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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Boracay Workers Village Soon to Rise

Saturday, March 19, 2022 Journal Online



Members and agency representatives of the Technical Working Group for the Boracay Workers Village (BWV) with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs Atty. Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. (3rd from left) hold the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed during the [Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force Alternates' Meeting held in Boracay Island](#) on March 10, 2022 for the establishment of housing facilities for the workers of Boracay Island who will be affected by the ongoing rehabilitation. Under the MOU, the member-agencies agree to serve as the focal point of coordination and clearing house for the relocation and resettlement planning, and implementation of the BWV. In photo are (left to right): National Housing Authority Region 6 Manager Engr. Rizalino Cabahug, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Region 6 OIC Director Eva Maria Marfil, [DENR](#) Region 6 Executive Director Livino Duran, Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group General Manager Martin Jose Despi, and Aklan Provincial Administrator Atty. Selwyn Ibaretta.



Rescued young turtle undergoes rehab in Zambo City hatchery

By Teofilo Garcia, Jr. **March 19, 2022, 4:42 pm**



YOUNG TURTLE. Personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO)-Zamboanga City measure the size of a rescued Juvenile Hawksbill Turtle that was turned over to them Friday (March 18, 2022). The turtle was placed under the care of the Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology Hatchery and Wet Laboratory. *(Photo courtesy of Department of Environment and Natural Resources-9)*

ZAMBOANGA CITY – A rescued juvenile female Hawksbill turtle is undergoing rehabilitation at a hatchery in this city in preparation for release back to its natural habitat.

Rosevirico Tan, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) information officer, said Saturday the Hawksbill turtle was placed in the care of the Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology (ZSCMST) Hatchery and Wet Laboratory.

“The turtle is under observation. It will be released back to the sea upon certification from the hatchery veterinarian,” Tan said in an interview on Saturday.

Tan said the turtle was found by a nine-year old Nelson Azuelo at the coastline of Zone 11, Barangay Cawit, here.

The find was reported to Cawit Barangay Chairperson Serbellio Molina, who in turn handed over the juvenile female turtle to the Biodiversity Conservation Unit of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of this city.

Tan said the turtle is healthy but with scars on its left eye.

The Hawksbill turtle belongs to the marine turtle species found in the Philippines.

It is classified as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List with its population declining by 80 percent over the past 10 years.

Tan encouraged the public to immediately report any wildlife concerns to the DENR or CENRO field office for the proper handling, rescue, and retrieval operations.

He said they may call or send text messages to the DENR hotline at 0948-147-1250. **(PNA)**



Pamamahagi ng titulo ng lupa sa mga residente sa Navotas



March 19, 2022 @ 2:26 PM 17 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines- Nagpasalamat sina Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco at Congressman John Rey Tiangco sa mabilis na pagtugon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na pinangunahan ni Atty. Alvin Constantino, Division Chief sa pag-aayos at pamamahagi ng Titulo ng lupa sa mga residente ng North Bay Boulevard North, Navotas City. **Jojo Rabulan**





Government grants new permit for mining, 1st since 2012

[Catherine Talavera](#) - The Philippine Star March 20, 2022 | 12:00am



In a statement, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has granted MPSA 352-2022-VI to DMCI Holdings Inc. subsidiary Semirara Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) on March 10.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The government has granted the first mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA), nearly a year after President Duterte lifted the moratorium on new mineral deals.

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The MPSA is for SMPC's Hamalian Limestone Project covering the 3,807.0571-hectare contract area on Semirara Island in Caluya, Antique. It gives SMPC the exclusive right to immediately undertake mining operations within the contract for a period of 25 years, renewable for another term.

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However, the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of EO 130 were only issued in August through DENR-Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2021-25 issued by former Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

The IRR include the qualifications for applying for mineral agreements, the renegotiation of existing mining contracts and agreements and the rationalization of existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms particularly through reviews by the DENR and the Department of Finance on the impact of mining on the economy, community and environment.



