power, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-led task force has completed the rehabilitation and management of the world-renowned Boracay Island in Aklan province.

The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force has ended the rehabilitation and management of Boracay Island four years after the beach's massive makeover.

"This culmination means the responsibility will now be with the local government of Malay. Please take good care of it just like what we did," DENR Secretary Jim Sampulna said.

"The challenge here is how you can maintain Boracay's cleanliness and sanitation, including the discipline of the people," he added.

On May 8, 2018, the President issued Executive Order 53, directing the establishment of the BIATF to end in 2020.

The President extended the task force's tenure until May 8, 2021 through EO 115.

On Sept. 14, 2021, the BIATF's term was extended again until June 30, 2022 through EO 148, to give it more time to complete all its projects.

Sampulna assured the local officials that although the BIATF would no longer be at the frontline, the task force would continue to assist them to sustain the gains of the Boracay rehabilitation. **Rio N. Araja**



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DENR AT PCG MAGTUTULUNGAN PARA SA MARINE PROTECTION

LUMAGDA sa isang Memorandum of Agreement ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa pamamagitan ng BMB o Biodiversity Management Bureau at ang Philippine Coast Guard kaugnay sa pagtugon sa mga kakulangan para sa pagbibigay-proteksyon at konserbasyon ng marine ecosystem ng bansa.

Pinangunahan ito nina BMB officer-in-charge director Natividad Bernardino at Commandant ng Philippine Coast Guard Admiral Artemio Manalo Abu.

Malaki ang paniniwala ng BMB na ang mas pinaigting na kooperasyon sa PCG ay magpapalakas sa kapasidad ng Kagawaran para mabigyang proteksyon ang mga karagatan, dagat, at iba pang anyong tubig na nasa hurisdiksiyon ng Pilipinas.

Aminado ang BMB na limitado ang kakayahan at budget nito para mapatigil ang mga ilegal na gawaing nakasisira at nakasasama sa marine ecosystem lalo na sa mga deklaradong marine protected areas.

Malaki ang maitutulong ng PCG lalo pa't sa ilalim ng Duterte administration ay natutukan ang modernisasyon ng ahensya.

Nakasaad sa MOA ang pagkakaroon ng palitan ng mga technical expertise, in-



formation and assistance sa demarcation and marker buoy installation sa mga marine protected areas na nakapaloob sa National Integrated Protected Areas System framework.

Kabilang din ang pagkakaroon ng capacity-building activities and development lalong-lalo sa reporting mechanism ng mga marine vessel na nagkakaroon ng aksidente sa karagatan o dagat katulad ng oil spill at ship grounding.

Binigyang-diin naman ni PCG admiral Abu na basta ang pagpapatupad ng mga marine laws ay participatory, consultative, science-based

at sustainable, maaasahan ng DENR ang buong suporta ng PCG.

Magtutulungan din ang DENR-BMB at PCG sa ilang joint activity na may kinalaman sa water quality monitoring, implementasyon ng wildlife laws, at mga marine research expeditions sa marine protected areas, sa West Philippine Sea at sa Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve.

Magsasagawa rin sila ng joint marine protection activities kabilang ang coastal and underwater cleanups, at mas pinalawak na information, education and communication campaign.



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Benguet pine trees protection sought

There are 2.5 million trees in Baguio City thriving in the forests and reservations, watersheds, parks, road-right-of-ways, government lots including private properties

BY ALDWIN QUITASOL

BAGUIO CITY — City councilors in this city are already in the process of finalizing a local legislation to save the remaining trees here

from being extinct.

In a proposed ordinance that was approved by the local legislative body, Baguio City councilors Arthur Allad-iw, Levy Lloyd Orcales and Joel Alangsab seek a tree-cutting

moratorium in the city.

They also want violators will be given appropriate sanctions.

Latest inventory by the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) Cordillera and the Baguio City Environment and Parks Management Office (CEPMO) revealed that there are 2.5 million trees in Baguio City thriving in the forests and reservations, watersheds,

parks, road-right-of-ways, government lots including private properties.

Of the total number, there are only around 492, 974 Benguet Pine Trees (*Pinus Kesiya*) or 19.7 percent of the total trees.

“It cannot be denied that Baguio City identity is anchored on the existence of robust Pine Trees, hence dubbed as the ‘City of Pines.’ But the Benguet

Pine Tree — endemic to the Cordillera Region — is being lost to development and urban expansion,” said the councilors.

The added that the urban tree cover of Baguio City is at 28.8 percent equivalent to 1,643 hectares from the total land area of the city which is 5, 749 hectares. Studies recommend that a community needs at least 40 percent of

its total land area covered by forest or urban tree canopy.

They added that the city already exceeded its total carrying capacity which is now over 350,000 residents and a daytime population that climbs to 750,000 with the influx of out-of-town workers, students, businessmen and tourists. The city’s build-up areas had already encroached to its forest covers.



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DUTERTE ASKED TO CANCEL QUARRYING AGREEMENTS IN MASUNGI, PRESERVE ENVIRONMENTAL LEGACY

MANILA, PHILIPPINES—Several mayors and other officials of cities downstream of the Upper Marikina Watershed and Masungi Geopark Project, including Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Pasig Mayor Vico Sotto, and Marikina Mayor Marcy Teodoro have joined mounting calls for the immediate cancellation of three large-scale quarrying agreements within the said protected and conserved areas. Their constituents suffer the brunt of disastrous floods accelerated by the deforestation of upland mountains and the tamping of rivers. They hope that the yearly cycle of destruction will finally come to an end.

