

09 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR, USAID boost tieup for environmental protection, climate change mitigation

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MARCH 7, 2022



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are exploring ways to enhance the partnership in environmental protection and climate change mitigation.

DENR Officer in Charge Secretary Jim O. Sampulna, on Thursday (March 3) met with US Charge d’Affaires Heather Variava, USAID Mission Director to the Philippines Ryan Washburn, and USAID Philippines Environment Office Chief John Edgar who paid him a courtesy visit at the DENR Central Office.

“It is our great pleasure to meet you today and have the opportunity to personally thank the US government for always being supportive in our efforts of meeting our agenda in the environment and natural resources,” Sampulna told the US officials.

The new DENR chief, who had been a regional director from 2009 to 2018, cited that several USAID projects were implemented during his time on the field and hoped to continue doing so under his leadership.

“I came from the field, from the region, and I have implemented many USAID projects,” he said.

Among the notable joint projects of the DENR and USAID is the Safe Water project and the ongoing SIBOL Project or Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes.

For his part, National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Seville D. David Jr. said the Safe Water project is currently being implemented by NWRB as DENR’s focal agency, among three regional offices in Palawan, Negros Occidental and Mindanao.

DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) OIC Director Natividad Y. Bernardino shared that the SIBOL project team has recently worked on the Siargao seascape, which was badly hit by Typhoon “Odette” in December 2021.

“The work that USAID does to the country’s resources is so important to the whole world, and the Philippines is one of our priorities for safe and resilient water,” Variava said.

USAID provides technical assistance to the projects with the Safe Water initiative aiming to improve the sustainable management of the country’s water resources, and SIBOL on reducing environmental crimes, and improving water security.



Pagtutulungan ng DENR, USAID sa environmental protection at climate change mitigation paiigtingin



March 8, 2022 @ 2:07 PM 18 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Upang protektahan ang environment tutuklas ng mga bagong paraan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at United States Agency for International Development (USAID) upang mapalakas ang partnership ng Pilipinas at ng United States para sa environmental protection at climate change mitigation.

Noong Marso 3 nang bisitahin nina US Charge d’Affaires Heather Variaya, USAID Mission Director to the Philippines Ryan Washburn at USAID Philippines Environment Office Chief John Edgar si DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna bilang pagkilala sa matagal nang partnership sa pagitan ng USAID at ng DENR.

“It is our great pleasure to meet you today and have the opportunity to personally thank the US government for always being supporting in our efforts of meeting our agenda in the environment and natural resources,” saad ni Sampulna sa mga US officials.

Sa press release sinabi pa ng bagong DENR chief na dati ring regional director mula 2009 hanggang 2018, na ang ilang USAID projects ay naimplementa na sa kanyang paninilbihan sa field at umaasa din ito na maipagpapatuloy ito sa kanyang pamumuno.

“I came from the field, from the region, and I have implemented many USAID projects. We have the Safe Water project and SIBOL (Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes), which we are implementing right now,” sabi ni Sampulna.

Kaugnay nito ayon kay National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr., patuloy ang implementasyon ng NWRB ng Safe Water project bilang focal agency ng DENR, sa tatlong regional offices sa Palawan, Negros Occidental at Mindanao.

Samantala, ibinahagi naman ni DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) OIC Director Natividad Y. Bernardino na ang SIBOL project team ay kasalukuyang ginagawa ang Siargao seascape na labis na napinsala ng Typhoon Odette noong Disyembre 2021.

“The work that USAID does to the country’s resources is so important to the whole world, and the Philippines is one of our priorities for safe and resilient water,” sabi ni Variava.

Ang USAID ay nagbibigay ng technical assistance sa mga proyekto at ang inisyatiba sa Safe Water ay layuning mapabuti ang sustainable management ng water resources ng bansa at ang SIBOL ay upang mabawasan ang environmental crimes at maisaayos ang water security.



Samantala si dating DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang lumagda sa five-year partnership ng USAID para sa SIBOL at Safe Water programs noong Mayo 27, 2021.

Ang proyektong ito ay nakapaloob sa P7.25 billion USAID-Philippines agreement on enhanced and community resilience na nilagdaan ng National Economic and Development Authority at USAID noong Pebrero 2021.

Bukod sa proyektong ito, pinag-usapan din ng DENR at USAID ang paghahanap sa mas maraming aktibidad para sa iba pang prayoridad na programa ng DENR kabilang na dito ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay, illegal wildlife trade, marine litter at climate change. (santi celario)



PH, USAID intensifies partnership for climate change mitigation

March 8, 2023 min read

USAID PAYS COURTESY VISIT TO DENR CHIEF. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna (5th from left) join officials from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Environment Office Chief John Edgar, Mission Director to the Philippines Ryan Washburn, and US Charge d’Affaires Heather Variava (2nd , 3rd and 4th from left, respectively) on their visit to the DENR to discuss strengthening partnership on environmental protection and climate change mitigation. They are joined by (from left to right) DENR Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Service Project Management Division Chief Eddie B. Abugan Jr., Biodiversity Management Bureau OIC Director Natividad Y. Bernardino, National Water Resources Board Executive Director Sevilla D. David Jr., Policy and Planning Service OIC Director Glenn Marcelo C. Noble, and Project Preparation Division Chief Conrado A. Bravante, Jr.

By Rjhay E. Laurea

MANILA — The Philippine government through its Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), together with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are exploring ways to further enhance the partnership of the Philippines and the United States in environmental protection and climate change mitigation.

In their recent courtesy visit to DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna, US Charge d’Affaires Heather Variava, USAID Mission Director to the Philippines Ryan Washburn, and USAID Philippines Environment Office Chief John Edgar, acknowledged the longtime partnership between USAID and DENR.

“It is our great pleasure to meet you today and have the opportunity to personally thank the US government for always supporting our efforts of meeting our agenda in the environment and natural resources,” Sampulna told the US officials.

The new DENR chief cited that several USAID projects were implemented during his time on the field and hoped to continue doing so under his leadership. Sampulna had been regional director from 2009 to 2018.



“I came from the field, from the region, and I have implemented many USAID projects. We have the Safe Water project and SIBOL (Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes), which we are implementing right now,” Sampulna said.

National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Seville D. David Jr., said the Safe Water project is currently being implemented by NWRB as DENR’s focal agency, among three regional offices in Palawan, Negros Occidental, and Mindanao.

Meanwhile, DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) OIC Director Natividad Y. Bernardino shared that the SIBOL project team has recently worked on the Siargao seascape, which was badly hit by Typhoon Odette in December 2021.

“The work that USAID does to the country’s resources is so important to the whole world, and the Philippines is one of our priorities for safe and resilient water,” Variava said.

USAID provides technical assistance to the projects, with the Safe Water initiative aiming to improve the sustainable management of the country’s water resources, and SIBOL on reducing environmental crimes, and improving water security. (AI/MTVN)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2022/03/08/ph-usaid-intensifies-partnership-for-climate-change-mitigation/?fbclid=IwAR3onswTtQPR6m6ajDQHdSgw2TqWWxK595FgRZ72GHZ5vgqXnTBFHbeQxOM>



DENR places under rehab injured Falcon Dumagat



ZAMBOANGA. An injured Falcon Dumagat is undergoing rehabilitation at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Regional Wildlife Rescue Center in Baclay village, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur. A photo handout shows a DENR team retrieves the injured bird in Tigbao, Zamboanga del Sur on March 3 while the agency was celebrating the World Wildlife Day. (SunStar Zamboanga)

March 08, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has placed an injured Falcon Dumagat under rehabilitation at the Regional Wildlife Rescue Center (RWRC) in Baclay village, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur.