MGB director Wilfredo Moncano earlier said the lifting of the ban on new mineral agreements was aimed at allowing the mining industry to boost its economic contribution and to spur the country's recovery from the pandemic.

Data from the MGB showed that the gross value added in mining contributions reached P120.4 billion in 2021, higher than the P102.3 billion the previous year.

Apart from the newly granted MPSA, the MGB said the country had a total of 306 MPSA which cover 557,493.3 hectares as of March 2.



NWRB, MULING TINYAK NA HINDI MAGKAKAROON NG KRISIS SA TUBIG ANG METRO MANILA

by **DWIZ 882** March 17, 2022



Muling tiniyak ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na hindi makararanas ng krisis o kakulangan sa suplay ng tubig ang kalakhang Maynila.

Sa pahayag ni NWRB Executive Director Dr. Sevilla David, Jr., walang inaasahang water interruption sa Metro Manila dahil hindi nagbago o nabawasan ang alokasyon ng tubig mula sa Angat Dam.

Bukod pa dito, nakatulong din aniya ang panaka-nakang pag-ulan nitong nakalipas na araw upang hindi mabawasan ang lebel ng tubig sa mga dam.

Ayon sa PAGASA Weather Bureau, kahapon, aabot sa 194.02 meters ang water level ng nasabing dam kaya malayo ito sa critical level na 160 meters.

Umaasa naman ang NWRB na masisimulan na ang pagsasagawa ng cloud seeding operations upang makatulong sa pagpapaangat ng lebel ng tubig ng mga dam sa bansa. —**sa panulat ni Angelica Doctolero**

Source: https://www.dwiz882am.com/index.php/nwrp-muling-tiniyak-na-hindi-magkakaroon-ng-krisis-sa-tubig-ang-metro-manila/?fbclid=IwAR3T0Z5q8xp79_ENuzPANqx07JyaTJaKiImEivQf2TOIGc1TUTrj-QSRc-Y



TINGNAN: 44 bagong pisang pawikan ang nailigtas ng mga miyembro ng Bantay Dagat sa dalampasigan ng Barangay Camanci Norte, Numancia, Aklan Biyernes.

Ayon sa Agriculture Numancia, unang nakita ng residente na si Dimple Ibabao at ng kaniyang ina ang dalawang baby pawikan na gumagapang mula sa dalampasigan papunta sa dagat.

Ani Ibabao, nakita nila na napapalibutan ng mga aso ang pugad ng pawikan kaya mabilis silang humingi ng tulong sa mga awtoridad. Pansamantalang inilagay sa conservation area ang mga pawikan at nakatakang pakawalan kapag lumakas na.

Samantala, sa Davao City, pinangalanan nang 'Espoir' ang Philippine eaglet na si 'Chick 29' matapos suportahan ng kompanyang Ceva Santé Animale ang pag-aalaga rito. (📷: Agriculture Numancia) | via Rolen Escaniel; Hernel Tocmo

BASA HIN ang mga kaugnay na ulat: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/patrol/tag/WILDLIFE>



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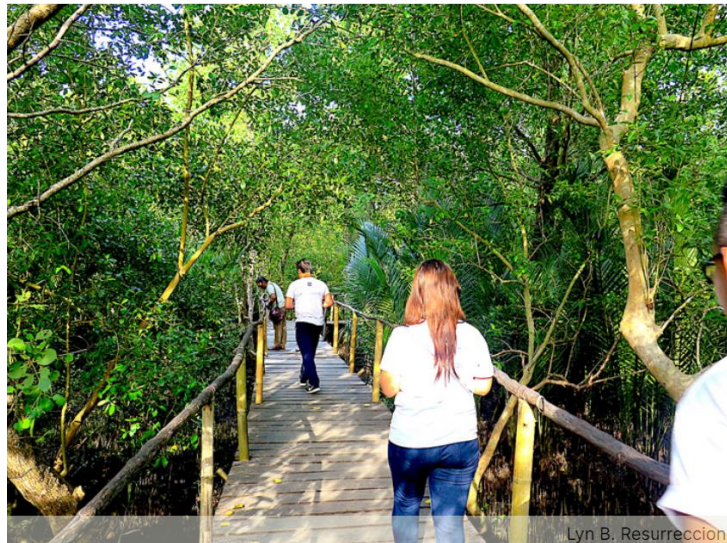
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UN meeting gears up to save biodiversity

