

16 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR allows recovery of fallen trees in typhoon-affected areas

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MARCH 15, 2022



Residents clean the ruins caused by Typhoon Odette in Surigao City.

To boost the rehabilitation efforts in areas affected by recent typhoons, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) field offices can now issue wood recovery permits (WRPs) for uprooted trees.

DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna signed a memorandum dated March 2, 2022, authorizing the issuance of WRPs primarily to “provide an additional wood requirement for the rehabilitation program of the local and national government units, such as for housing materials.”

The order, in effect, partially lifted the ban on the issuance of WRPs put in place in 2003 by former DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun.

Sampulna’s order, however, is only for the partial lifting of WRP suspension, which includes fire-damaged trees, covering both naturally-growing trees and planted trees in forestlands, alienable and disposable lands, and privately-owned lands.

Sampulna stressed that the order is only for typhoon uprooted and fire-damaged trees and does not cover areas within protected areas.

“The issuance of WRP for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops, and branches are still suspended until further notice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter,” Sampulna said in the order.

Sampulna said that no collection of forest charges will be imposed and that DENR officials will only issue a WRP within three months after the occurrence of a typhoon or fire.

Areas ravaged by Typhoon Odette in December 2021 are given three months to retrieve and dispose of typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Under the order, only qualified applicants can apply for WRPs under two categories: tenure instrument holders, local government units (LGU), and national government agencies for forestlands; and land/lot owner and LGU for alienable and disposable lands and private lands.

The order also specified the coverage of authority and validity period of the WRP issued.

For timber volume with 15 cubic meters (cu.m.) and below, the DENR Community Environment and Natural Officer (CENRO) or the implementing Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) will be the approving authority, while the regional executive directors cover timber volume above 16 cu.m. to more than 1,000 cu.m.



The periods of validity according to the volume of wood covered by the WRP issued are as follows: 50 cu. m., 50 days; 51 to 70 cu.m., 60 days; 71 to 100 cu.m., 90 days; 101 to 200 cu.m., 120 days; 201 to 300 cu.m., 150 days; 301 to 500 cu.m., six months; 501 to 650 cu. m., seven months; 651 to 750 cu. m., eight months; 751 to 850 cu.m., nine months; 851 to 950 cu.m., 10 months; 951 to 1,000 cu.m., 11 months; and more than 1,000 cu. m., one year.

“The concerned CENRO/implementing PENRO upon learning of the existence of retrievable wood materials [uprooted and typhoon/fire-damaged trees] shall conduct 100 percent inventory of these wood materials,” Sampulna said.

Image credits: [Greenpeace/ Jilson Tiu](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/03/15/denr-allows-recovery-of-fallen-trees-in-typhoon-affected-areas/>



DENR OKs use of fallen trees in typhoon-hit areas

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star March 16, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Trees uprooted or felled by strong winds or damaged by fire can now be used to boost rehabilitation works in areas affected by recent typhoons.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources acting secretary Jim Sampulna issued a memorandum to DENR field offices to grant wood recovery permits (WRP) for uprooted trees in areas affected by Typhoon Odette.

The partial lifting of the suspension of WRPs covers naturally growing and planted trees in forests, alienable, disposable lands and privately owned lands.

“The issuance of WRPs for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops and branches are still suspended until further notice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter,” the memorandum read.

Sampulna said WRPs should be issued within three months after a typhoon or fire.

Areas affected by Odette were given three months to retrieve and dispose typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Former DENR secretary Elisea Gozun suspended the recovery and disposition of abandoned, drifted and sunken logs as well as uprooted and fire and typhoon damaged trees, stumps, tops and branches, citing abuses in WRP issuances, saying these were used as convenient cover for illegal logging.



‘Odette’ trees can be used for rehab efforts – DENR

March 15, 2022 [People's Tonight](#)

FALLEN or uprooted trees in areas affected by typhoon Odette can now be used for the rehabilitation efforts in said areas.

In a memorandum issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting Secretary Jim Sampulna, he ordered the DENR field offices to issue wood recovery permits (WRPs) for uprooted trees in areas particularly affected by typhoon “Odette”.

Sampulna explained that WRPs primarily “provide an additional wood requirement for the rehabilitation program of the local and national government units, such as for housing materials.”

Sampulna’s directive in effect partially lifted the WRP suspension includes fire-damaged trees, covering both naturally-growing trees and planted trees in forestlands, alienable and disposable lands, and privately-owned lands.

However, Sampulna stressed that the lifting order is only for typhoon uprooted and fire-damaged trees and does not cover areas within protected areas.

“The issuance of WRP for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops, and branches are still suspended until further notice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter,” Sampulna said in the order.

He stressed that no collection of forest charges will be imposed and that DENR officials will only issue a WRP within 3 months after the occurrence of a typhoon or fire.

Areas ravaged by typhoon Odette in December 2021 are given 3 months to retrieve and dispose of typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Under the order, only qualified applicants can apply for WRPs under 2 categories: tenure instrument holders, local government units (LGU), and national government agencies for forestlands; and land/lot owner and LGU for alienable and disposable lands and private lands.

The order also specified the coverage of authority and validity period of the WRP issued.

For timber volume with 15 cubic meters (cu.m.) and below, the DENR Community Environment and Natural Officer (CENRO) or the implementing Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) will be the approving authority, while the regional executive directors cover timber volume above 16 cu.m. to more than 1,000 cu.m.



The periods of validity according to the volume of wood covered by the WRP issued are as follows: 50 cu. m., 50 days; 51 to 70 cu.m., 60 days; 71 to 100 cu.m., 90 days; 101 to 200 cu.m., 120 days; 201 to 300 cu.m., 150 days; 301 to 500 cu.m., 6 months; 501 to 650 cu. m., 7 months; 651 to 750 cu. m., 8 months; 751 to 850 cu.m., 9 months; 851 to 950 cu.m., 10 months; 951 to 1,000 cu.m., 11 months; and more than 1,000 cu. m., 1 year.

“The concerned CENRO/implementing PENRO upon learning of the existence of retrievable wood materials (uprooted and typhoon/fire-damaged trees) shall conduct 100% inventory of these wood materials,” Sampulna said.

Citing abuses in WRP issuances and as convenient cover for illegal logging activities, former DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun issued an order in May 2003, suspending the DENR Administrative Order No. 2000-78 which specifies the guidelines for the “Regulations in the Recovery and Disposition of Abandoned Logs, Drifted Logs, Sunken Logs, Uprooted and Fire/Typhoon Damaged Trees, Tree Stumps, Tops, and Branches.”



DENR fast-tracks Manila Bay's rehab, to intensify monitoring measures

Published March 14, 2022, 5:13 PM

by [Faith Argosino](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will implement intensified compliance monitoring (IMC) measures to track the discharge of untreated wastewater to the Manila Bay.

In a statement, DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the move was prompted by the agency's discovery of more illegal wastewater discharges into the said Manila Bay.



photo: DENR

"I was informed that there are illegal drainage pipes leading to the Manila Bay and we want to find out where these are coming from so we can order the stoppage of the illegal discharges," Sampulna said on March 14.

To prevent it, Sampulna said the DENR will conduct a saturation drive and inspect all the establishments to trace where the foul smell of Manila Bay comes from.

He added that the IMC aims to ensure establishments' compliance with environmental laws such as the Republic Act (RA) 9275 or Philippine Clean Water Act, RA 9003 or Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, and Presidential Decree 1586.

Meanwhile, DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations Atty. Juan Miguel T. Cuna will oversee the IMC operations along with the agency's metropolitan environmental offices (MEOs), DENR-National Capital Region (NCR), Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Central Office, EMB-NCR, and the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA).

"We will determine if these establishments have sufficient facilities to treat their wastewater and also guide them on how to comply with our environmental laws," Cuna said.

In an earlier statement, the agency revealed that making Manila Bay swimmable by the end of President Duterte's term remains its goal. In line with this, Sampulna said the monitoring would focus on the bay's water quality improvement.

Data from Manila Bay Coordinating Office (MBCO) showed that fecal coliform level near the Manila Baywalk was down to 22,500 most probable number (mpn) per 100 milliliters (mL) as of Feb. 28 from the 5.75 million mpn per 100 mL in 2019.



On the other hand, the fecal coliform level near the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach has dropped to 1,700 mpn per 100 mL as of March, from an average of 62,700 mpn per 100 mL in 2019.

Simpulna said that erring establishments and sources of illegal pipes would be penalized once traced.



Unending problem of pollution

By **Malaya Business Insight** -March 16, 2022

WITH a new acting secretary and a couple of months to go before President Rodrigo Duterte bows out of office, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it will intensify compliance monitoring of business establishments in the Manila Bay area.

The announcement came after the DENR reported the discovery of more illegal discharges of wastewater that contribute to the contamination of the waters of Manila Bay. We have to believe the DENR on this because they are the officials in charge and they should know if indeed there are illegal discharges of wastewater into the bay. If so, then the former DENR secretary was remiss in his duty of protecting Manila Bay from pollution, which is one of the supposed achievements or legacies of the outgoing Duterte administration.

‘He admitted that there are “many secrets here in the Manila Bay waters” and proceeded to order an inspection of all establishments so the department can trace where the foul smell of Manila Bay is coming from.’

DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the department’s monitoring will reinforce the water quality management. Sampulna said they will have to identify the real sources of untreated wastewater and sewage discharging into Manila Bay.

The acting secretary must have been surprised that during a walk-through in Manila Baywalk last week, he received reports that there are still illegal drainage pipes leading to the Manila Bay. He wants inspectors of the DENR, which is leading the interagency Manila Bay Task Force (MBTF), to identify where the illegal drainage pipes are coming from “so we can order the stoppage of the illegal discharges.”

A saturation drive, no less, is needed to confront this huge environmental pollution, as the new secretary confirmed. He admitted that there are “many secrets here in the Manila Bay waters” and proceeded to order an inspection of all establishments so the department can trace where the foul smell of Manila Bay is coming from.

We have all the laws and the Supreme Court orders to protect Manila Bay from pollution, such as Republic Act (RA) 9275 or Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, RA 9003 or Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, and Presidential Decree 1586, and yet the bay is still dirty. The dolomite beach has been funded and implemented to beautify part of the bay yet the low water quality remains.

There is a task force of several government agencies to cleanup Manila Bay. They can begin the work today, but we can only pin our hopes on the coming administration to make a difference.



DENR-led task force ensures continuation of Marikina River rehab project in post-PRRD admin

MAR 14, 2022, 7:12 PM

Santiago Celario
Writer

To ensure the continued rehabilitation of the Marikina River Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary and Task Force Build Back Better (TF BBB) Chair Jim O. Sampulna on Wednesday, March 9, handed over to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) the remainder of TF BBB's Marikina River rehabilitation to ensure its continuity even after President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's administration.