The local officials' action echoed a similar request from Rizal Governor Rebecen Ynares in 2020, immediately after the

devastation wrought by Typhoons Rolly and Ulysses. In Memorandum 2020-01, the governor urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to cancel all mining tenements in Rizal Province to mitigate floods.

Various groups of experts, civic leaders, and indigenous people have appealed for the cancellation of three Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSAs) covering more than 1,300 hectares to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, after acting Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna did not cancel the said MPSAs and instead "suspended" quarries that never went into operation in twenty-four (24) years.

The groups also asked for the

removal of and accountability for the unabated construction of illegal permanent structures in the watershed, including swimming pool resorts and rest houses.

According to a flood modeling study by the Manila Observatory, the continued deforestation of the Upper Marikina Watershed can significantly increase the extent of flooding in low-lying reaches. With only about 11% of forest cover left in the watershed, the devastation of life and property can be even worse than what was experienced during typhoon Ondoy.

Scientists from the National Museum of the Philippines warned in a recent report that major land and hydrologic disturbances in the sensitive Masungi karst landscape, such as quarrying and land clearing,

can have expensive consequences.

Featuring ancient limestone pinnacles and mountains of the Southern Sierra Madre, the area has been protected since 1904 through Executive Order 33 designating it as the Marikina Reservation. It received additional protection from quarrying and exploitation from Presidential Proclamation 1636 in 1977 declaring it part of a National Park, and Presidential Proclamation 296 in 2011 creating the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.

Both the protected areas act (e-NIPAS) and the Philippine Mining Act ban quarrying in national parks and proclaimed watershed reserves. In addition, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) itself said that the quarrying companies committed

breaches in their contracts that are grounds for cancellation.

In 1993, former DENR Secretary and National Scientist Dr. Angel Alcala penned Department Administrative Order 33 recognizing the geological and ecological importance of the Masungi landscape and banned the application of quarrying tenements herein. Masungi is home to endangered and endemic species such as the Indigo-Banded Kingfisher, the ultra rare JC's Vine, Philippine Hawk-Eagle, Colasisi parrot, and North Luzon Giant Cloud Rat.

Starting in 2017, the Masungi Geopark Project is a non-profit, award-winning legacy project of the administration which aims to restore degraded and abused watershed areas surrounding the limestone formation. It has res-

cued 2,000 hectares of land for restoration, established 17 km. of monitoring trails and ranger stations, and engaged 100 park rangers and 200 partners from various sectors in reforestation, despite serious risks faced by rangers and team members.

All of these gains, environmentalists say, may be lost once again if quarrying agreements are not canceled. The threat needs to be addressed decisively as non-cancellation gives the quarries runway to operate later on and continue speculating on the land, they stressed. Before the president steps down from office, this final action for the environment is requested to preserve an outstanding legacy.

QUEZON CITY, PASIG, MARIKINA MAYORS AND OTHERS JOIN CALL TO ACTION TO SAVE MASUNGI AND THE UPPER MARIKINA WATERSHED

As one of the most vulnerable countries to the climate crisis, our people are ravaged by floods and landslides year in and year out, causing untold loss of life, property, and infrastructure.

Those disastrous floods and landslides are accelerated by unlawful and misplaced quarrying, unscrupulous resort constructions, and other harmful activities that level mountains, obstruct waterways, and vanish forests that serve as our sole natural defense against calamities.

These destructive activities and developments are anathema to the protected area¹ meant to be preserved from exploitation for the wellbeing of Filipinos and future generations thereof.

We strongly urge the DENR and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to hold collective over individual interests, support conservation initiatives like the Masungi Geopark Project, and cancel mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) covering more than 1,300 hectares of the protected watershed². The proliferation of illegal structures and establishments inside the watershed should also be taken very seriously, with those responsible held to account.

We are deeply concerned that the DENR is reportedly not acting upon the cancellation of the MPSAs since the MPSAs are allegedly "not yet operational" and "will expire soon."

However, non-cancellation only gives the quarries runway to operate later on and does not guarantee the conservation of the watershed area. The MGB itself already stated in their Show Cause Orders to the quarry companies that they committed "gross violations constituting breach in their contracts and the Philippine Mining Act" that may be grounds for cancellation.

We likewise appeal to the relevant quarry companies to reconsider the social and environmental impacts of their plans, and voluntarily rescind their MPSAs within the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape and Masungi Geopark Project.

¹ Presidential Proclamation 296, s. 2011; Presidential Proclamation 1636, s. 1977

² MGB Show Cause Orders to Rapid City Realty & Development Corporation (MPSA #126-98-IVA), Quarry Rock (#112-98-IVA), and Quimson Limestone (#137-99-IVA)

SIGNATORIES

Original Sgd.
Mayor Ma. Josefina Belmonte
City Mayor,
Quezon City

Original Sgd.
Mayor Marcelino R. Teodoro
City Mayor,
Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Mayor Victor Ma. Regis N. Sotto
City Mayor,
Pasig City