BY LYN RESURRECCION AND ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARCH 20, 2022



Lyn B. Resurreccion

The Bakhawan Eco Park in New Buswang, Kalibo, Aklan, was established by the Kalibo Save the Mangrove Association Inc. The mangrove park, that was photographed in June 2017, was awarded the Best in People's Organization in Mangrove Coastal Rehabilitation and Best in Mangrove Forest Management for Eco-tourism by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

GENEVA—Nearly all the world's countries kicked off a UN-backed meeting this past week aimed at preventing the loss of biodiversity—seen as critical to avoiding the extinction of many vulnerable species, the emergence of pathogens like the coronavirus, and the damage to both lives and livelihoods of people around the world, Indigenous peoples in particular.

The two-week meeting of over 190 countries on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), that started on March 14, after a two-year delay due to the Covid-19 pandemic, will be the last gathering of its kind before a major conference in the coming months in Kunming, China, that will try to adopt an international agreement on protecting biodiversity, the Associated Press (AP) reported..



Lyn B. Resurreccion

Mangrove seedlings at the Bakhawan Eco Park in New Buswang, Kalibo, Aklan. Some seedlings were named after the Miss Earth 2008.

“We have this one goal, which is to bend the curve on biodiversity loss and really to build that shared future to live in harmony with nature in the long term,” CBD Executive Secretary Elizabeth Maruma Mrema told reporters.



Three meetings critical to developing an ambitious and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework to safeguard nature resumed in in-person sessions in Geneva, Switzerland, the Canada-based CBD said in a news release sent to the .

“The world is clearly eager for urgent action to protect nature,” Mrema said in the CBD news release. “And we have no time to spare. Together we must ultimately deliver a truly historic agreement that puts us firmly on the path to living in harmony with nature.”

Possible diplomatic fallout from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine lurked in the background—potentially denting any prospects of global unity on the issue.

Russian delegates who had planned to attend had their travel plans canceled amid the closure of much of Europe’s airspace to flights from Russia after the invasion, organizers said, expressing hopes that Russian diplomats based in Geneva would nevertheless participate.

An intergovernmental, science-based assessment of biodiversity worldwide three years ago cited a decline of nature at unprecedented rates and an acceleration of the extinction of species—with up to a million species facing possible disappearance in the coming decades.

The US-based Campaign For Nature says a major theme in Geneva will be a target to protect and conserve at least 30 percent of the world’s lands, inland waters and oceans to help stanch habitat loss, the “overexploitation” of nature by people and businesses, and the emergence of pathogens that thrive off upheaval in the environment.

Convention managers point to five drivers of biodiversity loss: Changes to the use of land and sea; unsustainable exploitation through activities like agriculture, and climate change; pollution; and the spread of invasive alien species into new habitats. Indirectly, it says, unsustainable production and consumption also play a role.

Originally scheduled for Geneva from January 12 to 28, the three meetings—of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 24), the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3) and the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (WG2020-3)—resumed at the Centre International de Conférences Genève, the CBD said.

SBSTTA-24 will advance discussions on a monitoring approach for the post-2020 framework. This includes marine and coastal biodiversity, biodiversity and agriculture and health, and invasive alien species.

Other issues include synthetic biology, living modified organisms risk assessment and management, and the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

SBI-3 will complete its work on key inputs to the post-2020 framework and lay a firm foundation for its adoption and implementation at the resumed Conference of Parties-15.

The agenda includes ensuring the framework mobilizes and scales-up finance for biodiversity, better aligned investments with the needs of nature and people and facilitates the disclosure of risks and impacts for nature.