In a press release Sampulna pointed out that the move will mainstream TF BBB's gains in the Marikina Restoration Project (MRP) through the DPWH-Unified Project Management Office-Flood Control Management Cluster (DPWH-UPMO-FCMC).

"But the objective of the activity remains the same — to address the issue of perennial flooding in Marikina, Pasig, and Quezon City," Sampulna said,

stressing that TF BBB's gains in its objective for Marikina River are proven by improved conditions in the cities of Marikina and Pasig during intense rains last year.

Likewise the transfer allows for the second segment of Phase 2 of TF BBB-Marikina River Dredging Project (TMRDP) to be adopted under Phase 4 of DPWH's Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project (DPWH-PMRCIP) in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

On the other hand TF BBB's MRP-Phase 1 was completed in July 2021, or five months after it was launched in February, resulting in the widening of the Marikina River by about 9,060 square meters after 41,625 cubic meters were dredged from three sites or "chokepoints" along the Olandez sewage treatment plant, BF City, and SM Marikina riverbanks.

"This broadened the river to 90 to 100 meters and additional depth of two meters," Sampulna said.



Meanwhile, Marikina City Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro said TF BBB's efforts have greatly lessened the anxiety of Marikina residents during heavy rainfall, noting a great improvement in the lessening of floodings have been observed last year, especially in outlying areas along the Marikina River.

He added that the TF BBB has provided local officials with effective models for addressing the flooding problems in Marikina City.



Russia-Ukraine war to cause climate change setbacks—DENR

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MARCH 16, 2022



A woman walks past a burning apartment building after shelling in Mariupol, Ukraine, Sunday, March 13, 2022. (AP Photo/Evgeniy Maloletka)

THE raging conflict between Russia and Ukraine would likely affect ongoing climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts on a global scale, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Wars cause death and destruction, including the environment and natural resources. For countries engaging in wars, environmental quality is also severely affected.

For Albert Magalang, chief of the Climate Change Service of the DENR and concurrent Philippine negotiator in UN Climate talks, the Russia-Ukraine war has its own pros and cons.

He said the direct impact of the ongoing hostilities in the region will have a ripple effect—affecting national securities, economies, and climate actions.

In a telephone interview with the BusinessMirror, Magalang said as the price of fuel goes up, economic activities are forced to slow down.

This may eventually lead to businesses to incur losses that will affect employment and livelihood.

On Monday, the price of pump gasoline went up by an unprecedented scale. The price of diesel went up by at least P13 per liter, and gasoline by at least P8 per liter. Prices of agricultural products have started to go up due to the impact of the oil price increase in the past few weeks already.

For the Philippines, the Russia-Ukraine war will subsequently cause the price of basic commodities to go up, making life more difficult for the average income earners.

While the oil price hikes and the economic slowdown will be beneficial for the climate as economic slowdowns will naturally reduce greenhouse gas emissions and benefit air quality as around 80 percent of air pollution in Metro Manila comes from motor vehicles that regularly hit the roads, the flow of financial resources for climate action may also slow down, or worse, stop.

The Philippines is still reeling from the impact of the global pandemic.

He said like the global pandemic's positive impact on the economy, however, contribution to the global climate action will also slow down.



He noted that one way or the other, with Russia and Ukraine prioritizing war, their contribution to global climate action would expectedly be relegated to the backburner.

Other countries, he said, may also look at “saving” resources in preparation for the effect of the Russia-Ukraine war, possibly rethinking their commitments to achieve their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

“This means countries may eventually stop focusing on the global climate action,” he said.

“All climate actions, environmental protection, and resource management—is all about sustainable development. But sustainable development cannot be achieved if there’s inaction,” he said.

Worse, Magalang said climate finance may suffer setbacks, affecting developing nations like the Philippines that are entitled to such support as guaranteed by the Climate Change Convention, as well.

“If budgets are channeled to war finance, definitely, this will affect sustainability efforts,” he said.



MMDA taking care of dolomite beach

The government put an overlay of mounds of artificial white sand on a part of the bay's naturally gray shoreline, that is now being maintained to retain its 'white sand' and cleanliness in the area

Published 2 hours ago on March 16, 2022 05:00 AM

By [Alvin Murcia](#) @tribunephil_alvi



The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has assigned personnel to ensure order and cleanliness of the Manila Bay dolomite beach along Roxas Boulevard.

MMDA chairperson Romando Artes made the announcement as he inspected the beach the other day accompanied by other agency officials.

He said personnel from the Metro Parkways Clearing Group have been assigned to maintain its cleanliness.

The dolomite beach is open daily from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., and 3 p.m. until 6 p.m.

The government put an overlay of mounds of artificial white sand on a part of the bay's naturally gray shoreline, that is now being maintained to retain its "white sand" and cleanliness in the area.

Marshalls from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were also deployed in the area to remind visitors of the health protocols that are being imposed.

Also, Artes inspected the progress of the repair works at the drainage box culvert in front of the Libertad Pumping Station along the southbound lane of Roxas Boulevard.

He said the Department of Public Works and Highways targets to partially open the two lanes of the southbound lane of Roxas Boulevard on Monday, 21 March.

The said portion was closed to motorists since 15 January to give way to the project.

Artes said the solar-powered sewage treatment plan at the Baywalk area along Roxas Boulevard plays a big part in cleaning waste water that flows to the Manila Bay.

Source: https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/03/16/mmda-taking-care-of-dolomite-beach/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=mmda-taking-care-of-dolomite-beach



SINISIGURO NG NWRB AT MANILA WATER ANG PAGHAHATID NG MAAASAHANG SUPPLY NG TUBIG



March 15, 2022 @ 8:04 PM 12 hours ago

SA pagpasok ng tag-init at sa kabila ng higit-kumulang 17.89 metrong baba ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam kumpara sa normal na operating level nito na 212-metro, patuloy na sinisiguro ng Manila Water na ang supply ng tubig para sa mga customer ay manatiling sapat at tuloy-tuloy.

Ito ay dahil naikasa na ng Manila Water ang ilang programa ukol sa water supply contingency at augmentation, sa malapit na pakikipag-ugnayan at pakikipagtulungan sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) at National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Kabilang dito ang pagma-maximize ng 100 million-liter-per-day (MLD) kapasidad ng Cardona Water Treatment Plant, na kumukuha ng tubig mula sa Laguna Lake; pagpapagana ng mga deepwells na makapagdaragdag ng hanggang 115 MLD; at pagpapagana ng Marikina Portable Water Treatment Plant na maaaring makapaglinis ng tubig mula sa Marikina River upang makadagdag ng hanggang 20 MLD sa supply.

Bukod dito, ilang adjustment din sa operasyon ang isasagawa ng kumpanya gaya ng 'backwash recovery' o paglilinis muli ng 'wastewater byproduct' ng proseso ng water treatment, maging ang paga-adjust ng pressure ng tubig sa kabuuan ng East Zone kung kinakailangan. Maaari ring kumuha ng karagdagang tubig para sa La Mesa Reservoir mula sa kalapit na Alat Dam.

Bagama't itong mga programa sa supply augmentation ay sinisimulan na, patuloy pa rin ang panawagan ng Manila Water tungo sa responsableng paggamit ng tubig, bilang suporta sa naturang programa ng NWRB at MWSS.

Habang nagtutulungan ang pamahalaan at ang kunsesyunaryo upang makapagbigay ng tuloy-tuloy na supply ng tubig, hinihikayat naman ang publiko na maging matalino at responsible sa paggamit ng tubig upang maiwasan na masayang ito.

Base sa ulat ng MWSS, ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay nasa 194.11 metro sa araw ng Marso 14, 2022, (8:00am), bahagyang bumaba ang water level sa Angat dam, sa Ipo Dam nasa 98.77 mtrs, mas mababa sa maintaining level na 101 meters at sa La Mesa Dam nasa 78.37 mas mababa rin sa maintaining level na 80.15 meters.

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/sinisiguro-ng-nwrp-at-manila-water-ang-paghahatid-ng-maaasahang-supply-ng-tubig/>



Environment group launches Basura Patrol drive



March 15, 2022

THE Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (Idis) Inc. launched another activity dubbed Basura Patrol.

This project aims to lessen or eradicate the open dumps and garbage piles heaping at empty lots, riverbanks, and roadsides of Davao City.

With the recurring flooding situation happening in Davao City, solid waste management is crucial now more than ever. The Basura Patrol envisions a city free from open dumps and garbage piles with a strong “netizen” commitment to monitor waste pollution.

The Basura Patrol encourages netizens to be volunteer patrollers.

Volunteers are tasked to locate and take photos of open dumps or garbage piles observed in their respective areas and submit them to Idis through email or Facebook. Idis will then help report it to the appropriate Barangay and City Environment and Natural Resource Office (Cenro) for appropriate action, such as collection, clean-up, or restoration.

In 2016, Idis assisted in reporting a heaping dump filled with mixed wastes, such as wrappers, left-over food, bottles, damaged appliances at a public Viewing Deck in Shrine Hills.

Due to the reports and clamor from the citizens, joggers, and cyclists, the Barangay Matina Crossing conducted a clean-up and restoration of the area.

A signboard informing the public on “Bawal Maglabay og Basura” was also installed after.

Just last year, Idis documented open dumps in several streets in Davao City.

Unattended and improperly disposed of wastes threaten the health of humans, wildlife, and the environment. If allowed to remain, open dumps often grow larger and may attract both solid and hazardous waste dumping.

"Open dumps and garbage piles must be urgently reported, restored, and cleaned up while the volume of wastes is still manageable. These are not just an eyesore, but these dumps will continue to accumulate through time if not addressed and, will pose a threat to health and the environment. We also encourage Dabawenyos to be a volunteer patroller and help us in reporting any existence of these dumps in your areas," said EnP. Lemuel Lloyd Manalo, Idis program coordinator.



It is prohibited to illegally dump mixed wastes, such as open dumping and uncollected wastes under the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act 9003).

Willing volunteers can sign up through the Idis Facebook page and attend an online orientation on the activity this March 22, 2022.

Idis believes that Dabawenyos can live in a healthier environment and more sustainable Davao City through working together. **(PR)**



Angeles City's plastic for rice project a hit

By [Frederick Silverio](#) March 16, 2022

ANGELES CITY: Plastics weighing 38,717 kilos were collected from the 23 villages here through the Walang Plastikan-Plastik Palit Bigas project of the city government launched by Mayor Carmelo Lazatin Jr.

The project was launched in January by Lazatin and has so far collected 38,717 kilos of plastic and have exchanged it into the same kilos of rice for residents from the 23 villages, who participated in the project.

"We are grateful to our townsfolk who participated in this project. While we aim to reinforce waste segregation and reduce the use of plastic, we are also offering a little reward for their effort — rice. Helping our town put food on the table at the same time," Lazatin said.