Original Sgd.
Mayor Jaime Fresneda
City Mayor,
Muntinlupa City

Original Sgd.
Vice Mayor Gerardo V. Calderon
Municipal Vice Mayor,
Angono, Rizal

Original Sgd.
Atty. Jeronimo U. Manzanero
City Administrator,
Pasig City

Original Sgd.
Atty. Voltaire C. Dela Cruz
City Administrator,
Malabon City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Bernard C. Bernardo
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Sta. Elena, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Segundo S. Cruz
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Calumpang, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Randy G. Leal
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Nangka, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Miguel A. Punzalan Jr.
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Marikina Heights, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Rizalina W. Teope
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Fortune, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Ronnie C. Tiburcio
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Barangka, Marikina City

Original Sgd.
Capt. Mary Jane Zubiri-Dela Rosa
Barangay Captain,
Brgy. Concepcion Dos, Marikina City



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Plastic neutrality program ramped up

Colgate-Palmolive Philippines and Green Antz Builders have ramped up a program on plastic waste collection to include agreements with the governments of Manila, Quezon City and Taguig, in collaboration with Department of Education (DepEd) units and City Environment and Natural Resources Offices.

The program also encompasses drop-off points for plastic waste in various Ayala Malls in Metro Manila.

Colgate-Palmolive PH and Green Antz celebrated the first year of a closed loop plastic waste management initiative in Bulacan that diverted from the environment hundreds of tons of plastic waste in cooperation with five local government units (LGU) and 112 public schools under the auspices of the DepEd. The LGU are those of Baliuag, Malolos City, Plaridel, Pulilan and San Ildefonso.

The plastic waste is collected by the LGU, communities and schools, and goes into the making of eco-bricks by Green Antz that are then used in the building of "Wash & Brush Stations," which are turned over to the LGU. Some 20 such handwashing stations have been constructed.



Mga nagtatanim ng puno kinidlatan: 1 patay, 3 sugatan

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL -
Utas ang isang lalaki ha-
bang kritikal ang tatlong
kasama niya matapos si-
lang tamaan ng kidlat ha-
bang nagsasagawa ng tree
planting sa Sipalay City.

Kinilala ang namatay na
si Christian Escarlan, 20,
habang nilapatan naman ng
lunas sa ospital sina Johnrey
Villacorta, 21; Cristina Lavila,
20; at isang 16-anyos na
binatilyo.

Ayon kay Dionilo Bogtae,
Executive Assistant on Pub-
lic Safety, Sipalay City at pi-
nuno rin ng Sipalay Emergen-
cy and Rescue Services
(Sears), dakong 3:30 p.m.
nang maganap ang insidente
sa Sitio Don Jose, Barangay

Manlucahoc.

Sinabi ni Bogtae, nagsa-
gawa sila ng tree planting bi-
lang bahagi ng National
Greening Program ng pama-
halaan at nakibahagi ang bik-
tima kasama ang iba pang
kabataan.

Pagdating sa lugar habang
naglalakad sa di kalayuan ay
biglang pumatak ang ulan na
may kasunod na kulog at kid-
lat. Sa lakas ng kidlat, tinama-
an si Escarlan at ilang metro
ang layo ng tatlo ay nahagip
din.

Bumagsak sa lupa si Es-
carlan na agad binawian ng
buhay habang dinala naman
sa ospital ang tatlo para lapa-
tan ng lunas.

MARY ANNE SAPICO



Strategies in creating climate resilience

CLIMATE change is believed to be an environmental peril that has impacted governance, human security, fishery, agriculture, environment and economic growth. It has created a disheartening encounter in society. It leads to worsening air quality, adverse impacts on food and water supply and quality, and more frequent and extreme weather events, which profoundly impact security.

Some useful strategies have been suggested to address the impacts and risks of climate change. And they are as follows:

1. Area: Governance

Impact:

Extreme weather events such as droughts, sea level rise, flooding can disrupt efforts to strengthen stakeholders and increase participation of marginalized groups.

Adaptation options:

- Incorporate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management schemes into governance systems.



HARVARD VERITAS

GLENN S. BANAGUAS

- Engage civil society groups or organizations in participatory fora to address their vulnerability and identify adaptations to climate impacts.

- Examine existing laws and regulations for opportunities to improve governance and resilience to climate variables.

2. Area: Human security

Impacts:

- Increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases (e.g., malaria, dengue)

- Increased risk of malnutrition due to decreased food availability and quality, and ill-health effects of reduced access to clean drinking water

- Increased risk of death from extreme weather events

- Increased need for post-disaster relief and reconstruction,

increased pressure on disaster management systems

Adaptation options:

- Broad-scale immunization

- Early warning systems and public information

- Increase access to primary care and preventive care

- Improve disaster preparation and emergency response

- Capacity building of local communities to assist in relief actions

- Use of insurance, bonds, and other risk-sharing measures to finance relief and reconstruction

- Manage risk to reduce impact

3. Area: Fishery

Impacts:

- Decrease in fisheries production

- Climate processes and extreme weather events will increase in frequency and intensity

- Warming is more intense in surface waters

- Changes in fish distributions

- Shifts in ocean salinity are occurring

- Oceans are becoming more

acidic with probable negative consequences to many coral reef and calcium-bearing organisms

Adaptation options:

- Creating resilient ecosystems, human and governance communities through decreasing the exposure of the sector by increasing the aquatic systems' resilience; decreasing the communities' sensitivities to change; and increasing the sector's adaptive capacity

- Supporting intersectoral collaboration (e.g., integrating fisheries and aquaculture into national climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (DRM) strategies and supporting integrated resource management, such as integrated coastal zone or watershed management, water planning)