Delegates will also advance work on the mechanisms to monitor, report and review implementation, and to build countries’ capacity to manage and conserve its biodiversity resources, benefit from ecosystem services, and achieve the framework’s targets.

Plans will also be advanced to enhance outreach and public awareness to support biodiversity action, and ensure the framework fully supports rights-based approach



and respect gender equality and equal access for women to leadership, participation and decision-making.

WG2020-3 discussions will center on agreeing on actions needed to reach the 2050 Vision of living in harmony with nature, defining how performance will be tracked and reported, and ultimately determining how success will be defined.

This includes addressing the five drivers of biodiversity loss—land sea use change, unsustainable exploitation, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species—and relevant indirect drivers such as unsustainable production and consumption.

The meeting is also expected to decide and announce the dates of the resumed UN Biodiversity Conference later this year in Kunming, China, at which the landmark blue print post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is due for adoption.

Mrema said one key issue in the conference will be efforts toward repurposing and redirecting harmful subsidies—to the tune of some \$500 billion per year currently—and how “these financial flows can move away from nature-negative to biodiversity-positive outcomes,” AP said.

A draft proposal for the framework to be adopted in China would aim to require that \$700 billion would be put into sustaining or improving biodiversity.

The issue of reducing pollution from plastics is also part of the draft, she said.

Image credits: [Lyn B. Resurreccion](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/03/20/filipinos-asean-residents-urge-leaders-to-solve-biodiversity-crisis/>



Filipinos, Asean residents urge leaders to solve biodiversity crisis

BYRIZAL RAOUL REYES MARCH 20, 2022



Many Filipinos, like their Indonesian and Malaysian counterparts, are urging their respective governments to champion the United Nation protection target as a solution to the world's biodiversity crisis.

In a three-day poll commissioned by Atri Advisory in February in biodiverse-rich countries of the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia showed an overpowering support for a global target to protect at least 30 percent of the planet's land and ocean by 2030, known as 30x30.

"Almost all respondents—96 percent in Malaysia, 98 percent in Indonesia and 95 percent in the Philippines—support the global goal, and 84 percent of Malaysians, 94 percent of Indonesians and 85 percent of Filipinos want their respective governments to also support the global target," the report said in a material sent to the BusinessMirror.

The survey was conducted by Vase.ai, a well-established polling company in the region.

The poll was the first-ever to measure public opinion in the three countries on the global 30x30 goal in the lead up to a major biodiversity summit later this year in Kunming, China.

Around 190 countries—including Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines—are expected to finalize and approve a global strategy, known as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), designed to stave off a biodiversity crisis that threatens up to 1-million species with extinction in the coming decades.

Negotiators from these countries are currently meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, to iron out the details of the GBF, which includes a target to protect 30x30 as one of its central elements.

The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC), an intergovernmental coalition of more than 80 countries co-chaired by Costa Rica, France and the US, is championing the 30x30 goal.

Cambodia is the first and currently only HAC member from the Asean region. Other Asian members include Japan, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan and the Maldives.

Overwhelming scientific evidence and economic data shows that conserving at least 30 percent of the planet's land and ocean is key to help address global biodiversity loss—in addition to storing carbon, preventing future pandemics, bolstering economic growth, increasing fisheries' production, and advancing Indigenous rights.



Southeast Asia comprises just 3 percent of Earth's land mass, but it contains almost 20 percent of the world's biodiversity.

The poll shows that people in the region fully appreciate the value of biodiversity to development, and appreciate the role it can play in preserving it.

The poll is a public mandate for the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to embrace the 30x30 global goal.

"The survey reflects the staggering support of citizens in the region for their governments to endorse the proposal to protect 30 percent of the planet by 2030 and to take urgent steps to halt biodiversity loss. To do otherwise is not an option," explained Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, chairman of Atri Advisory and Science Advisor to the Campaign for Nature.