Rosevirico Tan, DENR regional information officer, said Tuesday, March 8, that the Falcon Dumagat was retrieved by the personnel of Community Environment and Natural Resources office (Cenro)-Guipos in Tigbao, Zamboanga del Sur on March 3 while the agency was celebrating the World Wildlife Day.

Tan said that Cenro-Guipos in Zamboanga del Sur sent a retrieval team to Tigbao after William Arnejo, a farmer who found the injured Falcon, posted a message on Facebook seeking help of the DENR.

Arnejo told the Cenro-Guipos team that he found the bird with two injuries in the chest believed to be inflicted by airgun while he was tending his farm on February 24.

"Currently, the retrieved Falcon is under treatment by veterinarians of the RWRC. Once deemed fully recovered and healthy, it will be released back to the wild," Tan said.

He said the retrieval was timely as this year's World Wildlife Day celebration on March 3 was anchored on the theme "Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration."

The celebration also saw the release of a pair of tarsiers in Delucot village, Godod, Zamboanga del Norte, and Brahminy Kite and Rufous Night Heron at the bird sanctuary of the Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology in this city.

"We urge the public to refrain from causing any harm or danger to any of our wildlife species for they keep our ecosystem balanced," Tan said. (SunStar Zambonga)

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1923022/zamboanga/local-news/denr-places-under-rehab-injured-falcon-dumagat>



DENR hosts program on organizational productivity

IAN OCAMPO FLORA

March 08, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the City of San Fernando organized an onboarding program for 60 new entrants and promoted employees in an effort to arm them with a comprehensive understanding of the organization's priority programs and policies.

In his message, Assistant Regional Director for Management Services Arturo Fadriquela noted that the activity served as a channel to inform new employees of the mandates and thrust of the department, especially on developing appreciation on their roles not just as government personnel, but most of all, as public servants.

"Human capital is the greatest asset of our organization. We want to help our new employees reach their full potential, as this will eventually advance our overall performance to reach or even go beyond our goals," Fadriquela said, adding that the onboarding program provided a roadmap on guiding the group in performing their jobs, while adhering to the government's rules and regulations.

During the orientation program, topics on DENR Administrative Policies and Procedures, Employee Welfare and Benefits, Property and Supply Management, Quality Management System, and Good Governance were discussed among the participants.



Penro Pampanga joins Women's Month celebration

IAN OCAMPO FLORA

March 08, 2022

THE Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) in Pampanga has joined this year's celebration of the National Women's Month.

In celebration of the National Women's Month and the International Women's Day, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Penro Pampanga personnel wore purple on Monday, March 7, which signifies women empowerment and gender equality, as well as justice and dignity.

The event was followed by a clean-up activity on the neighboring area of the office.

IWD is celebrated each year to recognize the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

Penro Laudemir Salac expressed his support on this event and said women are key factors in the success not only in the office but also in the protection of the environment.

"Three out of five section chiefs and ten out of 20-unit heads in PENRO Pampanga are women and they are in par, if not better, with their counterparts in terms of accomplishments," Salac added.



NWRB: Angat water level drops but supply enough

By: [Carmela Reyes-Estropo](#), [Leila B. Salaverria](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:30 AM March 09, 2022

The country will have enough water supply for the summer season even if the reservoir level in Angat Dam has dipped to 195 meters, according to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB). Nevertheless, NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr. appealed to the public to conserve water.

“As of now, we can say we have enough supply for the summer season. But it will be better if we will conserve water and use it properly, not waste it and recycle it if we have the chance,” David said at the Laging Handa briefing on Tuesday.

With people’s collective efforts, the country would be able to manage the situation where the water source is limited, he said.

The current level of Angat Dam, which supplies the bulk of water needs of establishments and households in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, is lower compared to previous years because of scant rainfall in the watershed area, he added.

On Tuesday morning, the reservoir’s elevation was at 195.02 meters above sea level (masl), which was 7 m below its high water elevation and spilling level of 212 masl, according to data from the Bulacan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

The dam’s minimum operating level is 180 masl.

Irrigation needs

The steady supply of water is important, especially in a pandemic, David said.

To ensure this, he said the NWRB would make adjustments, such as bringing down the allocation for irrigation.

But he added that other measures would also be taken so the crops would not be adversely affected.

At least 60 percent of crops in 26,700 hectares of farms in 16 towns in Bulacan province and four towns in Pampanga province are in “critical need” of uninterrupted water supply until March 15 since these are already in flowering and reproductive stages, said Francis Clara, head of the water control coordination unit of the National Irrigation Authority (NIA).

In a telephone interview on Monday, Clara said they had sought the help of the Metropolitan and Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to conduct cloud seeding over Angat Dam watershed areas in the Bulacan towns of Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad to address farmers’ need for irrigation.

The NWRB, David said, is waiting for an advisory from the government weather bureau that conditions are favorable for cloud seeding.

Rainfall that is expected to be produced by cloud seeding would replenish the allocation of 22 cubic meters per second (cms) that the MWSS would release for irrigation from March 7 to March 15, Clara said.



On Monday, the NWRB, which regulates the release of water from Angat Dam, added an allocation of 7 to 15 cms for irrigation supply.

Angat's normal water allocation for farm irrigation is 40 cms, but this was reduced to 20 cms since last month to keep the supply for Metro Manila intact amid the dry season. INQ



NWRB: Angat Dam's water level decreases to 195 meters

Published March 8, 2022, 4:06 PM
by [Faith Argosino](#)

The water level of Angat Dam, which supplies 97 percent of Metro Manila's water requirement, has decreased to 195 meters, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) disclosed on Tuesday, March 8.

While the NWRB said the water level is still 15 meters above its minimum operating level of 180 meters, it is slightly lower than Angat Dam's water level during the previous years.

"Dapat bago pumasok ang taon mga 212 yan ang nangyari dahil wala tayo masyadong ulang naranasan sa Watershed ng Angat ang naging 202 lang at mula po ng pumasok ang Enero patuloy po itong bumababa ngayon nasa 195 meters (Before 2022 started the water level should be at 212 meters but because of lesser rains at Angat's Watershed it become 202 and since January it continuously decreased to 195 meters)," NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David explained at Laging Handa briefing.

He reiterated that the government and concerned agencies need to ensure Angat's steady water supply.

In an earlier statement, David said that the agency has worked with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), National Power Corporation (NPC), and Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

To increase the water level of Angat Dam the agencies will implement measures such as reducing allocation for domestic and irrigation needs; reactivation of deep wells for the use of MWSS; cloud seeding operations; and maximizing the use of water treatment plants owned by Maynilad and Manila Water.

The NWRB and the NIA will implement different water management strategies, including shallow tube wells to reduce irrigation water usage.

On the other hand, the MWSS will conduct cloud seeding operations in Angat Watershed and Bustos Dam in Bulacan and La Mesa Dam in Quezon City from March 7 until April 10 to prevent Angat Dam's water level from decreasing.

"This endeavor is in coordination with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration. We decided to conduct the cloud seeding operations this March due to the right weather conditions and after the amihan or northeast monsoon season," David said.

He also assured the public of sufficient water supply for the summer season, but residents must still conserve water.



Angat Dam further dips to 195 meters, but water board assures there's still sufficient supply

By: [Daniza Fernandez](#) - Reporter / [@DFernandezINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:53 PM March 08, 2022



The spillway of Angat Dam in Norzagaray, Bulacan. This photo was taken during a dry spell in June 2019. NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. confirms on Monday, February 28, 2022, that the water level in Angat Dam was at 196.28 meters — at least 15.72 meters below its normal high water level of 212 meters. Angat Dam is the main source of water supply in Metro Manila. (File photo by GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE / Philippine Daily Inquirer)

MANILA, Philippines — Angat Dam's water level further dipped to 195 meters, but the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) assured on Tuesday that there is still enough water supply in the country for the coming dry months.