- Promoting integrated monitoring and information systems — incorporating scientific and local knowledge sources and improving general awareness of climate change within and outside the sector

- Promoting context specific and community-based adaptation

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Strategies in creating climate resilience

tion strategies

- Avoiding "mal-adaptations" (e.g., overly rigid fishing access regimes that inhibit fisher migrations, adaptation actions that would increase fishing effort in an over-fished fishery)

- Embracing adaptive management, decision-making under uncertainty and the precautionary approach

- Promoting natural barriers and defenses rather than hard barriers that would impact the ecosystem

4. Area: Agriculture

Impacts:

- Increased temperature results in higher yields in some areas but lower yields due to higher rate of evapotranspiration and water deficits

- Increased incidence and range of pests and diseases, extreme weather events cause flooding,

crop loss and erosion, drought results in reduced crop yields.

Adaptation options:

- Genetic improvement to produce drought-tolerant crops, translocation of crops, and changes in cropping patterns

- Afforestation to condition soils

- Improve water infiltration, and provide shade, increase water use efficiency, diversification into non-farm activities, crop insurance and micro-edit schemes

5. Area: Environment

Impacts:

- Higher temperatures and drought lead to increased incidence of forest fires changes in temperature and precipitation can cause changes in flora and fauna ranges and potential losses of biodiversity, and extreme weather

events can damage coastal ecosystems, coral reefs and mangroves

Adaptation options:

- Seawalls, beach nourishment, regulation to discourage development in coastal and other threatened areas

- Forest management to reduce potential for forest fires, set-aside protected areas for threatened species

- Afforestation and reforestation

- Community management of forest and natural resources to ensure sustainable harvest and regeneration

6. Area: Economic growth

Impacts:

- Damages and losses to livelihood assets

- Straining of traditional coping systems

- Increased debt burden and

long-term poverty alleviation efforts

- Reduced foreign local investment in areas vulnerable to climate variability and change impacts

Adaptation options:

- Diversification of livelihoods

- Local value addition

- Improved access to markets and finances

- Technology transfer

- Use of carbon trading opportunities to increase revenue while putting in place measures that reduce emissions

7. Area: Energy

Impacts:

- In some areas, may reduce energy demand because of higher temperatures, decreased hydropower potential due to reduced precipitation

- Increase energy demand for

air conditioning, damage dams due to flooding

Adaptation options:

- Enhance dam structural parameters, change siting of hydropower, incorporate future reduced generation capacity in design, integrated water resources and disaster management

- Improved energy efficiency,

- Widen water channels and periodic draining of vulnerable lakes

- In order to attain a certain level of security, different stakeholders must bring unique perspectives, skills, solutions, and a wealth of knowledge to the challenge of strengthening resilience and addressing climate change.

They need to be engaged as partners in building climate resilience rather than being regarded simply as beneficiaries of initiatives. The IPCC's latest report recognizes the value of diverse

forms of knowledge such as scientific, indigenous and local knowledge in building climate resilience. Advances in the climate financing programs can connect local stakeholders to the higher-level policy, technical and financial assistance that they need for pertinent development impacts.

Sci. Dpl. Glenn S. Banaguas is a UN Sasakawa laureate for disaster risk reduction. He is an honoree of The Outstanding Filipino (ToFil), NAST Outstanding Young Scientist of the Philippines, United States-Association of Southeast Nations (US-Asean) Science and Technology fellow, European Union-Asia Climate diplomat, Asean science diplomat, Royal Society-The World Academy of Sciences awardee; and Asia Leaders awardee for sustainability leadership.



NEWS BRIEF

Pampanga inulan ng yelo

Inulan ng yelo ang ilang parte ng Lubao, Pampanga nitong Lunes.

Nabatid na alas-siyete ng gabi, habang umuulan nang malakas ay kasabay din ang pag-ulan ng yelo.

Ayon kay Pagasa Clark chief meteorologist Manuel Esguerra Jr., ang dahilan umano

nito ay kaugnay na rin sa thunderstorm. "Kasama po ng thunderstorm ang malakas na ulan, malakas na hangin, pag-ulan ng yelo o hailstorm at ipo-ipo o tornado."

Dagdag pa niya, sa ganito aniyang panahon ay malimit din ang pag-atake ng buhawi o tornado. **(Ansherina Jazu)**



MERALCO, NAKIISA SA INTERAGENCY CLEANUP SA ILOG PASIG



Kita sa larawan ang ilang mga Meralco employee-volunteers habang tinatanggal ang mga tumubong water hyacinth sa paligid ng Ilog Pasig na malapit sa Isla de Provisor sa Maynila

Bilang paggunita sa International Day of Biological Diversity, nakiisa ang Manila Electric Company (Meralco) sa isang espesyal na interagency clean-up activity sa Estero de Provisor na inorganisa ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ng Pasig River Coordinating and Management Office (PRCMO).

Layunin ng nasabing clean-up activity na linisin ang mga estero na nakapalibot sa Isla de Provisor sa lungsod ng Maynila upang tanggalin ang mga water hyacinths na kapag pinabayaan ay maaaring magdulot ng matinding pagbaha tuwing panahon ng tag-ulan dahil hinahadangan at binabarahan nito ang natural na pag-daloy ng tubig sa mga nasabing estero.