"It is incumbent upon our political leaders and policy-makers to listen to the people and join the rest of the world in this crucial effort," Zakri, founding chairman of Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, said.

Dr. Tony La Vina, former undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Philippines, said: "Southeast Asia comprises just 3 percent of Earth's land mass, but it contains almost 20 percent of the world's biodiversity."

An Associate Director for Climate Policy and International Relations of Manila Observatory, La Viña added, "The poll shows that people in the region fully appreciate the value of this biodiversity to our own development and appreciate the role we can play in preserving it. This poll is a public mandate for the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to embrace the 30x30 global goal."

The HAC pointed out that the economic benefits of 30x30 are strong. The group said an independent study prepared by more than 100 economists and experts found that meeting the 30 percent target will generate financial and ecosystem services benefits at least five times the cost.

In an interview, 80 percent of Malaysian respondents, 92 percent of Indonesians and 95 percent of Filipinos said they were either extremely or very concerned about the biodiversity crisis.

On the awareness of global negotiations on the new set of rules on biodiversity goals and targets, scheduled for agreement in Kunming, 87 percent of Chinese respondents said they are updated, while 93 percent of Malaysians and 91 percent of Filipinos said they are well informed.

Yongyuth Yuthavong, senior advisor to the president of National Science and Technology Development Agency, former deputy prime minister of Thailand, and Global Steering Committee member of Campaign for Nature, said science has shown that there is lot to be done in protecting Planet Earth, and warned that time is running out.

Image credits: [Aanjin Akyurt, Atriadvisory.com](https://www.atriadvisory.com)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/03/20/filipinos-asean-residents-urge-leaders-to-solve-biodiversity-crisis/>



Passion fuels forest protection in Palawan

By: [Romar Miranda](#) - Correspondent / [@RVMirandaINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:00 AM March 20, 2022



GLOBAL ATTRACTION | The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP) is globally known for its limestone karst landscape, featuring St. Paul's Underground River Cave that stretches more than 24 kilometers. An 8.2-km underground river system winds through the cave before flowing into the West Philippine Sea. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PPSRNP PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT OFFICE)

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, Palawan, Philippines — Evangeline Cabon, a member of the indigenous peoples (IP) group Batak, is a woman on a mission.

Walking for more than four hours each day, amid heavy rain or scorching heat, is nothing to the 46-year-old community organizer if only to reach Sitio Kayasan in the village of Cabayugan, an ancestral domain within the 22,202-hectare protected area inside the [Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park](#) (PPSRNP) in Puerto Princesa, one of the few remaining green cities in the country.

Cabon is coordinator of the PPSRNP Protected Area Management Office (Pamo), which helps local communities through livelihood opportunities that are environment-friendly. She also oversees the practice of community-based sustainable tourism, providing guidance in organic farming and other income-generating projects.

“Without the park, we are nothing. The forest gives life; it provides us medicine and food. If the forest is destroyed, we will lose our source of livelihood,” she said.

The national park, a major tourist attraction in Palawan, was ordered closed starting March 2020 when the pandemic was declared and as the city's borders were shut to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The shutdown meant no income for the park as well as for communities that depended on tourism activities.

As a result, about 81 percent of the 5,714 residents within the park experienced an unprecedented financial difficulty, which a Pamo study in 2021 considered as an immediate threat as people might resort to illegal activities so they could provide for their families.



“Taraw ng Lumalayag” (Karst of the Voyager), tucked within the 22,202-hectare protected area (PA) and part of the Cabayugan ancestral domain, is considered as a sacred cave that housed the first Tagbanua settlers, Bayi Sinada and Apu Magsinambi. (Photo courtesy of GEOGGREY KLeoffrey Delahaye)

More than titles

It came as no surprise when park officials uncovered an alarming number of illegally cut trees during its post-Typhoon Odette (international name: Rai) inventory — another disaster that devastated the tourism-dependent communities in December 2021.