NWRB Executive Director Dr. Sevilla David Jr. said during the Laging Handa public briefing that this level is lower compared to previous years for the same period when it reached 200 meters.

NWRB, along with other agencies, manages Angat Dam, which supplies about 90 percent of the water requirement of Metro Manila and other provinces adjacent provinces.

“Sa parte po ng pamahalaan po natin ay ang layunin po natin magkaroon po tayo ng sapat na supply ngayong panahon ng tag-init,” David said

(On the part of the government, our goal is to have enough water supply this coming summer.)

Still, David assured that the water supply in the country during the summer season would be sufficient.

“Sa ngayon po ay masasabi po natin may sapat po tayong supply para sa panahon po ng tag-init po,” he added.

(As of now, we can say that we have enough water supply for summer.)

The minimum operating water level of Angat Dam is 180 meters, below which the NWRB would already have to cut back on domestic water supply.

The NWRB attributed attributed the low water level to the lack of rains.

To avert water service interruptions, David encouraged the public to conserve water.



“Ang amin lang ho sana’y mas maganda pong magtipid ho tayo ng tubig at gamitin ng tama,” he advised.

(For us, it would be better if we save water and use it correctly.)

“Wag aksayahin at i-recycle po kung may mga pagkakataon at sa ganitong punto po ay ito pong collectively po ay mama-manage po natin ang kasalukuyang sitwasyon po na medyo mababa o limitadong supply po sa mga pinagkukunan po natin ng tubig kagaya po ng Angat Dam,” continued David.

(Don’t waste it and recycle it when you can so that we can collectively manage our current situation wherein the water supply is low or limited in our water sources like Angat Dam.)

EDV

Angat dam water level at 195 meters

March 8, 2022



Angat Dam located in Luzon. (Photo from PNA)

By Pearl Gumapos

The Angat Dam's water level is currently at 195 meters, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said on Tuesday (March 8) during the Laging Handa public briefing.

“Sa ngayon, ang level ng Angat Dam ay mga 195 meters po. [Kung] ikumpara natin sa mga naunang mga taon ay mababa,” NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. said.

David said that the public must prepare themselves come summer because of the low water levels of the dam.

“Sa ganitong sitwasyon na mababa ang level ng Angat Dam ay kailangan nating paghandaan ito para pagdating ng summer ay mayroon pong sapat na tubig na matatanggap,” David said.

“Nakahanda na ang mga deep wells at saka mga treatment facilities. Kasama din diyan ang pag-manage natin ng alokasyon. Sa ngayon po, sa tingin naman natin ay may sapat pa tayong tubig, partikular ngayong panahon ng tag-init,” he said.



Water level sa Angat Dam, patuloy na bumababa

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Boracay Water spends P4B for sustainability efforts

March 8, 2022 | 12:03 am



BORACAY Island Water Co., Inc. said it invested more than P4.32 billion in capital expenditures for its water and wastewater facilities to ensure environmental sustainability and water security.

The company, also known as Boracay Water, said it developed a 25-year plan to sustainably serve the water requirements of Boracay Island, as it is a major tourist hotspot.

“Boracay Water made sure that safe and reliable water supply is available in the island and at the same time, ensured proper wastewater management in the island’s Manocmanoc, Balabag, and Yapak barangays, including the white beach’s popular commercial stations 1, 2, and 3,” the company said in a statement on Monday.

Boracay Water, a public-private partnership between the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority and Manila Water Company, Inc.’s fully owned subsidiary, Manila Water Philippine Ventures, Inc. began its operations in 2010.

In 2015, it implemented projects to increase water availability, providing 100% of Boracay Water’s customers 24/7 supply, from a previous availability of 13 hours or less since its inception.

The company also worked on the rehabilitation of the water treatment plant in Caticlan with a capacity of 25 million liters per day (MLD), the one-kilometer submarine water pipeline along the Caticlan-Boracay channel, repairs and replacement of old networks, expansion of piping systems, and the rehabilitation and construction of pumping stations and booster pumps.

Apart from water supply, Boracay Water said it began upgrading and expanding its wastewater facilities to address the deterioration in coastal water quality.

It rehabilitated the Balabag sewage treatment plant and sewer network, which initially provided wastewater services to 22% of the island. In 2011, the rehabilitation of the facility was completed, doubling treatment capacity to 6.5 MLD from 2.6.

In 2016, the company inaugurated its second wastewater facility, the Manocmanoc sewage treatment plant, which can process 5 MLD.

According to Boracay Water, the island’s sewer coverage is at 61% and is projected to further expand to 87% by 2024 after future upgrades.



With the easing of mobility restrictions, Boracay Water said it would continue to “invest and expand its infrastructure in the island to ensure availability of clean, safe, reliable water supply as well as to safeguard the environment with the provision of enhanced wastewater and sanitation services.” — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**



Environmental issues need women participation: DOST

By Ma. Cristina Arayata March 8, 2022, 8:37 pm



Department of Science and Technology (*File photo*)

MANILA – The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is hoping more women would take part in all levels of climate change development planning, as well as in disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM).

Secretary Fortunato de la Peña on Tuesday cited a recent survey on 130 countries that showed that with higher female government representation, there are more international environmental treaties likely to be implemented.

"Studies demonstrate that gender equality and women empowerment are central to economic development as well as environmental sustainability. For example, there is evidence that women play a vital role in dealing with disasters by effectively mobilizing communities in the different phases of the risk-management cycle, thus, their greater involvement would contribute substantively to DRMM," he said in a virtual forum.

He added that research has shown that globally, women are more likely to be considered about the climate crisis.

However, because only a few world leaders are women, there is a lack of representation in climate decisions.

"Although women in power positions are on the rise, recent studies showed that only seven percent of world leaders and 24 percent of lawmakers are female, allowing for male leaders in power to continue to call the shots," he pointed out.

He also noted that the continuous stereotyping makes women underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education and in decision-making processes.

The country needs more women at the forefront of climate change, according to de la Peña, as increasing women's participation would result in more environmental and productivity gains and greater returns across the sustainable development goals.

The Philippines ranked fourth among countries most affected by extreme weather events in the 2021 long-term Global Climate Risk Index.

"We need to address the deeply rooted inequalities that exist for half of the world's population. We need to ensure that women from all economic, and social standings are included in the conversation on climate change policy and resilience plans," he said.



The DOST has been working on projects for DRR and climate change adaptation and mitigation, part of the National R&D agenda for 2017 to 2022.

Research priorities under the agenda were evaluated and harmonized by a team from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology and Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration. **(PNA)**



Here's how climate change, harmful products affect women

By Catalina Ricci S. Madarang - March 8, 2022 - 7:18 PM



International Women's Day 2022 poster from the World Health Organization website

Two organizations focused on the impact of climate change and harmful materials to women as the nation marks International Women's Day on March 8.

The theme for IWD 2022 is "Break the Bias" [wherein](#) it seeks to break the "bias" of women in all sectors and communities.

In an explainer released online, the World Health Organization Philippines highlighted how women and girls experience the greatest impact of climate change in many countries.

"The climate crisis is not 'gender neutral'. Women and girls experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety," WHO said.

"Across the world, women depend more on, yet have less access to, natural resources. In many regions, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel," it added.





WHO cited agriculture as an example. It said that some girls are forced to leave school to help their mothers with agricultural work during periods of drought and erratic rainfall.