Two trucks are being deployed in the villages on schedule with the supervision of Chief Adviser IC Calaguas and Executive Assistant 4 Reina Manuel, Angeles City Economic Development and Investment Promotions Office head Irish Bonus-Llego said.

City Engineer Donato Dizon, meanwhile, explained that the collected plastics will be sold to cement companies and the earnings will be turned over to the City Treasurer's Office for collection.

Of the 23 villages visited for the project, Barangay Anunas has the highest number of plastic-to-rice exchanged — 6,991 kilos followed by Malabantias with 4,404, Pampang, 3,701, Sta. Teresita, 3,401 and Cuayan, 2,400.

The redemption trucks are deployed at Sapangbato from March 9 to 10.



LGUs welcome Silangan mine development

[Catherine Talavera](#) - The Philippine Star March 16, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The province of Surigao del Norte and other local government units welcome the development of the Silangan copper-gold project, according to Philex Mining Corp.

In a letter to Philex and Silangan Mindanao Mining Co. Inc. (SMMCI) president and CEO Eulalio Austin Jr., Surigao del Norte Governor Francisco Matugas said he is pleased that the long-delayed development of Silangan mine would soon commence to help generate jobs and spur economic activity in the province.

“This is another milestone in the minerals industry that is geared towards building a prosperous nation by way of responsible mining,” Matugas said.

“Similarly, this is also a welcome development for our province and constituents who have been immensely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and, just recently, the Super Typhoon Odette,” he said.

SMMCI will begin development of the copper and gold mine in the second quarter and expects it to begin commercial operation in early 2025.

The company earlier said it would need an initial capital of \$224 million to develop a starter mine for the Silangan project, which would be funded by proceeds from a stock rights offer, cash reserves and possibly some debt.

Throughout its 28-year mine life, Philex estimates that total investments will reach \$1.7 billion, with \$1.5 billion coming from funds to be generated by the Silangan mine.

Apart from Matugas, Surigao del Norte Second Congressional District Congressman Robert Ace Barbers said the forthcoming development of Silangan should generate the employment, local expenditures and taxes needed to fuel economic recovery from the pandemic and the damage caused by Typhoon Odette.

Philex was awarded by the government a Minerals Production and Sharing Agreement (MPSA) in 1999 for the Silangan mining claims that cover 2,880 hectares that straddle the towns of Placer, Tagana-an, Tubod and Sison—all in Surigao del Norte.

“Since its exploration stage, the Silangan project has always been an able partner of our town and my administration towards progress and economic development while consistently demonstrating its responsible stewardship of environmental and social concerns,” Romarate said.

Noting the hardships brought by the pandemic and Typhoon Odette, Romarate said it is “very timely indeed for the project to finally take-off and start generating anticipated job opportunities and incremental economic activities.”

For her part, Placer Mayor Jovymarie Villazon recalled how Philex and SMMCI had displayed good practices towards the community and the environment.

“With that, we look forward to the realization of their plans and programs with the same sense of professionalism during the development and operating stages,” Villazon said.



SMMCI chief operating officer Mike Toledo said the mining project would generate direct and indirect employment for around 8,000 people, raise about P86.7 billion in investments, and contribute an estimated P38 billion in government receipts throughout its 28-year mine life in Surigao del Norte, which is home to more than half a million Filipinos.

Aside from LGU approval and support, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has also extended the MPSA granted to SMMCI to 2049.



LGUs welcome Philex mining project

By [Eireene Jairee Gomez](#) March 16, 2022

THE province of Surigao del Norte welcomes the start of development of the \$224-million Silangan copper-gold mine project of Philex Mining Corp., which is one of the biggest investments in Mindanao.

Philex's wholly owned unit, Silangan Mindanao Mining Co. Inc. (SMMCI), will begin development of the copper and gold mine in the second quarter of 2022 and expects it to begin commercial operation in early 2025. Throughout its 28-year mine life, Philex estimates that total investments reaching \$1.7 billion, with \$1.5 billion coming from funds to be generated by Silangan mine.

Surigao del Norte Gov. Francisco Matugas said he is pleased that the long-delayed development of the Silangan mine will soon commence to help generate jobs and spur economic activity in the province.

"This is another milestone in the minerals industry that is geared toward building a prosperous nation by way of responsible mining," said Matugas in a letter to Eulalio Austin Jr., Philex and SMMCI president and chief executive officer.

"Similarly, this is also a welcome development for our province and constituents who have been immensely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and, just recently, the Super Typhoon 'Odette,'" he added.

Surigao del Norte Second District Rep. Robert Ace Barbers said the forthcoming development of Silangan should generate the employment, local expenditures and taxes needed to fuel economic recovery from the pandemic and the damage caused by Odette.

Tubod Mayor Richelle Romarate also welcomed the coming development of Silangan mine and called Philex an "able partner" in economic activities of the town.

Philex was awarded by the government a Minerals Production and Sharing Agreement in 1999 for the Silangan mining claims that cover 2,880 hectares and straddles the towns of Placer, Tagana-an, Tubod and Sison — all in Surigao del Norte.

"Since its exploration stage, the Silangan project has always been an able partner of our town and my administration toward progress and economic development while consistently demonstrating its responsible stewardship of environmental and social concerns," Romarate said.

Meanwhile, Placer Mayor Jovymarie Villazon recalled how Philex and its unit SMMCI had displayed good practices toward the community and the environment. "With that, we look forward to the realization of their plans and programs with the same sense of professionalism during the development and operating stages," he said.

Tagana-an Mayor Cesar Diaz Jr. said the imminent development of Silangan is most welcome coming in the wake of the pandemic and Odette. "With this development comes new employment opportunities for the residents and helps the local economy to generate additional income through the generated taxes from this project," he said.

The Silangan mining project will generate direct and indirect employment for around 8,000 people, raise about P86.7 billion in investments and contribute an estimated P38.0 billion in government receipts throughout its 28-year mine life in Surigao del Norte, which is home to more than half a million Filipinos.

source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/03/16/business/corporate-news/lgus-welcome-philex-mining-project/1836410>



Digital interventions vs climate change

March 15, 2022 | 4:45 pm

Thinking Beyond Politics

By Felix M. Vitangcol

It's summer. Temperatures are rising, and now that most mobility restrictions have been lifted, many children can be seen playing outdoors. One sunny, sweltering afternoon, however, the sky turned gray, and a downpour ensued.

This might seem erratic to many of us, but the Department of Science and Technology's Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), says we should not be surprised. Most of their climate models, they say, suggest that La Niña is likely to continue through the months of March, April, and May, despite the warm and dry season that has started this month.

The combined effects of these weather systems may potentially trigger rains that may cause floods, flash floods, and rain-induced landslides in vulnerable areas. Moreover, the rainfall forecast for the month of March suggests we should expect near to above normal rainfall conditions in most parts of the country.

Climate change is indeed upon us. The complex environmental challenges it triggers affect everyone, especially the most vulnerable, at a far greater level than what was expected before.

The Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Tragically, Filipinos still have a low awareness and understanding of the dangers and consequences of climate change.

In a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey conducted from Oct. 20-23, 2021, respondents were asked what they thought was the main reason preventing the country from addressing climate change. Thirty-four percent said they don't know, can't understand the question, were not aware of climate change, or had no answer.

Alarmingly, another 40% responded with an invalid answer.

Yet the same survey found that 89% of Filipinos agree that there are benefits in the integration of digital technologies in the country's economic activities. Some 82% of Filipinos also agree that the growth of the Philippine economy will be accelerated if the government collaborates with the private sector, and 81% agree that the government should engage the private sector to invest in public infrastructure.

Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) believes that climate action is one of the areas where the government can collaborate with the private sector. Specifically, the private sector's initiatives and expertise in digital technologies can help advance our efforts in combatting the effects of climate change.

Planting trees is perhaps the most conventional nature-based solution. It is a relatively inexpensive way of tackling climate change and its environmental side effects. In addition to their natural carbon sink capabilities, trees help prevent soil erosion and provide clean air, shade, and shelter. Forest products such as wood are also essential in the economy's infrastructure development.



Our forest cover, however, has been on a steady decline. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Philippines had a forest area of 12 million hectares in 1960. The World Bank (WB) says this significantly decreased to only 7.19 million hectares in the years that followed. Some 24.1% of the total landmass remains as forest area.

Fortunately, there are some bright, encouraging spots.

There are private sector-led interventions. A good model is the data-backed Liveable Cities Challenge (LCC) Dashboard project of the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), and its private sector partners which contains multi-year data on local communities' basic information such as labor, education, local economy, doing business, mobility and connectivity, health, urban environment, resiliency and emergency response, and safety and security.

This data helps local communities and their governments spot local trends and their connections to enable community stakeholders to make timely and effective decision-making and help determine vulnerabilities and issues that need to be addressed.

Digital technologies are now being harnessed not just to champion environmental stewardship but also in implementing environment, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives. Several companies have linked their tree-planting advocacies to actual trees being planted and monitored. Sites that need reforestation and scaling of tree-related sustainability programs are efficiently identified and prioritized. People can now help fight climate change by using these smart platforms to participate in these programs while availing themselves of the online services through their phones.

The fast transition to online platforms for daily business transactions since the COVID-19 pandemic broke out two years ago has reduced carbon emissions and business interactions to a digital-first attitude, resorting to face-to-face meetings only when very necessary and observing the required safety protocols.

Still, the potential of digital tools and technologies, in terms of advancing climate action and resiliency, remains largely untapped, primarily because of the lack of a general understanding of climate change itself and how digitalization can address it. The government should also lead in its integration into Philippine communities and their infrastructure. Enough government resources must be allocated to build up our national digital infrastructure to a level that is globally competitive.

National and local policies and frameworks should be conducive in enabling the sectors' ESG-based initiatives and investments that are sure to provide Filipinos with access to financial tools while participating in environmental stewardship programs. The Philippines must now step up its climate risk preparedness investments that would enhance nature-based solutions to climate change. These would also reduce physical risks to the people and the environment.

Climate change has a profound effect on our economic sustainability and resiliency. Having access to reliable digital tools is now considered a basic human need. It is also an indispensable factor to ensure economic continuity and recovery, and a sustainable post-pandemic era.

Engineer Felix M. Vitangcol is a Stratbase ADRi Environment fellow and secretary general of Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST).



Climate-smarter health system

By: [Ronald Law](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:15 AM March 16, 2022

The second part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) “Sixth Assessment Report on Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability,” and the Working Group II discussion on the health and well-being of communities under a changed and changing climate, have again presented the health systems of highly vulnerable countries like ours the dire reality of our current situation.

From extreme weather conditions like destructive typhoons and flooding, heat-related events that exacerbate common illnesses, to climate-sensitive infectious diseases, nutrition, and mental health issues that result from food insecurity, as well as migration and conflict, every possible health impact from increasing carbon emissions and rising temperature is now apparent at the global, regional, and national levels. They spare no country but disproportionately affect those with weak adaptation capacities and systems characterized by deep-seated inequity issues.