“This is very alarming. If we were able to confiscate 40 chainsaw units operating in Cabayugan alone, a protected area, how much more in other villages? The entire forest in Puerto Princesa will be gone,” said park superintendent Elizabeth Maclang.

The PPSRNP, listed as a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1999, and voted as one of the New7Wonders of Nature in 2012, covers three ancestral domains in the villages of Cabayugan, Tagabinet and Marufinas. These areas are home to 90 percent of the Batak, Tagbanua and Palaw’an communities, the three remaining ethnic groups in Puerto Princesa City.

The park is also a proclaimed geological monument, a key biodiversity area, and important bird area, and a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, with more than 800 plant species and 165 species of birds, some of which are endangered, rare or endemic.

But for Cabon, a handicraft weaver before she became a community organizer in 2016, the PPSRNP is much more than the precious titles it holds as it represents the culture of its people and serves as a lifeline of a thriving community.



ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME | The management of the PPSRNP has reminded communities in Puerto Princesa City about protecting local forests after illegally cut trees are discovered during its post-Typhoon “Odette” (Rai) inventory last February. —PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH MACLANG/PPSRNP



The primary sources of income for IP communities in the park are farming, fishing, forestry, and tourism-related income generating activities.

For centuries, the park has been providing for its people from the abundance of its forest.
'Debt of gratitude'

One popular source of revenue for the IPs is by going up to the mountain for several days to gather almaciga resin, or "bagtik,"—an ingredient in varnish and paint—and selling it outside the village. A sack of almaciga is sold for about P2,000, which is enough to sustain a family for a week.

Owing "debt of gratitude" to the forest, the IP elders called for suspension of resin extraction last year due to overextraction and depletion of supply.

More than 1,138 sacks of almaciga resin had not been released to the market because the IPs collected these without renewing their permits and gathering beyond their quota, based on a survey conducted by PPSRNP officials since April 2021.

The park management team also found almaciga trees in bad shape, having been carved too many times in order to extract resin.

Speaking for the elders, Vilma Aguilar, the city's IP mandatory representative, said that as part of the IPs' commitment to protect the natural biodiversity of the area, gatherers were allowed to collect only five sacks of resin every season.



ORGANIZER | Evangeline Cabon, 46, a Batak, is a former handicraft maker who has turned to community organizing to assist villagers in Puerto Princesa's protected area in livelihood projects. (ROMAR MIRANDA)

Aguilar said the elders warned that if the harvesting of resin would continue unhampered, it would spell the end of their livelihood.

"We have to remember that we created these policies. We [made a promise] so we also have to make sure we follow [these], because this is not just for us but also for the future generations. We do not have luxuries, like expensive jewelry or makeup, we only need the essentials. We should only get what we need," Aguilar said.

Other IP families gather rattan and honey from the forests. Village women also produce woven items, flower pots, beaded necklaces, other trinkets and some indigenous household items like baskets.

"If there are no customers, we have no income. Now, at least we get training and education on how to sustainably support our needs while also taking care of nature," Cabon said.

Javier Ello, 55, a Tagbanua farmer who has been working as a park ranger for six years, considers his task as "critical" as members of his group are considered the first responders to illegal activities.



The park, for decades, has been hounded with illegal activities such as “kaingin” (slash-and-burn farming), poaching, logging, land clearing and development, and small-scale quarrying. Within its bounds, 3,901 ha of the protected area was declared as a World Heritage Zone and 704 ha as a no-fishing zone. Human activities are prohibited in these zones to protect and preserve the key biodiversity area.

“Our job is [replete with danger]. We are the first in line [in stopping] illegal human activities,” Ello said.

Hope for sustainability

For park superintendent Maclang, who has been serving as PPSRNP’s chief program director for over nine years, the task of protecting Puerto Princesa’s environmental treasure goes beyond their 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. work shift.

“Our environmental advocacy journey is fueled by passion. It’s not just an office work that ends after an eight-hour shift. After solving one problem, another one [crops] up and these cannot be simply addressed by your desire to [receive your] salary. It is commitment,” Maclang said. But the IP communities and park administrators have found partners to sustain efforts in protecting the PPSRNP.