The organization also stated that women and girls are among the most affected when climate change results in conflicts in societies and countries.

“Climate change is a ‘threat multiplier’, meaning it escalates social, political and economic tensions in fragile and conflict-affected settings. As climate change drives conflict across the world, women and girls face increased vulnerabilities to all forms of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, human trafficking, child marriage, and other forms of violence,” it [said](#).

Aside from women, climate change also severely affects LGBTQ communities, indigenous women and other vulnerable sectors.

“It is clear that climate change risks are acute for indigenous and Afro-descendent women and girls, older women, LGBTIQ+ people, women and girls with disabilities, migrant women, and those living in rural, remote, conflict and disaster-prone areas,” WHO said.

Environmental group Ecowaste Coalition, on the other hand, called on big e-commerce platforms Shopee and Lazada anew to enforce their policies against harmful mercury-containing skin whitening products for women.

 **EcoWaste Coalition**
15 hours ago 

CALLING ON LAZADA AND SHOPEE:

We call on [Lazada](#) and [Shopee](#) to enforce their policy not to tolerate the sale of harmful cosmetics. It has come to our attention that there are still mercury-containing skin whitening products sold on your platforms. Please remove advertisements for and sellers of such products from your platforms. Your immediate action will help protect consumers from being exposed to toxic mercury.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to all online and offline sellers to stop the sale of mercury-containing cosmetics. Your compliance will support the global ban on mercury-added cosmetics under the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

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“We call on [Lazada](#) and [Shopee](#) to enforce their policy not to tolerate the sale of harmful cosmetics. It has come to our attention that there are still mercury-containing skin whitening products sold on your platforms,” the coalition said.

“Please remove advertisements for and sellers of such products from your platforms. Your immediate action will help protect consumers from being exposed to toxic mercury,” it added.

Ecowaste also urged the merchants themselves to stop the trade of these cosmetics.

It cited the still standing global ban on excess mercury on products under the Minamata Convention.

This convention sets the international limit for mercury content at one ppm.

“We take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to all online and offline sellers to stop the sale of mercury-containing cosmetics. Your compliance will support the global ban on mercury-added cosmetics under the Minamata Convention on Mercury,” the coalition said.

Previously, Oxfam Pilipinas, a humanitarian aid organization, also launched several activities for Women’s Month this March that will culminate on IWD.



A business approach to end plastic pollution

[BIZLINKS](#) - [Rey Gamboa](#) - The Philippine Star March 8, 2022 | 12:00am

A study commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) estimates that humans ingest in a week the equivalent of five grams of plastic or about the weight of a credit card. This is so because all the improperly disposed plastic wastes through decades continue to leach microplastics that are finding their way into our food ecosystem.

Faced with this scientific finding and the growing awareness of people of the harm that plastics can pose to their health and the environment, businesses are increasingly feeling the pressure to come up with a sustainable approach to plastic use and to start to take a more active hand in the world's battle against plastic pollution.

For now, some companies are voluntarily initiating programs to eliminate plastics use even if their competitors do not, and this usually happens when the concerned business entity has a strong brand presence that will not sway its consumer base to turn to another.

McDonald's, for example, has done away with styropor packaging and plastic utensils even if other fast food chains offering burgers or chicken do not. The company believes that its patrons are not going to shift their loyalties even if they do have to pay more on food offerings.

Starbucks is another food vending company that has slowly shifted its corporate policies in line with its commitment to reduce plastic use, especially the non-biodegradable type. It first started with eliminating all plastic straws, a big problem for customers who buy iced coffee or tea and frappes. Somehow, it has managed to make the transition.

Creating level playing fields

Those who have not made the move are waiting for a consensus among all industry members to recognize the hazards of plastic use and to commit to a plan. For example, everyone now realizes that product sachets are one of the biggest single-use plastic pollutants now, but everyone should agree to stop its phase out, thus creating a level playing field.

Another way to make this happen, they say, is to have government enact laws that will compel businesses to cut down on plastic use. Current prohibitions on the use of plastic straws and sando bags are examples, but they must be strictly enforced at all levels and at all times.

A more radical solution would be to prohibit the manufacture and sales of plastic carry bags, PET bottles, and straws. If these were not made available to the market, then there would be less plastic wastes generated. Studies show that such single-use plastics account for more than 50 percent of plastic pollutants found in oceans.

The suggested solutions seem simple enough, except that it requires an ironclad commitment by governments to wage a full war on plastics. Unfortunately, very few governments have been able to come up with comprehensive laws and regulations to address plastics and its pollution.

Business' initiative

In the face of this seeming stalemate, more than 70 businesses and financial institutions signed a petition last January calling on the United Nations to come up with a legally binding treaty addressing plastic pollution. Some of the companies involved are Nestle and the Coca-Cola Company, as well as BNP Paribas Asset Management.

The petition was an offshoot of a paper published by The Ellen MacArthur Foundation, together with the WWF and Boston Consulting Group in 2020, that expounded on the growing crisis of plastic pollution for both the environment and businesses, and the need for the United Nations to draft a treaty, much like the Paris Agreement of 2015.



Release of the petition was timed a month or so before the fifth United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-5) meeting in Nairobi, Kenya where close to 200 representatives from member states were to meet to discuss and act on the world's most pressing environment challenges.

Among the salient points discussed in the petition was the need for a treaty that will keep plastics in the economy, but out of the environment and prevent the production of plastics from fossil fuels. In addition, the treaty needs to shape a shared approach by government, business, and society to address the issue. Finally, the treaty should put in place a governance structure for countries to enforce compliance.

Legally binding treaty by 2024

Last week, on March 2, representatives of 175 countries agreed to come up with a legally binding treaty by end 2024 that will end plastic pollution. An Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) will be formed, and is expected to lead discussions and constitute a forum before the end of the year.

What is historic in the UNEA-5 agreement is the recognition that a total plastic ban is not going to be sustainable in today's modern society, and instead pushes for the concept of sustainable consumption and production, including circular economy approaches, in developing national action plans.

This would involve rethinking the way plastics are being manufactured in the future, and its use and disposal so that they do not become pollutants on land, in the air, and in our waters.

The task is gargantuan, to say the least. Plastic production is now estimated at about 400 million metric tons a year, and will likely double by 2040. Encouraging countries to ban single plastic use will in itself be challenging, but the UN points out that we should all set our hearts to accomplish this goal.

Not to do so would be endangering further human lives.

Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa and follow us on www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa.

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at reydgamboa@yahoo.com. For a compilation of previous articles, visit www.BizlinksPhilippines.net.



Group issues 'green scorecard' to gauge national poll bets' positions on environmental concerns

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

MARCH 8, 2022



Members of the local government of Manila's Department of Public Services remove trash from Manila Bay during the coconut-planting activity of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in this file photo.

Environmental and Human rights groups under the Green Thumb Coalition (GTC) launched on Monday the Green Scorecard to determine the positions and commitment of selected electoral aspirants on various environmental concerns.

"GTC hopes that this survey results will serve as a tool to help voters to decide which candidates to vote [for] in the upcoming elections on May 9," Anjelica Dacanay of Bantay Kita said.

The candidates will be assessed through their response to the scorecard along with a comprehensive review and analysis of their academic credentials and track record, policy pronouncements stated in interviews, debates, and other fora, and linkages to individuals or organizations that can influence or have strong relevance to GTC's agenda. Six out of 9 presidential-vice presidential tandems will be given the scorecard.

The scorecard covers urgent issues such as Climate Justice, Sustainable Agriculture, Waste Management, Mining Extractives, Mineral Resource Management, Biodiversity Preservation, Ecosystem Integrity, Energy Transformation and Democracy, Natural Resources, Land Use Management, and Governance, and People-centered Sustainable Development. Each topic contains questions that candidates will answer in their survey questionnaire.