Unequivocally, these direct and indirect health effects are caused by humans, thus mitigation strategies to reduce carbon emissions at the global and systems levels should take precedence. But adaptation measures have to be done more effectively at the country level to prevent the worst-case scenario when the temperature rise goes beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius in the next five to 10 years.

In the Philippines, recognizing that we are already on the cusp of this near-future bleak scenario as far as our health realities are concerned can be a challenge. But defining how we can strengthen our health system to adapt to these grim climate change impacts, no matter how herculean the task, should be approached as a moral imperative in the “now normal.”

Public health authorities should take bold “code red” or emergency actions within a very narrow window of opportunity to best protect the health and well-being of the population, especially vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Building a climate-smarter health system that will benefit our generation and future ones is inarguably the most important premise of our reason for being during this now normal.

Research findings on the country’s national health adaptation policy and implementation barriers indicate a four-fold pathway to a climate-smarter health system.

Improved policy implementation based on both mitigation and adaptation strategies at the community, health facility, and governance levels is key. A clear theory of change will need to be developed moving forward but mobilizing resources—financial, human, material—is crucial to ensure effective and efficient implementation of plans at different levels.

Responsive health leadership and governance that champion decarbonization and stress the development of climate-resilient health systems should be the critical themes in health programs, plans, and activities. This includes the commitment to start, see through, and sustain the implementation of plans amidst uncertain political, fiscal, and social environments.

Robust systems for generating, translating, and using health data and evidence to help identify the source of diseases and climate-related health events should be developed, as they allow documentation and synthesis of knowledge, beliefs, and practices on climate and health resilience. Done right, this can guide us as far as our policy priorities are concerned.



There should be engaged and meaningful participation from stakeholders from local and international agencies, the private sector, civil society, academe, local governments, and communities on the frontlines. This is the only way to create a shared vision of the future that we want (and deserve) and hold everyone accountable for the holistic actions that need to be done.

As the lines dividing our future and present are blurred by the rising temperature and worsening impacts on the health of our planet and people, the necessary impetus for action is becoming clearer.

In this now normal, our country must take a stand and we, as humans united by our common failures, frailties, struggles, and aspirations, should rise to this existential challenge before it's too late.

Ronald Law is a physician, public health practitioner, and academic focused on health emergencies and disasters including global environmental change and its impacts on health. He is one of the contributing authors to the health chapter of the latest IPCC report and is currently a Rockefeller Foundation resident in Bellagio Center, Italy, working on his research project on enhancing the climate and health resilience of high-risk and vulnerable communities in the Philippines.



How climate change is leading to bigger hailstones



(Image credit: Lukas Jonaitis/Alamy)

By David Hambling 15th March 2022

Rising global temperatures might be causing hailstorms to become more violent, with larger chunks of ice and more intense downpours. But just how big can a hailstone get?

It was the height of summer in the UK and the country found itself in the grip of a heatwave. In Leicestershire, in the midlands of England, children on their school holidays played in paddling pools to stay cool. Then the sky darkened.

In the early evening of 21 July 2021, [hailstones the size of golf balls](#) pelted suddenly from the sky, smashing windows and battering cars. Gardens that were a few moments earlier filled with people soaking up the evening sun, were left badly damaged by the downpour of ice.

While the hailstorm – caused by strong updrafts of cloud high in the atmosphere – was unusual in its severity, it was mild compared to a [hailstorm that struck Calgary in Canada in June 2020](#). Hailstones the size of tennis balls caused damage to at least 70,000 homes and vehicles, destroyed crops and left the area facing a C\$1.2bn (US\$940m/£720m) repair bill. The 20-minute hailstorm was [one of the country's most costly weather events](#).

And [climate change is altering the pattern of hailstorms](#). In [Texas](#), [Colorado](#) and [Alabama](#) the records for largest hailstone have been broken in the last three years, reaching sizes of up to 16cm (6.2 inches) in diameter. In 2020, Tripoli, the capital of Libya, was struck by [hailstones nearly 18cm \(7.1in\) across](#).

While giant hailstones – classed as those with a diameter greater than 10cm (3.9in) – are extremely rare, they are an indicator and hail damage in the US now averages [more than \\$10bn](#) (£7.6bn) a year.

But why might global warming be causing an increase in the amount of ice falling from the sky? And are their limits to just how big a hailstone can grow?



Some large hailstones form as smaller ones collide and fuse together as they are buffeted around in a storm (Credit: Nature Picture Library/Alamy)



Hail forms as [droplets of water are carried upward into a thunderstorm](#). Updraughts carry them into parts of the atmosphere where the air is cold enough to freeze the droplets. Moisture from the air accumulates on the outside of the drops of ice as it moves through the air, causing the hailstone to grow in onion-like layers.

How fast a hailstone grows depends on the amount of moisture in the air. It will continue to grow until the updraught is no longer strong enough to keep it aloft. A [103km/h \(64mph\) updraft supports hail the size of a golf ball](#), while one 27% faster can create hailstones the size of baseballs, according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (although as we will see in a moment, the size of a hailstone doesn't always directly relate to its weight). More humid air and more powerful updraughts will bring bigger hailstones. Often larger hailstones will fall closer to the updraught while smaller hailstones will fall further away, often blown there by cross winds.

Destructive storms that produce hailstones more than 25mm (1in) in diameter require a specific set of conditions, says Julian Brimelow, a physical sciences specialist at Environment and Climate Change Canada, a department of the Canadian government, who has studied how climate change affects hail formation. They require enough moisture, powerful updraughts, and a "trigger factor", typically a weather front. This is why serious hailstorms are usually confined to particular regions such as the Great Plains in the US and Australia's Gold Coast. Typically such regions have cool, dry air in the upper atmosphere above warm, humid surface air. This unstable situation leads to strong updraughts and the formation of thunderstorms.

Such locations are particularly prone to [a type of thunderstorm known as supercells](#), which can produce very large hail due to the powerful rotating updraughts they create.

But as climate change alters the temperature of the Earth's atmosphere, so too is the amount of moisture in the air. [Warmer air can hold more water vapour](#) while higher temperatures also mean more water is evaporated from the Earth's surface. This is predicted to lead to [heavier rainfall](#) and more extreme storms in parts of the world.

Fewer days with small hail have been observed with warming, but there have been more days with larger hail – Julian Brimelow

"As the planet continues to warm, areas where hailstorms are favoured are likely to shift," says Brimelow. "An area now where sufficient moisture is a limiting factor may become more moist and consequently, hailstorm frequency may increase."

A combination of observations of changes already taking place and climate modelling has led researchers to conclude that hailstorms will become more frequent in Australia and Europe, but there will be a decrease in East Asia and North America. But they also found that hailstorms will become generally more intense.

And while hailstorms might become less frequent in North America, [hailstones when they fall are also likely to get larger](#), according to a separate study by Brimelow and his colleagues that looked at how hail conditions in North America might change in a warmer world.

One of the reasons for this is because the [height at which hailstones start to melt as they fall will be raised](#), so small hailstones will melt into rain before they hit the ground, but larger stones pass too rapidly through the warm zone for melting to have much effect on them.

"We have in fact already seen evidence of this, with hail pad data in France indicating a shift in [the size distribution of hail](#)," says Brimelow. Hail pads are blocks of soft material that are left out in storms and deform when impacted by hail to give a record of the size and number of hailstones in the area. "Fewer days with small hail have been observed with warming, but there have been more days with larger hail."



A hailstone measuring 4.83in (12cm) at its widest point was collected after a storm in Bethune, Colorado, US, in 2019 (Credit: National Weather Service, Goodland Forecast Office)

It could mean that annual damage caused by hail might also increase. But pinning down exactly which areas will see increased damage from hail is difficult, Brimelow says.

In areas where hail damage is expected, structures may be rated for hail resistance. The current method uses steel balls which may be dropped or fired from a pneumatic launcher to simulate impacts, but increasing the size of hailstones does not scale up the damage as simply as you might expect. [A 2020 study](#) by Texas Tech University explored why prediction is so difficult and why hailstorms can be far more damaging than expected.

The temperature and the level of moisture in the air a hailstone forms in can influence how dense it is. In very cold air, water freezes as soon as it collides with the hailstone, but this can lead to a lot of air and being mixed with the ice. If the water freezes more slowly, perhaps because the air is warmer or the amount of moisture in the air is high, meaning not all of it freezes instantly, the air bubbles have time to escape. This leads to clear ice that tends to be denser. Small hailstones are only [half as dense as pure ice](#), as they have a lot of air mixed in as they tend to move rapidly up through the atmosphere before falling again.

The largest hailstones are often composed of a complex mixture of ice layers that form as they move around in the air column. Looking at a [cross section of ice can reveal a great deal about how it formed](#) while lobes and icicle-like structures on the outside of the hailstone also provide hints at how it might have been rotating as it was tossed about in the storm.



Hailstones as big as eggs – like these that fell in Louisville, Colorado, in 2018 – are not uncommon in severe storms (Credit: Helen H Richardson/The Denver Post/Getty Images)

One large hailstone measuring 17cm (7in) across that was examined after it fell during [a storm in Aurora, Nebraska in 2003](#), for example, was found to have a type of "spongy" air-filled ice at its core and dense clear ice on the outer layers. If it had been made of pure ice, scientists who studied it say the volley-ball sized hailstone should have weighed about 2.5kg (5.5lbs), but it in [fact weighed only 500g \(1.1lbs\) due to the lower density core](#). They concluded that the hailstone had initially formed as it quickly rose through the clouds, before being tossed out of the updraught by sidewinds before falling back into it again, and this time rising more slowly due to its larger size, and so growing bigger with denser ice.



The density of the hailstone also effects how large it can grow. The heavier it is, the more likely it will fall out of an updraught. And it will also fall faster too, because the bigger a hailstone, the less drag it experiences per unit weight. Hailstones of less than 25mm (1in) diameter typically fall at 11 to 22 m/s (25 – 49 mph), while those of 25-45mm (1-1.7in) fall at 22 to 29 m/s (49 - 65 mph), according to Brimelow. The heaviest hailstone ever recorded fell in Gopalganj district of Bangladesh in 1986, [weighing 1.02kg \(2.25lbs\)](#). The hailstorm killed [40 people and injured 400 others](#), according to reports at the time, but later reports suggest as many as [92 people may have lost their lives](#).

But the speed at which a hailstone falls is far from simple. Researchers have in the past assumed that hailstones are approximately spherical, whereas [recent research has shown](#) they are more like flattened rugby balls, which can lead to more air resistance as they fall. They also become more uneven as they get larger, with nodules and lobes forming. Both of these factors affect their aerodynamics and how fast they fall, and so how much damage they cause when they finally hit the ground.