Ang social development arm ng Meralco, ang One Meralco Foundation, ay tumulong rin at nagkalooob ng mga gamit para sa mga volunteers katulad ng mga kalaykay, rain boots, kapote, guwantes, masks, at isang heavy duty truck na ginamit pang-hakot ng mga water hyacinths.

Lumahok din sa nasabing clean-up activity ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Maynila, ang NCR – Regional Community Defense Group (RCDG), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), at ang K-Line Maritime Academy – Philippines.

Nagpasalamat si PRCMO Deputy Director Dr. Teodoro Lloydon C. Bautista sa mga ahensya at kumpanyang nakilahok sa nasabing aktibidad. Aniya: "At the end of the day, it is not us who is going to benefit from this. It is your children, and your children's children."

Ayon naman kay Meralco Central Business Area Head Margarita B. David: "This is all in the spirit of bayanihan and of course, malasakit. As one of Meralco's core values, malasakit for us not only applies to our customers to whom we deliver electricity service, but also to our environment."



Pinamunuan ni PRCMO Deputy Director Dr. Teodoro Lloydon C. Bautista (5th from Left) ang clean-up activity na siyang nilahukan ng ilang mga Meralco employee volunteers mula sa iba't-iba nilang opisina katulad ng Central Distribution Services, Sub transmission Services, Malate Business Center, at Organizational Safety and Business Continuity.



TITLE:

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Govt agencies review rules on flexible work

By SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA
@sam_medenilla

DESPITE the implementation of guidelines for flexible work arrangement (FWA) for public sector workers last week, several government offices are still undecided on whether to adopt the measure or not.

At least three government offices—the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Commission on Elections—told BUSINESSMIRROR they are still studying the possible adoption of the scheme.

Civil Service Commissions (CSC) Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 2022-6, which institutionalized the government guidelines for FWA finally became effective on June 15, 2022.

It allowed government offices to make use of “flexi place” wherein workers can render service while they are outside of office; compressed work week wherein the 40-hour work week can be compressed into four days or less instead of five; skeleton workforce wherein a minimum number of workers must report for office; workshifting wherein employees will be allowed work in batches to ensure an office operate 24/7; “flexi time” wherein a worker can report anytime between 7 am and 7 pm as long as they complete the 40-hour work-week; and weekend work.

Frontline workers

INTERIOR Undersecretary Jonathan E. Malaya disclosed they are currently looking at the possible impact of the measure on their operations since they are a “frontline agency.”

“The DILG Personnel Division is drafting our proposed guidelines to conform with the CSC MC, which we will then subject it to consultation with the Employees Union before

submission to the SILG (Secretary of Interior and Local Government),” Malaya said.

Comelec acting spokesperson John Rex C. Laudiangco said the matter has yet to be taken up by the Comelec en banc.

The president of the Comelec Employees’ Union (Comelec-EU), Mark Christopher “Mac” Ramirez said while they welcome the FWA option, it may not be applicable to them amid their preparations for the next Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE).

“We will be starting voter registration by next month, and preparations for December 5, 2022 are already under way. This means we will be in our offices daily and would have to render overtime services even on holidays and weekends,” Ramirez said in a SMS.

For her part, Social welfare spokesperson Irene B. Dumlao said she will discuss the MC with their Human Resources Management and Development Services.

Pending list

AS of Tuesday, CSC Commissioner Aileen A. Lizada said they are still waiting for their regional offices to submit the list of government offices, which will be implementing FWAs.

Under MC 2022-6, government offices must submit their internal guidelines to the CSC regional offices for record purposes.

CSC earlier said it will be up to the government offices to determine if they will adopt the FWAs in any of their departments.

“We will see which agencies are adopting work arrangements. We will also see which type they will use if they decide to adopt it,” Lizada said.

She said they expect to come out with an initial consolidated list of agencies with flexible work arrangement by next month.

CONTINUED ON A5



Govt agencies review rules on flexible work

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"It takes time for them to craft [the internal guidelines]. We will give them a month. Hopefully, they will be able to submit by then. But right now, there are many offices, which are already seeking assistance from our regional offices [for their guidelines]," Lizada said.

Labor reaction

FEDERATION of Free Workers (FFW) President Sonny Matula supports the mainstreaming of FWA in the public sector, seeing it as beneficial to employees.

"In principle, FFW favors said arrangements as long as such should not disrupt the continuous delivery of government usual services from 8 am to 5 pm," Matula said in SMS.

The policy is also backed by Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK) general secretary Annie Enriquez-Geron, but the labor leader expressed concern over the execution of flexible work guidelines, especially since she said there was no stakeholder consultation done for its creation.

"There was no consultation with public sector unions on this despite our letters since 2020 for a dialogue [with CSC] to discuss and determine which of the existing jobs can be done at home and the framework within which it should be implemented," Geron said.

She said they hope CSC will issue a clarification on what work performance assessment tools will be used in implementing the flexible work arrangement.

Asked about the concerns of PSLINK, Lizada said the concerned

government agencies are already engaging with their regional offices to thresh out the said details.

Private sector implementation

CSC decided to institutionalize FWA, which were implemented by many government agencies since the onset of the Covid-19 crisis in early 2020, to provide more options for public employees to achieve work-life balance and minimize risk from infections.

The scheme is already widely implemented in the private sector especially during the pandemic.