"The GTC is [the] widest environmental and human rights coalition. We came together from different organizations, realizing that it is only through collective action that we can actually make a dent," Atty. Aaron Pedrosa of Sanlakas said.

"From 2015, it is an understatement to say that we are only making a dent—we have been making history. We want that history to continue in the 2022 elections...we urge everyone na samahan ang ating laban, sapagkat ang laban para sa kalikasan ay laban ng lahat—'ang boto para sa kalikasan, ay boto para sa kinabukasan,'" he said, ending his segment with a quote from the late Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Gina Lopez, a staunch advocate against mining and environmental destruction.



GTC also states that any candidates' refusal to answer the survey will reflect on their final scorecard. Pedrosa said the refusal of candidates to answer the scorecard will "not be a loss for us, but a loss for them," and that their refusal becomes an unfortunate sign that they "do not take environmental issues seriously."

Jaybee Garganera of Alyansa Tigil Mina said that the Green Scorecard is necessary for candidates to clarify their stand on environmental issues, and allow the public to choose which candidates would look after the best interests of our current climate crisis.

The deadline for candidates' responses to the GTC scorecard is on March 27. After which, their responses will be assessed and analyzed, then released to the public on April 8—almost a month before the national elections. All senatorial candidates will be asked to respond as well, with a response turnover of 72 hours from the March 7 send-out date.



BAN Toxics Backs Treaty to End Plastic Pollution

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 Journal Online



QUEZON CITY, 8 March — Environmental watchdog organization BAN Toxics announced their support for the resumed fifth United Nations Environment Assembly's (UNEA 5.2) resolutions to address the chemicals and plastic waste crises.

Held in Nairobi, Kenya for 10 days, the resumed fifth UNEA adopted a resolution to end plastic pollution and form an international legally binding instrument by 2024. The assembly's decisions also included the creation of an international scientific panel on chemicals, wastes, and pollution prevention, and the renewal of the special program which provides financial support to developing countries to create programs to address sound chemicals and wastes management.

During UNEA 5.2, national leaders, environment ministers, and other representatives from 175 nations supported this historic agreement, which addresses the entire lifetime of plastic from source to sea. This treaty was pushed due to plastic production and consumption increasing in recent decades, reaching 400 million tons per year, a figure expected to double by 2040.[1]

The global plastic production surged from 2 million tons in the 1950s to more than 438 million tonnes in 2017, a trend that is expected to continue.[2]

The [plastic pollution crisis](#) is one of the Philippines' biggest waste challenges. In 2015, the country ranked third as the world's greatest plastic waste producer, with 2.7 million tons of plastic waste produced each year.[3] Despite the Philippines' having one of the highest garbage collection rates among Southeast Asian countries, a 2018 study on waste management practices revealed the country's problem with the proper disposal of garbage.[4]

Founded in 2006, BAN Toxics is a non-profit, non-governmental organization whose mandate is to promote sound chemicals and wastes management. The organization was established to respond to urgent waste issues besetting the Philippines.

"The creation of the plastic treaty is a huge step in our fight against the plastic pollution crisis. This is an opportunity for the Philippine government to protect Filipinos from the fallout of plastic overproduction and overconsumption," says Reynaldo San Juan Jr., executive director of BAN Toxics.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/ban-toxics-backs-treaty-to-end-plastic-pollution/>



Attribution science: How to trace climate change's impact in extreme weather

By Janine Peralta, CNN Philippines

Published Mar 8, 2022 4:14:32 PM



As more heat waves, typhoons and hurricanes pillage the planet, governments and the public are quick to blame climate change. But experts of a relatively new field called attribution science say that might not always be the case. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, March 8) – As more heat waves, typhoons and hurricanes pillage the planet, governments and the public are quick to blame climate change. But experts of a relatively new field called attribution science say that might not always be the case.

From 2019 to 2021, Southern Madagascar suffered a two-year drought, particularly in The Grand Sud region. The area saw only 60% of normal rainfall across the period. The [World Food Programme](#) tallied 1.1 million people who suffered from severe hunger as poor rain conditions drained the land.

The effects of the drought were thought to be the first climate change-driven famine, until a group of scientists from South Africa, Madagascar, New Zealand, India, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and others from the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group, [released a study](#) debunking this claim.

Using observations of rain deficits in the area and “climate modelling”, the WWA concluded that the drought was mainly a consequence of “natural variability.” The region actually suffered a worse drought in 1990 to 1992.

“We did find that the drought was an extreme event but it was not outside what you would expect from natural variability, and climate change did not actually change the likelihood or intensity of possible droughts in that region,” Dr. Friederike Otto, who was part of the study, told climate reporters in February.

The scientists also looked at whether low rainfall had coincided with El Niño events, and found out that even when there was severe El Niño back in 1997/98, the region at least felt average rainfall.

WWA said its findings were consistent with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report which states that any changes in drought in the area would only take place if global mean temperatures surpass 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Otto was also one of the authors of that report.

Attribution science however, can not only quash links to human-induced climate change, but also confirm if it really did have a role in influencing the magnitude and probability of an extreme event.

The process goes: Scientists check whether a heat wave, for instance, is an extreme event by observing the daily maximum temperatures that could occur in an area during the summer.

With the available figures, they are able to set a threshold, beyond which would be an extreme event.

In January, Argentina sizzled under a scorching heat wave with temperatures as high as 45°C. Otto said it was an extreme event since the threshold was 35°C and climate change increased the likelihood for it to occur.

To see if climate change was the culprit, experts estimated temperatures in a scenario or alternate world where there was no surge of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere. This is possible because the surge of GHG began in the industrial revolution, so they just remove from the equation the amount of GHG that has been injected into the climate since that period.

“And so we can simulate Argentina as it would have been in a world without human-induced climate change, and then we can ask again what are the possible daily temperatures in the summer in Argentina in such a world as it might have been if it was 1.2°C cooler,” explained Otto.

But what is the significance of this type of study? Otto said that for one thing, extreme attribution studies could strengthen climate litigation cases that seek to hold corporations and even countries accountable for their emissions.

In many cases, attribution is only “assumed,” but if lawyers will also study the new science, then their arguments could hold weight.

Though attribution studies have been published in recent decades, the WWA does the simulations real-time, providing a rapid analysis, but that is often the pitfall of its methods, according to critics.

Usually, it takes more time and a peer-review process before climatologists can conclude if human-induced climate change had any impact on a weather event.

Philippines



Devastation from Super Typhoon Yolanda

For the Philippines, a [peer-reviewed attribution study](#) published in 2015 about Super Typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan) concluded that climate change may have worsened its destructive storm surges.

The authors from Japan also deployed simulations comparing scenarios under the “real climate” in November 2013 and the “hypothetical natural climate.”



Using prediction models from the Japan Meteorological Agency, the researchers concluded that the storm surge in “real condition” was much worse than the replicated surge under the “hypothetical natural climate” or the climate without human influence.

“In 15 of 16 ensemble simulations, the typhoon became stronger than it did in the hypothetical natural cases, and the height of the storm surge around Tacloban increased by around 20%,” the article stated.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) itself has not yet conducted its own attribution study, said Rosalina de Guzman, Assistant Weather Services Chief and Officer-in-Charge of the Climatology and Agrometeorology Division.

De Guzman pointed out that other countries may have the upper hand in advanced resources. These would be necessary since it is difficult to distinguish the effects of climate change given that the Philippines’ location over the Western Pacific Ocean’s warm waters makes it a fit breeding ground for bad weather. The country confronts an average of 20 typhoons a year.