Finally, the speed at which a hailstone hits is not the same as its falling speed. For one thing, there may be a horizontal component – side winds can increase the impact speed of a hailstone compared to if it had hit in freefall. The most damaging hail events are downbursts, driven by powerful downdraughts – where [air rapidly descends from storms and spread outwards when they hit the ground](#), producing very high wind speeds. Downbursts are typically only a few kilometres or miles across and last a matter of minutes, but can feature vertical windspeeds of 70-80m/s (156-179mph) with correspondingly destructive hail.

Large hailstones travelling at these sorts of speeds have the power to punch through roof tiles, [smash car windows and tear off cladding on buildings](#). They can [devastate crops](#), injure people and animals. They pose a [particular threat to aircraft](#).

(I once witnessed a downburst in Mendoza, Argentina some years ago – it brought down trees, and the hail was piled up in drifts afterwards, even though it was a warm day).

All of these factors put together mean that scaled-up hailstones can cause significantly more damage than expected.



*Damage caused by large hail downpours can cause damage to vehicles and buildings costing billions
(Credit: Helen H Richardson/The Denver Post/Getty Images)*

In 2018, the town of Villa Carlos Paz in Argentina was hit by stones of unprecedented size, with some [measuring 18cm \(7.1in\) across but there could have been some hailstones possibly even as large as 23.7cm \(9.3in\) in size](#). Although such dimensions are thought to be close to the world record in size for a hailstone, it is difficult to be certain. For one, giant hailstones are rarely recovered intact, as they tend to strike with shattering force.



Meteorologist Matthew Kumjian of Pennsylvania State University [came up with the estimate of the hailstones](#) that fell on Villa Carlos Paz after analysing the many images posted on social media after the storm. He then visited the site and measured lamp posts, awnings and other background objects to get an exact scale, as well as interviewing witnesses. He also managed to inspect one stone preserved in a freezer that measured 11.4cm (4in).

Kumjian notes that reports of giant hail have become more common in recent years.

"In the last two decades, there's been about 10 reports of hail about six inches (15cm) in maximum dimension or greater in the US," says Kumjian. "Those are exceptionally rare."

Records have been tumbling in recent years. A hailstone measuring [16cm \(6.4in\) across and weighing 590g \(1.3lbs\), for example, was collected after a storm near Hondo, Texas](#) in April last year. The hailstone was preserved in a freezer and later confirmed as a new record in the state.

Gargantuan hailstones are often outliers in storms that contain far more abundant, smaller hailstones that are still capable of causing widespread damage

But just how big can a hailstone get? Kumjian estimates the largest possible hailstone at 27cm (10.6in) across or "bowling ball sized", based on data from modelling simulations, the maximum mass of a hailstone to be reported (around 1kg/2.2lbs) and research on shape. However, nothing quite this large has yet to be recorded and he says he is working with some colleagues to refine the estimate. While 27cm (10.6in) is at the upper end of the estimates, a hailstone of those proportions would be highly irregular in shape. But he says the ingredients needed to create such a large hailstone – strong updrafts, plenty of supercooled liquid water and plenty time spent travelling around in the cold air – exist today.

"The strong 'supercell' thunderstorms that produce the world's largest hailstones have many of these ingredients coming together already, so the strongest of these storms today is probably capable of producing a supergiant stone," he says.

Gargantuan hailstones, however, are often outliers in storms that contain far more abundant, smaller hailstones that are still capable of causing widespread damage. However, because of their potential to kill livestock and people and severely damage property, giant hailstones are significant even though they are rare.

On 9 June 2006, an [Airbus 321 airliner](#) in South Korea, encountered a powerful hailstorm which ripped off the radome (the structure on the nose that protects the radar) and destroyed the radar. Hail battered the wing edges and stabilisers, and parts of the radome were ingested by an engine, damaging it. The crew had to deal with a barrage of automated warning messages triggered by all the damage. They eventually managed to land safely, but only after two missed approaches due to poor visibility.

Aircraft have always been at risk from hail, with [20 incidents recorded from 2017-2019](#). Their windscreens are strong enough to resist bird strikes so hail does not usually damage them, but hail damage can obscure the windscreen making landing more difficult, as in the South Korean incident.

Weather radar normally allows aircraft to avoid hailstorms, but hail at high altitude – seven of the recorded incidents between 2017-2019 took place above 30,000ft (9,144m) – tends to be dry because the extremely cold temperatures means all moisture is frozen. This means it reflects radar faintly and is difficult to spot. And, as you might expect, larger hailstones are more dangerous than small ones.

On the ground, two new and increasingly common structures are particularly at risk: solar panels and wind turbines.



These large hailstones hit the Uskudar district of Istanbul, Turkey in September 2020 in a storm that caused widespread damage (Credit: Emrah Yorulmaz/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)

A 2019 study by the Institute for Environmental Studies in Amsterdam showed that [more solar panels means more hail damage](#). An EU initiative is aiming to have a million zero-carbon homes by 2023 and solar is becoming much more common, but the researchers noted there is a lack of rules and standards to ensure panels are hail-resistant. Destructive hail triggered by climate change may destroy solar panels meant to counter climate change.

Hail damage also [erodes wind turbine blades](#), pushing up maintenance costs and increasing energy losses from wind farms. This is because the leading edge of the wind turbine has to be highly aerodynamic, slicing through the air with minimal resistance.

The edge is typically a curved glass-fibre-reinforced polymer laminate with a brittle polyurethane-based coating. Even rain wears away at this edge, but hail has literally more impact, and repeated strikes will crack it. Any damage to the blade affects airflow and increases drag, making the turbine less efficient. A [2017 Danish study](#) suggests hail damage can be reduced simply by stopping the turbine blades during extreme weather events to reduce the speed of impact.

While more big hailstones may be coming our way, damage is not necessarily inevitable. One option is issuing hail warnings to affected areas. In South Africa insurance companies already send text alerts warning of hail, giving people a chance to get their cars or other property under cover.

Hail netting made from monofilament polyethylene can protect vulnerable fruit such as apples and grapes, catching all but the largest hailstones. Similar netting is now also installed at some car dealerships in the US – a sector which, Brimelow notes, accounts for a [significant proportion of hail insurance claims](#).

A 2021 study led by Leila Tolderlund at the University of Colorado also highlighted the potential for [green roofing as hail protection](#). This consists of a waterproof membrane with a thick layer of soil planted with vegetation. Green roofs provide insulation, reduce heat in summer and absorb CO₂, but they also turn out to be excellent hail armour. The study found that in a simulated severe hailstorm, all the non-protected roof surfaces were damaged, while those with green roofing remained unharmed.

There have also been attempts to [predict the size of hailstones](#) that might be generated by particular storms, but [many of these lack accuracy](#). As Brimelow notes, it is too early to tell exactly where hail damage will occur in future. But it's clear from his work and others that the really big stuff is likely to still keep hurling down at us. All we can do is prepare, and find a decent shelter.

16 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

DENR allows recovery of fallen trees in typhoon-affected areas

TO boost the rehabilitation efforts in areas affected by recent typhoons, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) field offices can now issue wood recovery permits (WRPs) for uprooted trees.

DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna signed a memorandum dated March 2, 2022, authorizing the issuance of WRPs primarily to "provide an additional wood requirement for the rehabilitation program of the local and national government units, such as for housing materials."

The order, in effect, partially lifted the ban on the issuance of WRPs put in place in 2003 by former DENR Secretary Elisea Gozun.

Sampulna's order, however, is only for the partial lifting of WRP suspension, which includes fire-damaged trees, covering both naturally-growing trees and planted trees in forestlands, alienable and disposable lands, and privately-owned lands.

Sampulna stressed that the order is only for typhoon uprooted and fire-damaged trees and does not cover areas within protected areas.

"The issuance of WRP for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops, and branches are still suspended until further notice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter," Sampulna said in the order.

Sampulna said that no collection of forest charges will be imposed and that DENR officials will only issue a WRP within three months after the occurrence of a typhoon or fire.

Areas ravaged by Typhoon Odette in December 2021 are given three

months to retrieve and dispose of typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Under the order, only qualified applicants can apply for WRPs under two categories: tenure instrument holders, local government units (LGU), and national government agencies for forestlands; and land/lot owner and LGU for alienable and disposable lands and private lands.

The order also specified the coverage of authority and validity period of the WRP issued.

For timber volume with 15 cubic meters (cu.m.) and below, the DENR Community Environment and Natural Officer (CENRO) or the implementing Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) will be the approving authority, while the regional executive directors cover timber volume above 16 cu.m. to more than 1,000 cu.m.

The periods of validity according to the volume of wood covered by the WRP issued are as follows: 50 cu. m., 50 days; 51 to 70 cu. m., 60 days; 71 to 100 cu. m., 90 days; 101 to 200 cu. m., 120 days; 201 to 300 cu. m., 150 days; 301 to 500 cu. m., six months; 501 to 650 cu. m., seven months; 651 to 750 cu. m., eight months; 751 to 850 cu. m., nine months; 851 to 950 cu. m., 10 months; 951 to 1,000 cu. m., 11 months; and more than 1,000 cu. m., one year.

"The concerned CENRO/implementing PENRO upon learning of the existence of retrievable wood materials [uprooted and typhoon/fire-damaged trees] shall conduct 100 percent inventory of these wood materials," Sampulna said.

Jonathan L. Mayuga



PAGE



UPPER

LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

03-16-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

DENR OKs use of fallen trees in typhoon-hit areas

Trees uprooted or felled by strong winds or damaged by fire can now be used to boost rehabilitation works in areas affected by recent typhoons.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources acting secretary Jim Sampulna issued a memorandum to DENR field offices to grant wood recovery permits (WRP) for uprooted trees in areas affected by Typhoon Odette.

The partial lifting of the suspension of WRPs covers naturally growing and planted trees in forests, alienable, disposable lands and privately owned lands.

"The issuance of WRPs for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops and branches are still suspended until further no-

tice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter," the memorandum read.

Sampulna said WRPs should be issued within three months after a typhoon or fire.

Areas affected by Odette were given three months to retrieve and dispose typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Former DENR secretary Elisea Gozun suspended the recovery and disposition of abandoned, drifted and sunken logs as well as uprooted and fire and typhoon damaged trees, stumps, tops and branches, citing abuses in WRP issuances, saying these were used as convenient cover for illegal logging.

- Rhodina Villanueva



09-16-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

'Odette' trees can be used for rehab efforts – DENR

FALLEN or uprooted trees in areas affected by typhoon Odette can now be used for the rehabilitation efforts in said areas.

In a memorandum issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting Secretary Jim Sampulna, he ordered the DENR field offices to issue wood recovery permits (WRPs) for uprooted trees in areas particularly affected by typhoon "Odette".

Sampulna explained that WRPs primarily "provide an additional wood requirement for the rehabilitation program of the local and national government units, such as for housing materials."

Sampulna's directive in effect partially lifted the WRP suspension includes fire-damaged trees, covering both naturally-growing trees and planted trees in forestlands, alienable and disposable lands, and privately-owned lands.