Data from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) showed from January to May this year, 193,557 workers were affected by FWAs implemented by 3,681 establishments.

The most commonly implemented FWAs for private firms are reduction of workdays, compressed work week and telecommuting work arrangement.

"In terms of establishment size, the majority of the establishments which adopted flexible work arrangements were small enterprises [45 percent or 1,554]," DOLE said in its latest displacement report.

Some government officials are pushing for the mass implementation of flexible work arrangements to help employees cope with rising transportation costs due to higher fuel prices. This is compounded by the severe shortage in space in public transport, as many operators and drivers have reduced operations, unable to shoulder the added burden of spiking fuel prices amid authorities' failure to adjust fares.



NAVOTAS COASTAL BAY

RECLAMATION PROJECT

LAGOT KA



NI EDD REYES

NABABANAAGAN na ang positibong kalalabasan ng Navotas Coastal Bay Reclamation and

Development Project sa Barangay Tanza na mahigit isang taon ding plinano nina Mayor Toby Tiangco, Congressman John Rey Tiangco at ng San Miguel Corporation (SMC).

Sinimulan noong taong 2019, ang proyekto na gagastusan ng 57.4 bilyong piso ay lilikha ng 650-ektaryang lupa na tatayuan ng gusaling pang-industriya, komersiyo, pabahay at institusyunal na tugma sa

pagkakaroon ng pasilidad na para sa daungan ng mga barko at pang-turismo.

Dito rin itatayo ang Airport Support Service dahil sa naturang lugar dadaan ang itatayong elevated expressway mula Maynila patungo sa itinatayong New Manila International Airport sa Bulacan.

Nito nga lang nakaraang linggo ay personal ni pinuntahan ni Mayor Toby Tiangco ang ginagawang pagsusuri ng kontraktor ng SMC sa lupang pagtatayuan ng mga poste para

sa itatayong elevated expressway sa kaha-baan ng C3 Road patungo sa Coastal Bay.

Kinakailangan kasing isagawa muna ang pagsusuri sa lupa upang malaman ang komposisyon nito para maging matatag ang itatayong pundasyon ng elevated expressway.

Si Rep. John Rey naman na mauupo na bilang alkalde ay nagsabi na nasasabik na ang mga Navoteno sa napakalaking proyekto dahil mag-

iging daan ito upang maangat ang kabuhayan ng maraming mamamayan at ekonomiya ng lungsod. **PAGKUKUMPUNI NG LAGUSNILAD** MALAKING tulong sana ang Lagusnilad sa tapat ng Manila City Hall para maging maluwag ang daloy ng mga sasakyan patungo sa Katimugang bahagi ng Lungsod ng Maynila pero dahil sa pagkasira ng naturang lagusan, nagiging masikip tuloy ang trapiko sa lugar. Ang nakapagtataka,

napakatagal na panahon ng kinukumpuni ng Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) ang lansangan pero wala pa ring pagbabago at sa halip, lalo pang nasira ang pinakailalim ng lagusan kaya't nai-imbudo ang mga dumadaloy na sasakyan. Maliban pa rito, matagal na ring kinayod ang malaking bahagi ng lansangan para muling latagan ng bagong espalto pero

nanatiling nakatiwang-wang kaya't hirap ang mga motorista, lalo na ang mga naka-motorsiklo na dummaan sa lugar dahil bukod sa madulas, malalalim pa ang mga lubak. Sabi nga ng mga motorista, kung ipinaubaya siguro ng DPWH sa Manila City Engineering Office ang pagkukumpuni ng Lagusnilad, baka matagal na naisaayos ang kalsada. *Sa puna, komento at suhestiyon, mag-text lang sa 0923-3478363 o mag-email sa eddreyes2006@yahoo.com*



'World's biggest' freshwater fish netted in Cambodia



THE biggest freshwater fish ever recorded - a 300-kilogram stingray - hooked in Cambodia. AFP

AFP - A fisherman on the Mekong river in Cambodia has hooked the biggest freshwater fish ever recorded, scientists said -- a 300-kilogram stingray.

The giant freshwater stingray, which measured four metres (13 feet) from snout to tail, was caught last week and released back into the wild after being fitted with a tag to track its behavior.

The monstrous bottom-dweller beat the previous record for biggest recorded freshwater fish, held by a 293-kilo (646-pound) Mekong giant catfish caught in Thailand in 2005, the US-funded Wonders of the Mekong research project said.

The stingray, caught in Stung Treng province in northern Cambodia, was more than twice the weight of an average lowland gorilla, the experts said.

"In 20 years of researching giant fish in rivers and lakes on six continents, this is the largest freshwater fish that we've encountered or that's been documented anywhere worldwide," Zeb Hogan, a fish biologist leading the Wonders of the Mekong project, said in a statement released Tuesday.

"This is an absolutely astonishing discovery, and justifies efforts to better understand the mysteries surrounding this species and the incredible stretch of river where it lives."

The researchers fitted an acoustic tag to the stingray before returning it to the river, to try to learn more about the secretive creature's elusive behaviour.

Last month, an endangered giant freshwater stingray four metres long and weighing 180 kilos was also hooked by a fisherman in the same province.

More than 1,000 fish species call the Mekong home and the stingray is not the only giant lurking in the muddy waters - the giant catfish and giant barb also reach up to three metres long and 270 kilos in weight.