“*Paano mo ihihiwalay ‘yung difference eh dito sa atin ‘yung warm waters, nandito talaga banda sa Pilipinas?’*” she told CNN Philippines in an interview.

[Translation: How will you separate them (effects of climate change) when the warm waters are near the Philippines?]

However, the bureau has a trove of publications on observed trends – tracking typhoons, rainfall and temperatures – including a paper De Guzman [co-authored in 2016](#) that examined tropical cyclones from 1951 to 2013.

The research uncovered a decreasing trend in the number of tropical cyclones that passed the country in those decades. But there was also a slightly rising trend in the entry of extreme events, particularly typhoons with maximum winds of at least 150 kilometers per hour. For reference, the recent typhoon Odette (international name: Rai) [peaked at 175 kph in wind strength and killed at least 101 people](#).

The results were consistent with a [more recent study in 2018](#) which also predicted that with large increases in greenhouse gases, the number of tropical cyclones could remain the same or even dwindle by mid-21st century, while intensities could heighten. The “year-to-year variability” also remains high.

“It implies that we should continue to expect years with many damaging TCs and other years with very few,” the study stated.

While local attribution studies remain scarce, PAGASA seeks to collaborate with the academe to delve into the field.

“*[A]ng study na ginagawa is more on in terms of how do we enhance ‘yung mga forecasting capability, pero in terms of attribution baka uumpisahan pa lang ‘yan,*” said De Guzman.

[Translation: Our studies are mostly focused on how to enhance our forecasting capability, but in terms of attribution, we have yet to start our work.]

Source: <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/lifestyle/2022/3/8/attribution-science-climate-change.html>

09 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

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03-09-22

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

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NWRB: ANGAT WATER LEVEL DROPS BUT SUPPLY ENOUGH

**By Leila B. Salaverria
and Carmela Reyes-Estrope**
@Team_Inquirer

The country will have enough water supply for the summer season even if the reservoir level in Angat Dam has dipped to 195 meters, according to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Nevertheless, NWRB executive director Seville David Jr. appealed to the public to conserve water.

"As of now, we can say we have enough supply for the summer season. But it will be better if we will conserve water and use it properly, not waste it and recycle it if we have the chance," David said at the Lagging Handa briefing on Tuesday.

With people's collective efforts, the country would be able to manage the situation where the water source is limited, he said.

The current level of Angat Dam, which supplies the bulk of water needs of establishments and households in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, is lower compared to previous years because of scant rainfall in the watershed area, he added.

On Tuesday morning, the reservoir's elevation was at 195.02 meters above sea level (masl), which was 7 m below its high water elevation and spilling level of 212 masl, according to data from the Bulacan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

The dam's minimum operating level is 180 masl.

Irrigation needs

The steady supply of water is important, especially in a pandemic, David said.

To ensure this, he said the NWRB would make adjust-

ments, such as bringing down the allocation for irrigation.

But he added that other measures would also be taken so the crops would not be adversely affected.

At least 60 percent of crops in 26,700 hectares of farms in 16 towns in Bulacan province and four towns in Pampanga province are in "critical need" of uninterrupted water supply until March 15 since these are already in flowering and reproductive stages, said Francis Clara, head of the water control coordination unit of the National Irrigation Authority (NIA).

In a telephone interview on Monday, Clara said they had sought the help of the Metropolitan and Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to conduct cloud seeding over Angat Dam watershed areas in the Bulacan towns of Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad to address farmers' need for irrigation.

The NWRB, David said, is waiting for an advisory from the government weather bureau that conditions are favorable for cloud seeding.

Rainfall that is expected to be produced by cloud seeding would replenish the allocation of 22 cubic meters per second (cms) that the MWSS would release for irrigation from March 7 to March 15, Clara said.

On Monday, the NWRB, which regulates the release of water from Angat Dam, added an allocation of 7 to 15 cms for irrigation supply.

Angat's normal water allocation for farm irrigation is 40 cms, but this was reduced to 20 cms since last month to keep the supply for Metro Manila intact amid the dry season. INQ



Solid waste management prayoridad ng DENR

Nangako ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mananatiling pangunahing prayoridad ang solid waste management para maabot ang layunin nitong maaprubahan ang 10 year solid waste management plans (SWMPs) ng mas maraming local government units (LGUs) sa buong bansa.

Ang National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), na pinamumunuan ng DENR, ay tututukan ang pagkakaroon ng 185 LGUs na may aprubadong 10-taong SWMP sa pagtatapos ng 2022 bilang pagsunod sa Republic Act 9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Noong Pebrero 22, nasa kabuuang 1,175 SWMP mula sa target na 1,716 na plano ang naaprubahan, ayon sa isang pahayag ng ahensiya.

Inaprubahan kamakailan ng NSWMC ang mga SWMP ng Magallanes, Sorsogon; Balabalan, Kalinga; Pontevedra, Negros Occidental; at Abra.

Ang 10 taong SWMP ay isang kinakailangan sa ilalim ng RA 9003 para sa epektibong pamamahala ng solid waste sa mga lungsod at munisipalidad.

Naglalaman ito ng mga

residente, ang pagkakaroon ng pasilidad sa pagbawi ng mga materyales at sanitary landfill, proseso ng biodegradable na basura, at pakikipagtulungan sa mga organisasyon para



(DENR Soccsksargen)

Lifestyle

stratehiya sa tamang pangongolekta, paglipat, at pagtatapon ng basura, gayundin ang wastong operasyon at pagpapanatili ng mga kagamitan at pasilidad ng solid waste.

Tinutukoy din nito ang mga aksiyon tulad ng mga diskarte sa pagpapakalat ng impormasyon sa mga

sa kanilang pag-recycle.

Ang plano sa pamamahala ng basura ng Covid-19 ay kasama sa mga stratehiya upang maiwasan ang posibleng kontaminasyon dulot ng mga karaniwang basurang medikal tulad ng ginamit na face mask at iba pang kagamitang pangproteksiyong medikal. (Mina Navarro)



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

THE LAST MOHICAN



By **MARIO FETALINO JR.**

AS a certified 'plantito', I'm pondering on ways to cut water use without depriving my small lot of green in Las Pinas City the regular nourishment it needs.

Growing plants is healthy but we must conserve water as supply of which in the country is fast diminishing.

I'm eyeing on catching rainwater. A big drum and rainfall might be all I need to accomplish my mission.

My plan is a small solution to the nation's immense water supply problem but a million or more of similar endeavors can make a big difference.

One might be glad to know that a business conglomerate is already doing the same thing in a huge manner.

To reduce drawing from scarce water sources, San Miguel Corporation, just like my idea, utilizes rainwater harvesting for cooling machines, cleaning, and other

utility, non-product water usage.

In fact, SMC has mandated that all its newly-built facilities be fitted with rainwater collection systems. A number of older facilities are also being retro-fitted to increase rainwater harvesting and to replace leaking underground pipes with above-ground, easy to monitor installations.

Aside from rainwater harvesting, the company uses other several methods like the use of sea water and water recycling. All these are part of SMC's drive to accelerate its group-wide water consumption by 50 percent by 2025.

SMC saved a total of 27.4 billion liters of water to date since its water stewardship initiative "Water For All" was launched in 2017.

"Water is a valuable resource not just for San Miguel, but for all of us. We have not stopped working on improving water use efficiency across all our businesses as we all continue to face water scarcity challenges," said SMC President and CEO Ramon S. Ang.

The 2021 reduction of 4.54 billion liters represented an 18.40 percent cut in the company's water use

against 2016 baseline, slightly better than the 18.09 percent it recorded in 2019, and significantly higher than the 13 percent reduction it registered in 2020.