However, Sampulna stressed that the lifting order is only for typhoon uprooted and fire-damaged trees and does not cover areas within protected areas.

"The issuance of WRP for the retrieval and disposition of abandoned logs, drifted logs, sunken logs, tree stumps, tops, and branches are still suspended until further notice and upon comprehensive review and assessment to be conducted on the matter," Sampulna said in the order.

He stressed that no collec-

tion of forest charges will be imposed and that DENR officials will only issue a WRP within 3 months after the occurrence of a typhoon or fire.

Areas ravaged by typhoon Odette in December 2021 are given 3 months to retrieve and dispose of typhoon-damaged trees from the issuance of the memorandum.

Under the order, only qualified applicants can apply for WRPs under 2 categories: tenure instrument holders, local government units (LGU), and national government agencies for forestlands; and land/lot owner and LGU for alienable and disposable lands and private lands.

The order also specified the coverage of authority and validity period of the WRP issued.

For timber volume with

15 cubic meters (cu.m.) and below, the DENR Community Environment and Natural Officer (CENRO) or the implementing Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) will be the approving authority, while the regional executive directors cover timber volume above 16 cu.m. to more than 1,000 cu.m.

The periods of validity according to the volume of wood covered by the WRP issued are as follows: 50 cu. m., 50 days; 51 to 70 cu.m., 60 days; 71 to 100 cu.m., 90 days; 101 to 200 cu.m., 120 days; 201 to 300 cu.m., 150 days; 301 to 500 cu.m., 6 months; 501 to 650 cu. m., 7 months; 651 to 750 cu. m., 8 months; 751 to 850 cu.m., 9 months; 851 to 950 cu.m., 10 months; 951 to 1,000 cu.m., 11 months; and more than 1,000 cu. m., 1 year.



03-16-22
March 16, 2022
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE

EDITORIAL

A member of the
PPPI Philippine
Press
Institute
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Unending problem of pollution

WITH a new acting secretary and a couple of months to go before President Rodrigo Duterte bows out of office, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it will intensify compliance monitoring of business establishments in the Manila Bay area.

The announcement came after the DENR reported the discovery of more illegal discharges of wastewater that contribute to the contamination of the waters of Manila Bay. We have to believe the DENR on this because they are the officials in charge and they should know if indeed there are illegal discharges of wastewater into the bay. If so, then the former DENR secretary was remiss in his duty of protecting Manila Bay from pollution, which is one of the supposed achievements or legacies of the outgoing Duterte administration.

'He admitted that there are "many secrets here in the Manila Bay waters" and proceeded to order an inspection of all establishments so the department can trace where the foul smell of Manila Bay is coming from.'

DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the department's monitoring will reinforce the water quality management. Sampulna said they will have to identify the real sources of untreated wastewater and sewage discharging into Manila Bay.

The acting secretary must have been surprised that during a walk-through in Manila Baywalk last week, he received reports that there are still illegal drainage pipes leading to the Manila Bay. He wants inspectors of the DENR, which is leading the interagency Manila Bay Task Force (MBTF), to identify where the illegal drainage pipes are coming from "so we can order the stoppage of the illegal discharges."

A saturation drive, no less, is needed to confront this huge environmental pollution, as the new secretary confirmed. He admitted that there are "many secrets here in the Manila Bay waters" and proceeded to order an inspection of all establishments so the department can trace where the foul smell of Manila Bay is coming from.

We have all the laws and the Supreme Court orders to protect Manila Bay from pollution, such as Republic Act (RA) 9275 or Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, RA 9003 or Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, and Presidential Decree 1586, and yet the bay is still dirty. The dolomite beach has been funded and implemented to beautify part of the bay yet the low water quality remains.

There is a task force of several government agencies to cleanup Manila Bay. They can begin the work today, but we can only pin our hopes on the coming administration to make a difference.



Russia-Ukraine war to cause climate change setbacks—DENR

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jonlmayuga

THE raging conflict between Russia and Ukraine would likely affect ongoing climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts on a global scale, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Wars cause death and destruction, including the environment and natural resources. For countries engaging in wars, environmental quality is also severely affected.

For Albert Magalang, chief of the Climate Change Service of the DENR and concurrent Philippine negotiator in UN Climate talks, the Russia-Ukraine war has its own pros and cons.

He said the direct impact of the ongoing hostilities in the region will have a ripple effect—affecting

national securities, economies, and climate actions.

In a telephone interview with the BUSINESSMIRROR, Magalang said as the price of fuel goes up, economic activities are forced to slow down.

This may eventually lead to businesses to incur losses that will affect employment and livelihood.

On Monday, the price of pump gasoline went up by an unprecedented scale. The price of diesel went up by at least P13 per liter, and gasoline by at least P8 per liter. Prices of agricultural products have started to go up due to the impact of the oil price increase in the past few weeks already.

For the Philippines, the Russia-Ukraine war will subsequently cause the price of basic commodities to go up, making life more difficult for the average income earners.

While the oil price hikes and the

economic slowdown will be beneficial for the climate as economic slowdowns will naturally reduce greenhouse gas emissions and benefit air quality as around 80 percent of air pollution in Metro Manila comes from motor vehicles that regularly hit the roads, the flow of financial resources for climate action may also slow down, or worse, stop.

The Philippines is still reeling from the impact of the global pandemic.

He said like the global pandemic's positive impact on the economy, however, contribution to the global climate action will also slow down.

He noted that one way or the other, with Russia and Ukraine prioritizing war, their contribution to global climate action would expectedly be relegated to the backburner.

Other countries, he said, may also look at "saving" resources in preparation

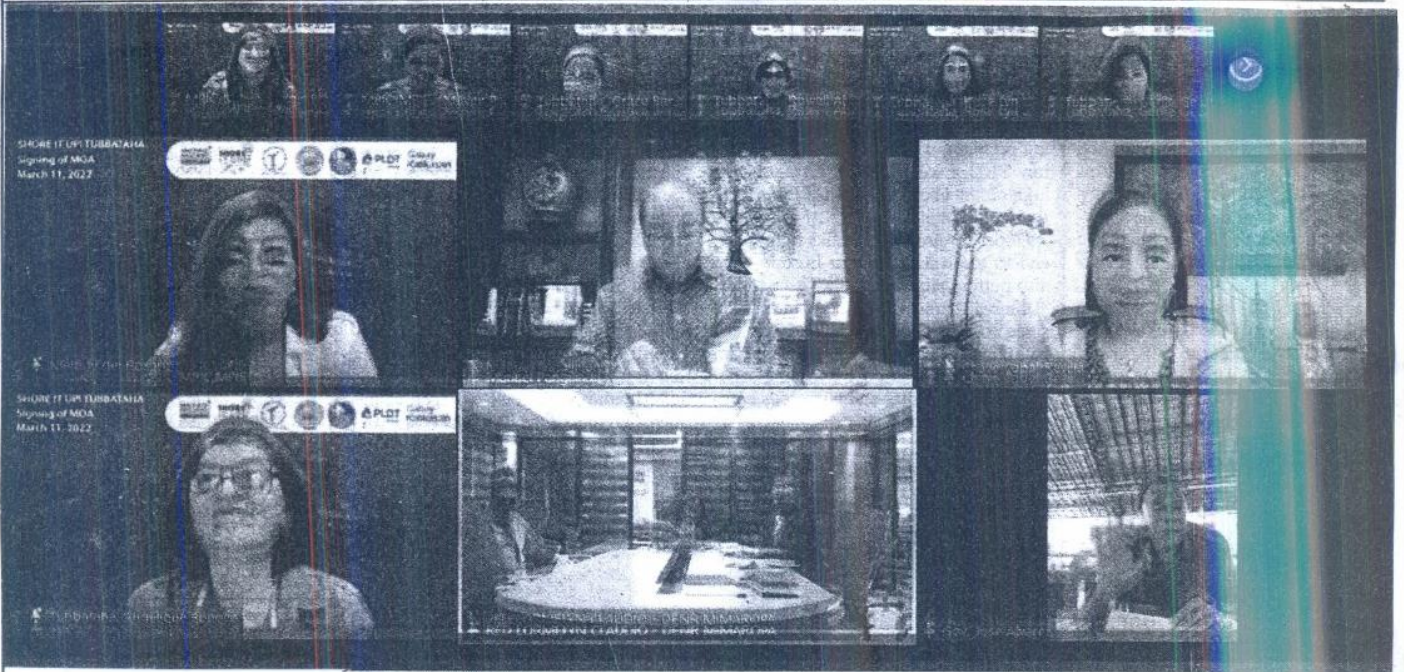
for the effect of the Russia-Ukraine war, possibly rethinking their commitments to achieve their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

"This means countries may eventually stop focusing on the global climate action," he said.

"All climate actions, environmental protection, and resource management—is all about sustainable development. But sustainable development cannot be achieved if there's inaction," he said.

Worse, Magalang said climate finance may suffer setbacks, affecting developing nations like the Philippines that are entitled to such support as guaranteed by the Climate Change Convention, as well.

"If budgets are channeled to war finance, definitely, this will affect sustainability efforts," he said.



SHORING UP TUBBATAHA. Metro Pacific Investments Foundation Inc. chairman Manuel Pangilinan (top center) and president Melody Del Rosario (top left) sign a memorandum of agreement with the Tubbataha Protected Area Management Board, represented by Palawan Governor Jose Alvarez (bottom right) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources MIMAROPA officer-in-charge regional director Lormelyn Claudio (bottom center). The event is witnessed by MPIF trustee and MPIC chief finance, risk and sustainability officer Chaye Cabal-Revilla (top right) and Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Protected Area superintendent Angelique Songco (bottom left). Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is the country's largest marine protected area.



Nickel Asia companies extend and renew output sharing deals

NICKEL Asia Corp. on Tuesday announced that its mining subsidiaries were granted extensions and renewals for their mineral production sharing agreements by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Nickel Asia wholly owned subsidiary Hinatuan Mining Corp. was granted an extension for its mineral production sharing agreement and was permitted to resume operations in Eastern Samar.

On March 14, Hinatuan Mining received an order from the DENR extending the first 25-year term of its mineral production sharing agreement with the government for fifteen years.

The order also lifted the suspension of Hinatuan Mining's operations in a 1,165-hectare area in Manicani Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

Cagdianao Mining Corp., also a wholly owned subsidiary of Nickel Asia, also received a renewal for its mineral production sharing agreement with the government and East Coast Mineral Resources Co., Inc. for another 25 years, from the

expiration of the first 25-year term on Nov. 19.

This covers a 697,0481-hectare area in Valencia, Cagdianao in the Dinagat Islands.

"East Coast Mineral Resources authorized Cagdianao Mining to undertake mineral exploration, development, and utilization activities," Nickel Asia said in a disclosure on Tuesday.