Scientists have warned that plastic waste threatens wildlife even in the deepest stretches of the Mekong, along with "ghostnets" - abandoned by fishers but still able to snare fish.

The famous waterway starts in China and twists south through parts of Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam, feeding 60 million people through its basin and tributaries.

But environmentalists have long voiced concerns about dam building along the Mekong River that will destroy fish stocks.



TITLE:



REMATE OPINION

ULTIMATUM

NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

BAHA, LINDOL PAGHANDAAN

NAPAKAHIRAP isipin, mga Bro, ang pagdating ng mga sakuna ngayong tag-ulan.

Sa mga bansang India, China at Bangladesh, nanalasa ang mga baha at milyon-milyon katao ang tinatamaan.

Sa Banglades, may 3.1 milyon ang tinamaan ng baha habang 1.8 milyon naman sa India habang daan-daang libo naman ang dinaluhon ng baha sa China.

Ang ulan umano sa China ay katulad ng nagapan noong 1961 na milyon din ang pininsala ng baha.

Sa Bangladesh at India, palahaw ng mga residente, ngayon lang sila nakararanas ng grabeng baha na maaari umano lalala pa sa mga susunod na araw.

May nabilang nang 116 patay sa dalawang bansa.

Pero hindi lang baha ang pumapatay sa mga bansang ito kundi maging ang mga kidlat na nagaganap na pumaslang na ng 49.

Sa Afghanistan, tumira naman ang napakalakas na lindol na magnitude 6.1 at may 920 nang natagpuang patay.

NAKAPANGINGINIG

Habang nag-uulat ang media at mga awtoridad sa nagaganap na mga pag-ulan at paglindol, hindi nating maiwasan ang makaramdam ng lungkot, nginig sa takot at lamig, gutom at iba pa.

Sino naman ang hindi malulungkot at matatakot sa rami ng mga patay at still counting, 'ika nga.

"Yang gutom at lamig habang nakababad sa tubig, anak ng tokwa, sino ang makatitiis?

Lalo na kung sa kapaligiran mo ay ang mga biktima na mismo na nalulunod at nadadapurak ng mga bakal at bato naman sa mga nagibang gusali, sa lindol naman?

Isa pang ikinalulungkot, mga Bro, ng mga biktima at kawalan ng mainom man lang na malinis na tubig.

Kapag baha na kasi at nire-rescue na ang mga mamamayan sa bubong ng kanilang mga bahay, sino ang may malinis na tubig sa pinaghalo-halong dumi ng tao at hayop, bulok na mga bagay, nakalalasong kemikal at iba sa paligid?

IBA PANG MGA PINSALA

Kung tutuusin, hindi na kailangang magtanong pa kung ano-ano ang mga napipinsala sa mga grabeng pag-ulan at pagbaha.

Patay ang lahat ng mga hayop na inaalagaan, maging ang mga pananim.

Sira rin maging ang mga pundar sa hanapbuhay gaya ng mga sasakyan, kompyuter, makinarya sa distilled water, mga panluto sa pagrerestoran, mga palengke at iba pa.

Kinakailangan pa ang mangutang para makapagsimula mula at maganda kung may mga pantang na hindi 5/6.

Ang mga nasira at naanod na bahay sa mga ilog, paano rin?

Ang mga nagiba na bahay sa lindol na ikinasira rin ng mga hanapbuhay na nadaganan, paano?

Mahihirap na bansa ang Afghanistan at Bangladesh.

Mabuti kung kaya ng pamahalaan nila ang magbuhos ng sapat na mga pondo na pang-ahon sa mga nabibiktima ng kalamidad.

MAGHANDA LAHAT

Sa tag-ulan, inaasahan na nating ang pagdating ng mga sakuna mula sa mga bagyo, baha, landslide at iba na talaga namang mapaminsala.

Sa lindol, dumarating ito nang katulad ng pagdating ng isang magnanakaw na hindi namamalyan. Dapat maghanda ang lahat at bahagi ng paghahanda ang pagkaroon ng mga pagsasanay at pagkakaroon ng mga imbak na pagkain, tubig, gamot, salap at iba pa.

Nakahanda ba tayo lagi, mga Bro?

Anomang reklamo o puna, iparating lang sa www.remate.ph o i-text sa 0921-4303333.

23 JUNE 2022, THURSDAY



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DOH sees significant increase in COVID-19 cases

[Mayen Jaymalin](#) - The Philippine Star June 23, 2022 | 12:00am



Commuters, who are heading to their workplaces, line up at the Nepa Q-Mart station of the EDSA Bus Carousel in Quezon City early Tuesday morning, June 21, 2022, to beat the influx of passengers. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority estimated last week that there will be a possible increase in passenger volume as fewer private cars may ply EDSA due to the continuing hike in oil prices.

The STAR / Miguel De Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) is seeing a significant increase in COVID-19 cases and a possible peak that may reach as high as 2,000 daily cases in the National Capital Region (NCR) toward the end of July.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the DOH has recorded a total of 3,198 new cases nationwide from June 14 to 20 at an average of 456 cases per day.

“Although we’re seeing a notable increase in the number of cases, we remain in the low risk case classification because we are still in the less than one per 100,000 population and average daily attack rate,” Vergeire said partly in Filipino at a virtual briefing.

At present, the daily average matches the level in February when the DOH recorded 466 cases per day.

In Metro Manila or NCR, the increase in cases started in mid-May, but the sharp increase was observed last week when the daily average rose to 200 with the positivity rate at 4.4 percent, said Vergeire.