Savings, however, dropped in 2020 due largely to the shutdown of most of the company's facilities amid the pandemic.

Plant shutdowns and intermittent production are inefficient, resulting in more frequent startups and draining of water tanks in between, so more water is used as opposed to having the facilities continuously running.

But 2021 saw a return to pre-pandemic water savings with a slight improvement, as there were lesser lockdowns and facilities were able to run more efficiently.

"From a water savings perspective, we seem to have recovered from the pandemic, but we're still challenged by low production volumes and continuing inefficiencies. The good thing is the majority of our businesses still showed improvement in 2021, particularly Northern Cement, San Miguel Foods, SMC Infrastructure and SMC Global Power. Ginebra San Miguel also improved slightly. Petron also im-

proved, it still has the highest accumulated water savings, about 15.29 million cubic meters. But this is not yet their former peak performance," Ang said.

Given the disruptions and changes brought on by the pandemic these last two years, Ang said the company is continuously evaluating how it can best reach its 2025 goal.

Apart from reducing its own use of water, the company has also become a champion for cleaning up major rivers and coastal areas and ridding them of solid waste pollution.

Its P3-billion cleanup of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system and the Pasig River, are unprecedented. Since June 2020, SMC has removed a total of 986,641 metric tons of silt and solid wastes from both rivers, or 740,841 tons from the Tullahan River since June 2020, and 227,800 tons from the Pasig River since July 2021.

The cleanup is seen as critical to alleviating flooding all over Metro Manila and paving the way towards improving water quality and biodiversity of both rivers, considered as the top plastic-emitting rivers responsible for the world's ocean plastics.

See page 5...



03-09-22

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE



BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT – A huge mound of sand is delivered by a barge on the banks of Manila Bay on Roxas Boulevard in Malate, Manila, on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, as the beautification of the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach continues. (Manny Llanes)



Group issues 'green scorecard' on rights, envi to natl poll bets

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL and Human rights groups under the Green Thumb Coalition (GTC) launched on Monday the Green Scorecard to determine the positions and commitment of selected electoral aspirants on various environmental concerns.

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only through collective action that we can actually make a dent," Atty. Aaron Pedrosa of Sanlakas said.

"From 2015, it is an understatement to say that we are only making a dent—we have been making history. We want that history to continue in the 2022 elections... we urge everyone *na samahan ang ating laban, sapagkat ang laban para sa kalikasan ay laban ng lahat—'ang boto para sa kalikasan, ay boto para sa kinabukasan,'*" he said, ending his segment with a quote from the late Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Gina Lopez, a staunch advocate against mining and environmental destruction.

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Empowering women for a sustainable tomorrow

COMMENTARY

BJORN ANDERSSON

As the world continues to battle and recover from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and governments look to institute policies to build back better and greener, we are at the same time affected by another global crisis—climate change—and the impact it has on women's health, rights, and equality.

Climate change is a multiplier of preexisting forms of vulnerabilities and inequalities, including gender inequalities, often resulting in negative impacts for women and girls. Between 2010 and 2020, Asia and the Pacific accounted for three-quarters of the 122 million people that were affected by disasters. With Asia-Pacific being the most disaster-prone region in the world, we cannot ignore the disproportionate effects of climate change on women and girls.

Gender-based violence and harmful practices, including child marriage and female genital mutilation, increase among climate-affected populations. Climate-related emergencies also cause major disruptions in access to essential sexual and reproductive health services and life-saving medicines, including maternal health care, contributing to a higher risk of maternal and newborn deaths.

Adelina, 43, from Dinagat, the Philippines, illustrates how climate change affects women as they seek maternal health care. Adelina was pregnant with her sixth child when Super typhoon "Odette" made landfall, badly damaging the nearest medical unit and leaving her with no choice but to take a difficult two-hour boat ride to give birth in a hospital in a nearby city.

There is a critical role that all stakeholders have in ensuring that climate adaptation, and disaster preparedness, response, and early recovery efforts are climate-resilient and more inclusive. This will ensure that women have access to sexual and reproductive services

and information, including maternal health, family planning, and protection services. This in turn will empower women and girls to protect their rights, make choices, and realize their potential, as well as strengthen climate change-affected communities' ability to adapt.

During the Fourth World Conference held in Beijing in 1995, the global community agreed to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs. More than 25 years later, we see that progress toward achieving gender equality and women's empowerment has been slow. For this reason, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its partners are stepping up their efforts to reverse this worrying trend and achieve universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

As women remain on the frontlines of the pandemic and climate crisis, whether as health professionals, community leaders, educators, or unpaid care providers, there is an urgent need to build the resilience of women and girls in every society at all levels to combat any crisis and ensure their access to sexual and reproductive health services and information.

When floods badly affected the Rohingya refugee camps last year in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, midwife Shakila Parvin was quick to provide support on the ground in delivering sexual and reproductive health services. She also provided mental health support to families, reassuring them of the health and safety of mother and newborn after emergency deliveries.

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development Program of Ac-

tion called for making the rights of women and their reproductive health a central topic in national and international economic and political development efforts. Yet, while it is essential to achieve bodily autonomy for all people, only 55 percent of girls and women aged 15-49 who are married or in unions say they can make their own decisions about sexual and reproductive health and rights by deciding about health care, contraception, and their own sexual practices.

In order to ensure a better and more sustainable future for all, it is of critical importance to accelerate transformational progress including through maternal health and family planning services, increased sexual and reproductive health-related decision-making, and by strengthening policies, organizations, and feminist and youth networks to promote and protect these issues to build resilient societies, especially in the context of climate change.

To facilitate this, UNFPA, the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, is working to deliver a world where women can lead in ensuring a sustainable future.

UNFPA calls on all governments to join its efforts and invest in achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, including by ensuring the meaningful participation of women and girls in climate action by shifting and sharing power with excluded groups and people—and promoting gender parity in all decision-making spaces. *The Jakarta Post/Asia News Network*

Bjorn Andersson is regional director, UNFPA Asia-Pacific.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer is a member of the Asia News Network, an alliance of 22 media titles in the region.



PAGE
1/2

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03-09-22

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

A sustainable feminist recovery



■ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks to members of the media outside the Security Council chamber on Feb. 24, 2022 at the United Nations Headquarters. AP PHOTO/JOHN MINCHILLO



Sekyu sa minahan, tiklo sa pagpupuslit ng ginto

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya - Kalaboso ang isang guwardya matapos makumpiska sa kanya ang ipinuslit umano nitong ginto sa isang malaking minahan sa bayan ng Kasibu sa talawigang ito, kamakalawa.

Kinilala ni P/Maj. Nova Gasid, information officer ng Nueva Vizcaya Police Provincial Office (NVPPPO) ang nadakip na

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Nakuha umano ang nasabing mineral ore ng ginto sa loob ng jacket ni Galuzo malapit sa isolation room dakong alas-4:22 ng hapon.

Hinihinalang ipinuslit ng suspek ang nasabing mineral ore na nasa P130,000 ang halaga sa loob ng processing plant ng minahan sa pag-aakala na hindi ito mabubuking. (Victor Martin)



Sekyu sa minahan, tiklo sa pagpupuslit ng ginto

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442 na bagong kaso ng COVID-19, naitala sa Pilipinas

By Angellic Jordan March 08, 2022 - 07:59 PM



Mababa sa 500 ang naitalang bagong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Base sa datos ng Department of Health (DOH) hanggang sa araw ng Martes (March 8), 442 ang bagong naitalang kaso ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 3,668,710 ang confirmed cases ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 47,867 o 1.3 porsyento ang aktibong kaso.