In 2021, Nickel Asia reported that its net income attributable to equity holders rose by 91.9% to P7.81 billion due to higher global ore prices, expansions in its renewable energy business, and increased equity in nickel processing.

The company's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) climbed 52.1% to P14.4 billion from P9.47 billion in the prior year, due to higher ore sales prices.

Total revenue increased by 26% to P27.4 billion from P21.8 billion in 2020.

At the stock exchange, Nickel Asia shares fell by 52 centavos or 6.52% to close at P7.45 apiece. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocoson**



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

NCIP issues CDO against Ayala's El Nido projects

By Othel V. Campos

THE National Commission on Indigenous Peoples said Tuesday it issued a cease-and-desist order against Lio Airport and Tourism Estate, which are owned and operated by Ten Knots Philippines Inc., a subsidiary of Ayala Land Inc., in El Nido, Palawan.

NCIP said in a statement it issued the CDO due to TKPI's refusal to undergo the process of the Free and Prior Informed Consent with the Tagbanuwa Tandulanen IP community, as mandated under Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act.

The CDO ordered the temporary halt of the projects in Barangays Villa Libertad and Pasadena in El Nido. Legal action/s maybe filed for violation of the provisions of IPRA.

NCIP Mimaropa regional director Dr. Marie Grace Pascua signed the CDO.

The CDO asked for support from the provincial government to implement the order with the assistance of authorities or other government agencies if necessary.

NCIP issued a show cause order on Feb. 13, 2022 to TKPI addressed to legal counsel Angara Abello Concepcion Regala Cruz. Before this, four notices to comply were also issued by NCIP dated Sept. 20, Oct. 21, Dec. 30, 2021 and Jan. 21, 2022.

NCIP said TKPI refused to abide by the FPIC.

The Lio Tourism Estate is a 325-hectare master planned beach residential village with 4.2-kilometer white sand beach front.

Lio Airport is a private airport owned and operated by TKPI for the exclusive use for its aircraft, Airwift Philippines which flies to and from El Nido, Manila, Cebu, Boracay and Bohol.

TKPI also owns and operates four island resorts of Apulit, Miniloc, Lagen and Pangulasian in Palawan. The locations of the resorts are also claimed by the Tagbanuwa Tandulanen IP community as part of their ancestral domain.



Napocor seeking regulator nod to use P335 million for watersheds

THE National Power Corp. (Napocor) has sought regulatory approval to avail and use around P335.35 million from a component of the universal charge collected from consumers for its environmental function to rehabilitate watersheds.

In its application filed with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), the state-led firm said its environmental projects for 2022 require the budget to address "uncontrolled deforestation" in watershed areas.

"For the past 20 years (2002-2022), [Napocor] continues to embark on nonstop greening initiatives in various watershed areas that gained acceptance and encouraged cooperation from stakeholders," the government-owned and controlled corporation said.

Under Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA), Napocor is entitled to the environmental charge collected from electricity users equivalent to one-fourth of one centavo per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity sales or P0.0025 per kWh.

The environmental charge is intended solely for watershed rehabilitation and management, which is a function of Napocor under existing arrangements.

ERC is required to file with the ERC to avail of the funds collected from consumers.

In its filing docketed at the ERC on March 14, Napocor said it was granted in 1987 through an executive order complete jurisdiction, control and jurisdiction over five watershed areas surrounding the reservoir of plants or projects it constructed.

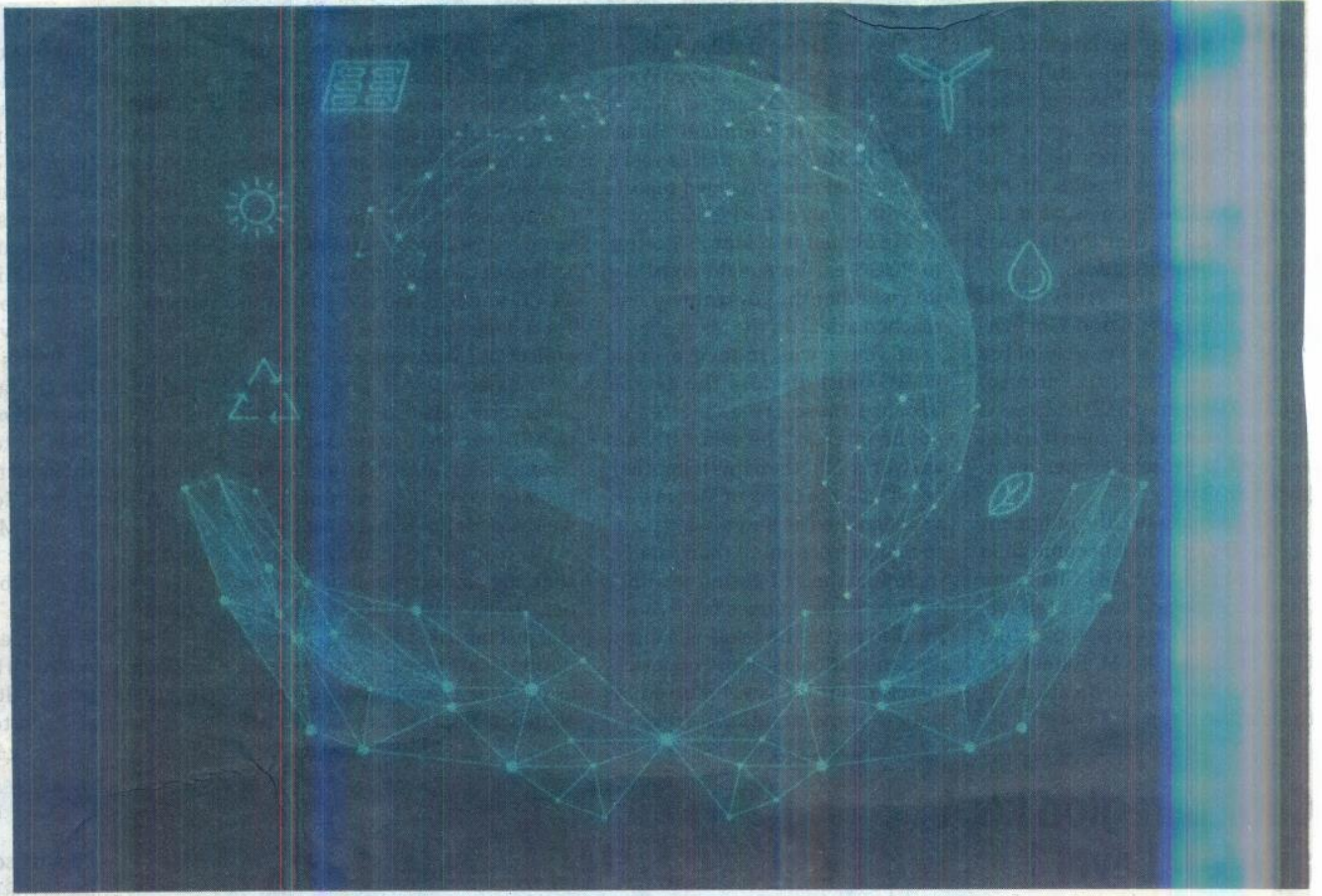
These areas are Upper Agno watershed reservation, Angat watershed reservation, Caliraya Lumot watershed reservation, Makiling-Banahaw geothermal reservation, Buhi-Barit watershed, and Tiwi geothermal reservation.

Aside from the six areas, Napocor also listed other areas under its 2022 rehabilitation program called "Plan 18," namely: San Roque watershed (Lower Agno) and Lake Lanao-Pulangi watershed.

The universal charge is imposed for the recovery of the stranded debts, stranded contract costs of Napocor and stranded contract costs of eligible contracts of distribution utilities.

Aside from managing watersheds and water resources, the corporation is also mandated to provide electricity to rural areas, and to optimize the use of other power generating assets.

Digital interventions vs climate change





It's summer. Temperatures are rising, and now that most mobility restrictions have been lifted, many children can be seen playing outdoors. One sunny, sweltering afternoon, however, the sky turned gray, and a downpour ensued.

This might seem erratic to many of us, but the Department of Science and Technology's Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), says we should not be surprised. Most of their climate models, they say, suggest that La Niña is likely to continue through the months of March, April, and May, despite the warm and dry season that has started this month.

The combined effects of these weather systems may potentially trigger rains that may cause floods, flash floods, and rain-induced landslides in vulnerable areas. Moreover, the rainfall forecast for the month of March suggests we should expect near to above normal rainfall conditions in most parts of the country.

Climate change is indeed upon us. The complex environmental challenges it triggers affect everyone, especially the most vulnerable, at a far greater level than what was expected before.

The Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Tragically, Filipinos still have a low awareness and understanding of the dangers and consequences of climate change.

In a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey conducted from Oct. 20-23, 2021, respondents were asked what they thought was the main reason preventing the country from addressing climate change. Thirty-four percent said they don't know, can't understand the question, were not aware of climate change, or had no answer.

Alarmingly, another 40% responded with an invalid answer.

Yet the same survey found that 89% of Filipinos agree that there are benefits in the integration of digital technologies in the country's economic activities. Some 82% of Filipinos also agree that the growth of the Philippine economy will be accelerated if the government collaborates with the private sector, and 81% agree that the government should engage the private sector to invest in public infrastructure.

Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) believes that climate action is one of the areas where the government can collaborate with the private sector. Specifically, the private sector's initiatives and expertise in digital technologies can help advance our efforts in combatting the effects of climate change.

Planting trees is perhaps the most conventional nature-based solution.

THINKING BEYOND POLITICS

FELIX M. VITANGCOL

It is a relatively inexpensive way of tackling climate change and its environmental side effects. In addition to their natural carbon sink capabilities, trees help prevent soil erosion and provide clean air, shade, and shelter. Forest products such as wood are also essential in the economy's infrastructure development.

Our forest cover, however, has been on a steady decline. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Philippines had a forest area of 12 million hectares in 1960. The World Bank (WB) says this significantly decreased to only 7.19 million hectares in the years that followed. Some 24.1% of the total landmass remains as forest area.

Fortunately, there are some bright, encouraging spots.

There are private sector-led interventions. A good model is the data-backed Liveable Cities Challenge (LCC) Dashboard project of the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), and its private sector partners which contains multi-year data on local communities' basic information such as labor, education, local economy, doing business,

mobility and connectivity, health, urban environment, resiliency and emergency response, and safety and security.

This data helps local communities and their governments spot local trends and their connections to enable community stakeholders to make timely and effective decision-making and help determine vulnerabilities and issues that need to be addressed.

Digital technologies are now being harnessed not just to champion environmental stewardship but also in implementing environment, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives. Several companies have linked their tree-planting advocacies to actual trees being planted and monitored. Sites that need reforestation and scaling of tree-related sustainability programs are efficiently identified and prioritized. People can now help fight climate change by using these smart platforms to participate in these programs while availing themselves of the online services through their phones.