“Previously we were recording less than 100 cases per day in NCR. Right now, we’re seeing almost 300 cases per day already,” she said.

The DOH also observed an increase in cases in the rest of Luzon and the Visayas, although the average daily cases remained less than 80. In Mindanao, the case trend is still low with daily cases averaging less than 40.

But Vergeire pointed out that as cases continue to rise, the national positivity rate also rose to 3.1 percent, which is similar to the rate in the first half of March.

In terms of hospitalization, she said more than half of the admissions are asymptomatic and mild cases.

“Severe and critical admissions since mid-March of this year remained below 1,000,” said Vergeire, noting that the slight increase in recent days is less than one percent of the total hospital admissions.



The national health care utilization rate is at 14.61 percent to 17.82 percent which is still classified as low risk, she added.

It is the same in the NCR, where no significant increase in severe and critical cases has been observed.

PRC ready for surge

Taking a cue from the DOH report, the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) said it was preparing for another surge of COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila.

“The PRC is prepared for the surge, with its 14 operational molecular laboratories across the country. The PRC also continues to support the government’s vaccination efforts through its 17 Bakuna Buses, 26 Bakuna Centers and 24 Bakuna Teams to the LGUs,” said PRC chairman Richard Gordon.

Gordon said Filipinos should get vaccinated and tested promptly for early detection and prevent further transmission of COVID-19, following the DOH’s report that cases increased significantly last week – 82 percent higher than the previous week.

He also noted that OCTA Research projects the daily cases of COVID-19 in Metro Manila to reach 1,000 per day by the end of the month or early July.

However, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III warned in a radio interview that COVID-19 cases in the NCR may reach as high as 2,000 by the middle or end of July.

Vergeire explained that this projection was based on scientific assumptions that included the entry of more transmissible subvariants of Omicron, waning immunity among the vaccinated, the drop in compliance with minimum public health standards (MPHS) and the continuing low uptake in booster shots.

Working on the assumption that the more transmissible subvariants of Omicron spread, she said the peak of the surge in cases will be expected in the middle of September.

“But if the entry of the more transmissible subvariant, plus immune escape and low (compliance with) MPHS and update booster still slow, we will have it (peak in cases) as early as the third week of July,” Vergeire said.

Nevertheless, the DOH is not expecting cases to reach the same number during the Omicron surge in January when the country posted as many as 34,000 cases a day nationwide and 17,000 cases a day in Metro Manila.

While the DOH cannot certainly predict when the next surge will happen, Vergeire said this could still be avoided if the people comply with MPHS and avail themselves of vaccination and boosters.

More subvariants

Yesterday, the DOH reported the detection of 32 more cases of the more transmissible Omicron subvariants in the country.

Vergeire said that of the 32 new BA.5 cases, 21 came from Region 6 (Western Visayas), four from Region 4-A (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon or Calabarzon), four from the NCR and three from Region 3 (Central Luzon).

This brings to 43 the total number of BA.5 cases nationwide, with 22 of the new cases manifesting only mild symptoms. Five were asymptomatic while the remaining five are still being verified.



“At the moment, exposure of individuals is still unknown and travel histories are being verified,” Vergeire said, but noted that nine of the cases in Western Visayas were traced to the same workplace.

With 30 of the latest cases of BA.5 being full vaccinated, 16 have already recovered, while 14 are in isolation. The status of the two others is still being verified.

Vergeire clarified that there is still no declaration of community transmission of the Omicron subvariants at this time.

Meanwhile, no additional BA 2.12.1 subvariants were detected in the latest genome sequencing. – **Neil Jayson Servallos**



32 pa tinamaan ng Omicron subvariant – DOH

[Danilo Garcia](#) - Pang-masa June 23, 2022 | 12:00am



People with large baggages start arriving at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) in Parañaque City before dawn on Dec. 23, 2021 to catch their buses as they head to their respective provinces early to avoid the influx of passengers for the Christmas weekend.

The STAR / Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Inihayag ng Department of Health (DOH) na nasa 32 ang karagdagang nahawa ng BA.5 Omicron subvariant ang naitala sa bansa.

Sinabi ni Usec. Ma. Rosario Vergeire, 21 sa mga bagong kaso ay sa Region 6, apat sa Calabarzon, apat sa Metro Manila at tatlo naman sa Central Luzon Region.

Ibinahagi niya na ang naitalang 21 sa Region 6 ay magkakasama sa trabaho at sa mga bagong tinamaan, 30 dito ang fully vaccinated, samantalang ang isa naman ay partially-vaccinated.

Sa mga bagong kaso, 22 ang nakaranas ng mild symptoms at lima ay asymptomatic, bukod dito, 16 sa kanila ang gumaling na samantalang ang natitirang bilang ay naka-isolate.

Ngayon, 43 na ang naitalang tinamaan ng BA.5 sa Pilipinas at hindi pa rin tukoy ng DOH kung paano nalantad ang mga pasyente sa BA.5 subvariant at inaalang pa rin ang kanilang mga travel history.

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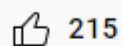
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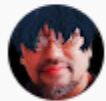
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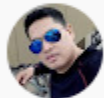


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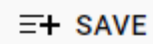
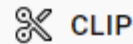
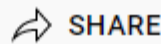
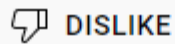
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