Samantala, nasa 57,072 o 1.6 porsyento naman ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa.

Ayon pa sa DOH, 3,563,771 na o 97.1 porsyento ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/310594/442-na-bagong-kaso-ng-covid-19-naitala-sa-pilipinas>



Drop in Covid-19 numbers due to protocols, high vax rate: Duque

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [March 8, 2022, 4:16 pm](#)



(PNA photo by Joey Razon)

MANILA – The country's lower coronavirus figures could be attributed to Filipinos' adherence to the minimum public health standards and the high vaccination rate, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said.

In his presentation to President Rodrigo Duterte Monday night, Duque reported a 31 percent decrease in the daily average cases for the week of March 1 to 7 at 899 infections compared to the previous week – February 22 to 28 – at 1,306 infections.

“One differentiator compared to many of these countries, I should like to believe, is our very good compliance to minimum public health standards, *‘yung masking ng mga Pilipino* (the wearing of masks of Filipinos),” Duque said.

He added that countries with high vaccination coverage rates “just threw caution to the wind” while Filipinos are disciplined in terms of compliance to the minimum public health standards – physical distancing, hand hygiene, and all other non-pharmaceutical interventions.

This, he noted, is evident in the country’s low mortality rate at 1.5 percent which is much lower than the global average of about 2.04 percent.

The country logged 6,207 new cases for the recent week. Of the total number, 1,479 came from the National Capital Region; 836 from Calabarzon; and 776 from Western Visayas.

Three severe and critical cases were added to the tally and 615 verified deaths were recorded for the recent week.

“*Ang current cumulative case fatality rate ay nasa 1.56 percent, mababa po kumpara sa* (The current cumulative case fatality rate is 1.56 percent, lower compared to the) global fatality rate of 2.04 percent,” Duque said.

Meantime, the tally of recovered cases for the recent week reached 9,954. The country’s current cumulative recovery rate is 98.7 percent.

The healthcare utilization rate nationwide also showed a downtrend in the recent week. About 18 percent of the non-intensive care unit (ICU) beds are utilized while 26 percent of the ICU beds are utilized.



Out of the 6,572 total admissions at the national level, only 16.1 percent are identified as severe and critical.

When asked about the reason behind the decline in cases, Duque told Duterte the country has two sources of protection – vaccination and natural immunity.

To date, a total of 137,085,697 Covid-19 vaccine doses have been administered nationwide. Some 69,229,939 individuals were given the first dose of the vaccine; 63,793,957 are fully vaccinated; and 10,616,590 have received booster shots.

Duque said the Philippines experienced an early spike in cases before these numbers went down as compared to other countries in the region.

“This is the fifth straight day that we have reported below 1,000 cases per day. So, the next reason, Mr. President, is the protection from natural infection, natural immunity,” he said.

The country had five surges since the pandemic started. The recent surge due to the Omicron variant infected many with only mild symptoms, and some no symptoms at all, accounting to 92 to 94 percent of the overall case tally.

The country's vaccination figures also show that about 70.76 percent of the target population has been vaccinated against the coronavirus.

As of March 6, Department of Health data showed that 63,690,701 individuals are fully vaccinated while 10,554,093 people have received their booster shots. **(PNA)**



IATF: Entry to commercial establishments does not require anti-Covid boosters

BY SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA MARCH 8, 2022



File photo shows a health-care worker takes a selfie as she receives a booster shot of the Covid-19 vaccine last November 17, 2021, in Taguig City.

PEOPLE who do not yet have booster shots against Covid-19 shall not be barred from entering commercial establishments, the government said Tuesday.

In an online press briefing last Tuesday, Secretary Vince Dizon said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF) is not inclined to make booster shots mandatory for any activities for now due to the low booster shot coverage in the country.

“If we require booster shots, many will not be able to go to malls or eat at restaurants, or go shopping etc. It adversely affects our efforts to prime the economy, which we desperately need,” Dizon explained.

“The economy will greatly suffer if we do that,” he added.

National Vaccination Operation Center (NVOC) Myrna C. Cabotaje said currently only 10.5 million of the 54.9 million fully vaccinated individuals aged 18 and above have gotten their free booster shots.

“So we still have a long way to go to providing booster shots,” Cabotaje said.

Cabotaje said they are still unable to focus their efforts on encouraging people to get their boosters, since a considerable number of the population — particularly those with high risk from Covid-19 like senior citizens — are still unvaccinated.

She said they are trying to further increase the vaccination rate in the country by mounting their fourth National Vaccination Days (NVD) on March 10 and 12, 2022.

At least 1.8 million people are expected to be vaccinated in the latest NVD this month.

In the latest leg of the NVD, Cabotaje said they will focus on bringing the vaccine closer to people through their nearby hospitals or clinics as well as in workplaces.



Presidential Adviser for Entrepreneurship Sec. Jose “Joey” A. Concepcion has been pushing to require booster cards in entering establishments in order to compel more people to avail of booster shots.

He noted the booster shots will be crucial to prevent future lockdowns from the possible spread of Covid-19.



Alert Level 1 sa buong Pilipinas 'hindi pa napapanahon' — DOH

(Philstar.com) - March 8, 2022 - 3:01pm



Churchgoers hear Mass at the Plaza Miranda fronting the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila on the first Friday of the month, March 4, 2022. More devotees, including children, are allowed to attend religious gatherings under the Alert Level 1 status.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Hindi pabor ang Department of Health (DOH) na ilagay na sa Alert Level 1 ang buong Pilipinas ngayong patuloy ang pagbaba ng lokal na arawang kaso ng COVID-19, habang idinidiing maaaring mawala ang mga napagtagumpayan na laban sa pandemya.

Una nang [inirekomenda](#) ni Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua na isailalim sa pinakamaluwag na Alert Level 1 ang COVID-19 restrictions sa buong bansa para mapagaan ang economic effects ng Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

"Hindi pa ngayon. Ayaw nating mawaldas natin 'yung ating mga napagtagumpayan na,'" wika ni Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, Martes, sa panayam ng dzBB.

"So kailangan mag-ingat tayo. Pasensya na, kasi ako talaga, 'yung prinsipyo ko sa buhay, 'yung laging mas prudent tsaka mas conservative."

Wika pa niya, ang layunin sa ngayon ng gobyerno ay ang pagpigil sa posibilidad ng pagkakaroon uli ng COVID-19 lockdowns, lalo na't malaki ang epekto nito sa ekonomiya.

Una nang sinabi ni Chua na [hindi pa maaasahan ang "full economic recovery" sa pamamagitan lang ng pagpapataw ng Alert Level 1](#), ngunit kailangan rin ang pagbabalik ng face-to-face classes at pagpapabalik sa mga magulang sa harapang trabaho para mapataas ang business activity.

[Kasalukuyang nakalagay ang Metro Manila at 38 pang lugar sa Alert Level 1 hanggang ika-15 ng Marso](#), dahilan para maging 100% capacity na ang lahat ng negosyo, pampublikong transportasyon, atbp. basta't sumusunod pa rin sa pagsusuot ng face masks at minimum public health standards ang lahat.

"Kung darating ang panahon na bababa pa ang ating mga kaso, kasi limang araw na tayong below 1,000, and hopefully maaabot na natin below 500 sa mga susunod na linggo and then mataas ang ating vaccination coverage doon sa rest of the population and senior citizens, ay malaki-laki ang pwede pang iluwag ng ating restrictions at mas maganda pa, lalakas ang daloy ng ating economic activity," dagdag pa ni Duque.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2022/03/08/2165841/alert-level-1-sa-buong-pilipinas-hindi-pa-napapanahon-doh/amp/>

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
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
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