The fast transition to online platforms for daily business transactions since the COVID-19 pandemic broke out two years ago has reduced carbon emissions and business interactions to a digital-first attitude, resorting to face-to-face meetings only when very necessary and observing the required safety protocols.

Still, the potential of digital tools and technologies, in terms of advancing

climate action and resiliency, remains largely untapped, primarily because of the lack of a general understanding of climate change itself and how digitalization can address it. The government should also lead in its integration into Philippine communities and their infrastructure. Enough government resources must be allocated to build up our national digital infrastructure to a level that is globally competitive.

National and local policies and frameworks should be conducive in enabling the sectors' ESG-based initiatives and investments that are sure to provide Filipinos with access to financial tools while participating in environmental stewardship programs. The Philippines must now step up its climate risk preparedness investments that would enhance nature-based solutions to climate change. These would also reduce physical risks to the people and the environment.

Climate change has a profound effect on our economic sustainability and resiliency. Having access to reliable digital tools is now considered a basic human need. It is also an indispensable factor to ensure economic continuity and recovery, and a sustainable post-pandemic era. ■

Engineer FELIX M. VITANGCOL is a Stratbase ADRI Environment fellow and secretary general of Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST).

16 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



All areas in PH now 'low risk' for Covid-19: DOH

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor March 15, 2022, 6:14 pm



MANILA – All areas in the country including those under Alert Level 2 are now classified as low risk for coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), a health official said Tuesday.

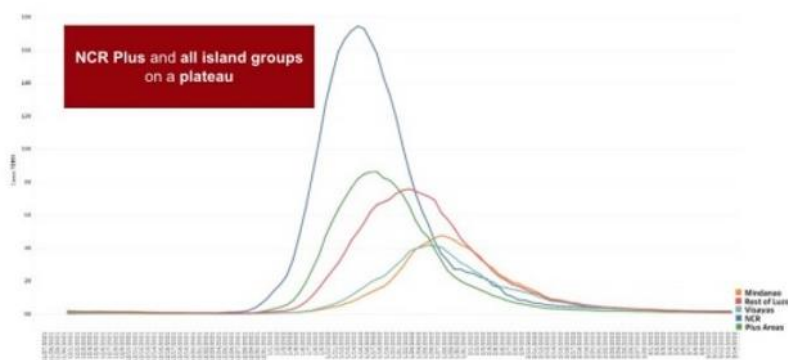
In an online media forum, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the government is strengthening its inoculation drive in Alert Level 2 areas to increase vaccination coverage so these can deescalate to Alert Level 1.

“As for Metro Manila and 39 other areas, they have eased restrictions because of high vaccination rates and continued adherence to public health safety protocols,” she said.

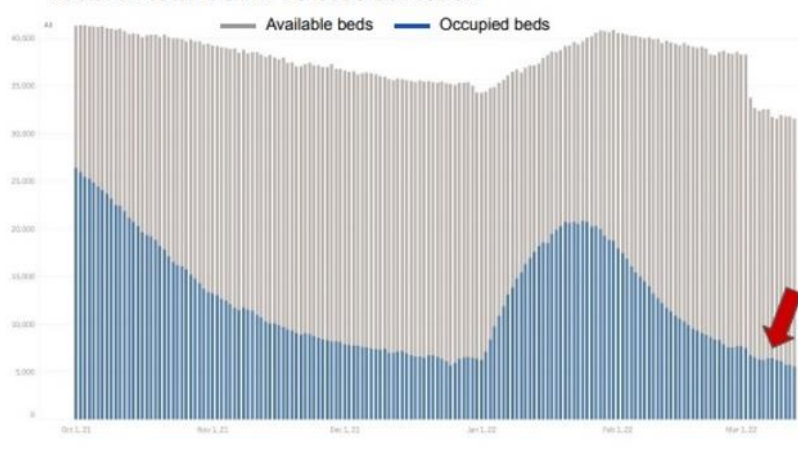
Vergeire added that there is no new uptick in Covid-19 cases nationwide and the Deltacron is not yet detected in the country.

While the Deltacron is not yet a variant of concern, Vergeire urged the public to be vaccinated as protection against other Covid-19 variants circulating worldwide.

Confirmed Cases by Report Date - Island Groups



National Total COVID-19 beds utilization





As of March 14, a total of 1,400,889 doses have been administered during the fourth edition of the "Bayanihan, Bakunahan" drive. T

The government has extended the program until March 18 to increase the vaccination coverage among senior citizens.

So far, there are 6.5 million fully vaccinated and 1.9 million boosted senior citizens in the country.

"Muli po binibigyan diin ng Kagawaran ng Kalusugan na ang mga bakuna ay garantisadong ligtas at epektibo hindi lamang sa ating elderly population kung hindi para po sa ating lahat (The Department of Health emphasizes that all vaccines are proven safe and effective not only for the elderly population but for everyone)," Vergeire said. **(PNA)**



NCR, 47 others under Alert 1

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the government is still studying whether to call as Alert Level 0 the least restrictive classification as it may result to confusion



Children spend their time playing a traditional Filipino game Chinese garter at Brgy. BalicBalic Sampaloc Manila / Photo: Analy Labor

The national government kept Metro Manila and 47 other areas across the country under Alert Level 1 for the rest of the month amid the continuous drop in Covid-19 cases.

Aside from the capital region, also placed under the same scheme were Abra, Apayao, Baguio City, Kalinga, Dagupan City, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Batanes, Cagayan, City of Santiago, Isabela, Quirino, Angeles City, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Olongapo City, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales.

Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Lucena City, Marinduque, Puerto Princesa City and Romblon, Naga City, and Catanduanes have also been classified under Alert Level 1.

Likewise, the same alert level were put in effect in Bacolod City, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo City, Cebu City, Siquijor, Biliran, Ormoc City, Tacloban City, Zamboanga City, Cagayan de Oro City, Camiguin, Davao City and Butuan City.

The rest of the Philippines had been placed under a stricter Alert Level 2.

Prior to the announcement, most areas in the country were under Alert Level 1 — the most relaxed lockdown in a five-tier system — after experiencing a surge in infections driven by the highly mutated Omicron variant at the start of the year.

In areas under Alert Level 1, all establishments and public transport are allowed to operate.

There were also no prohibitions on domestic travel, except if local government units impose restrictions or requirements on tourists in their respective jurisdictions.

Over 3.67 million Covid-19 cases have been detected so far in the Philippines since the outbreak began. Of these, 46,537 are active cases.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the government is still studying whether to call as Alert Level 0 the least restrictive classification as it may result to confusion.

Source: https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/03/16/ncr-47-others-under-alert-1/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=ncr-47-others-under-alert-1



DOH: No Deltacron variant detected here

By [Caecent No-ot Magsumbol](#)(The Freeman) - March 16, 2022 - 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — There is no Deltacron nor BA 2.2 strain of the Omicron sub-variant has been detected in the Philippines yet, said Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire.

Vergeire, however, tells everyone to remain vigilant and never be complacent to keep the country's low-risk classification in COVID-19.

“Walang dapat ipag-alala ang ating publiko dahil sa kasalukuyan wala pa rin pong tinatawag na Deltacron dito sa ating bansa,” said Vergeire.

She said it has not also been considered as a variant of concern at the moment, but a recombinant variant, according to the World Health Organization.

“Ang Deltracron ay nareport at na recognize din yan ng WHO, they call this a recombinant variant. Kumbaga itong Omicron and Delta ay nakita sa iisang sequencing run,” she said.

Health officials are still conducting a study to determine whether it cause more severity or more transmissibility.

Currently, there is not much difference in the said recombinant variant from that of Delta and Omicron itself.

“Base sa mga obserbasyon, wala silang nakikita na kaibahan nito sa ating mga variants na currently present like Delta and Omicron,” added Vergeire.

Vergeire said that what had been detected so far in the Philippines is the Omicron variant and its BA.1 and BA.2 sub-lineage.

“Sa ating bansa ang detected palang would be the Omicron variant nga at yung BA.1 and BA.2 na sub-lineage ng Omicron, itong tinatawag na Deltracron hindi pa natin nadidetect dito sa ating bansa,” Vergeire said.

So far there are only three countries that detected the so-called Deltracron strain. They are France, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

Dr. Anna Ong-Lim of the Department of Health (DOH) also said that experts from other countries are open to the idea that Deltacron is just a sequencing error.

“Might have been sequencing error coming from lab contamination...There are two sides of the story now being investigated...Worst case scenario, na bago talaga tong combination, ang binabantayan nating features tulad ng bawat variant of concern is its transmissibility, severity and impact in diagnostics na hindi naman natin nakikita sa ngayon kaya merong open to lab process issues, na merong error sa sequencing,” said Lim.

Lim, however, said they are still closely monitoring it to ensure it will not have a negative impact here.

Health authorities said that vaccination has kept most Filipinos safe from COVID-19. It has also helped bring down the number of cases.

In Cebu City, COVID-19 cases are now down to 141 active cases as of yesterday. The city's positivity rate also remains within the 5% WHO threshold at 3.68 with only 11 out of the 299 tested turning positive.

Active cases are from 46 barangays while 34 others no longer have reported transmissions.
— **FPL (FREEMAN)**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2022/03/16/2167662/doh-no-deltacron-variant-detected-here/amp/>

16 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS

ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ROnyFR98Rk>


#ManilaBayUpdate #DolomiteBeach #BattleForManilaBay


DATING DAGAT NA MAITIM, NGAYON KUMIKINANG SA LINAW!

2,752 views • Mar 15, 2022

 145

 DISLIKE

 SHARE

 CLIP

 SAVE

...



engr. berto

193K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#ManilaBayUpdate #DolomiteBeach

#BattleForManilaBay

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81kX7xsG5cE>

DOLOMITE BEACH UPDATE March 15, 2022

2,988 views • Streamed live 19 hours ago

186 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



engr. berto
193K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6jgc7z6Jvk>

#manilabay #duterte #dutertelegacy

MANILA BAY UPDATE MARCH 15, 2022

3,803 views • Mar 15, 2022



112



DISLIKE



SHARE



THANKS



CLIP



SAVE

...



BTV Pinas

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay

#duterte

#dutertelegacy

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6jgc7z6Jvk>

#manilabay #duterte #dutertelegacy

MANILA BAY UPDATE MARCH 15, 2022

3,803 views • Mar 15, 2022



112



DISLIKE



SHARE



THANKS



CLIP



SAVE



BTV Pinas

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay

#duterte

#dutertelegacy

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zk59vCJeLPI>

#rehabilitation #manilabay #philippines

Manila Bay Update: March 15, 2022

1,283 views • Mar 15, 2022

👍 53 🗑️ DISLIKE ➦ SHARE ✂️ CLIP ⋮ SAVE ...



PINOY BLOGGER PH
28.5K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#rehabilitation #manilabay #philippines

SHOW MORE