Since 2014, PPSRNP Pamo and Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI) have partnered in promoting backyard gardening among the communities to ensure local food security. The initiative has transformed into an alternative livelihood to this backyard gardeners as their produce are now being bought by PSFI through their “Ani para sa Bayani” program.

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Environmentalism after Ukraine

By: [Giulio Boccaletti](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:05 AM March 20, 2022

London—Russia’s war in Ukraine is tragic, infuriating, and unspeakably sad. It is also an unexpected turning point for environmentalism. Until a few days ago, climate change topped the global agenda, with science-based targets pointing the way to a cleaner, more sustainable future. But now, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s reckless decision to invade a sovereign country and threaten nuclear war has revealed weaknesses in the architecture of international rules and multilateral governance. It is hard to believe that global environmental efforts have any chance of succeeding within such a fragile system.

Strikingly, this realization has not yet dawned on those engaged in environmental work. A week into the war, the United Nations hailed a major agreement on single-use plastics as a “triumph” for planet Earth. But such agreements depend on the mutual recognition of sovereign nation-states—precisely the principle that Putin has called into question.

The war also imperils efforts to transform the energy system through global cooperation. Sharp increases in oil and gas prices are testing the goodwill of governments and companies. Many OPEC suppliers are seeking to profit from the situation rather than helping to mitigate the shock. Yes, high oil and gas prices and the clear security risk implied by dependence on petrostates like Russia may well accelerate the shift away from fossil fuels. But the economic turmoil on the horizon will discourage investment, and green energy may find itself competing against the military-industrial complex for public finance.

These developments pose a significant challenge for contemporary environmentalism, a still-young intellectual framework that has seldom had to deal with geopolitical issues. With roots in the pacifist, anti-capitalist movements of the 1960s, the movement became institutionalized at the 1992 UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were established. In addition to serving as the backbone of the environmental movement for three decades, these agreements long stood as a monument to the post-Soviet world order.

Comforted by the notion that all countries could agree, in principle, to be held accountable to environmental objectives, activists and environmental institutions focused their efforts on private and public actors’ predatory and illegal behavior. Taking the rules-based system for granted, they relied on science-based targets to produce global roadmaps to desired outcomes. For a while, this politically neutral approach allowed everyone to avoid the question of whether outcomes delivered by authoritarian states are acceptable. But those days are over: environmental goals can no longer be considered separately from the sources of power that define state authority.

Consider the issue of biodiversity protection. Most environmental organizations have mobilized behind a “30×30” target—protecting 30 percent of land and ocean areas by 2030. But protecting nature requires more than advocacy. It ultimately depends on the regulatory power of the state, which exercises sovereignty over territory, using force if necessary. Indeed, the Latin origin of “territory” is not the noun terra, “land,” but the verb terrere, “to terrorize.” Until recently, this distinction would have seemed pedantic. Not anymore. Conservation depends on state power, so it matters very much which state we are talking about.

The problem is hardly limited to Putin’s delusions of empire. When Chinese President Xi Jinping, on his first visit to Davos in 2017, portrayed his government as a global environmental



steward, he was met with applause. China's "ecological civilization" was hailed as an example of global environmentalist leadership, rather than as an application of ecological Marxism, a project that is indifferent to individuals' civil and political rights. But now, we should recognize the danger of elevating despots to the status of environmental heroes. Without the rule of law and the protection of human dignity, environmental commitments may not be worth the paper they are printed on.

Traditional Western environmentalism grew up protesting an order that it now must defend. The question is whether it is prepared, or even equipped, for the task. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz apparently saw no need to consult his Green Party coalition partners before he greenlit sending weapons to Ukraine and vastly increasing Germany's military spending—two paradigm-shifting policy changes.

Moreover, as governments around the world sanction Russian oligarchs who owe their fortunes to Putin, we should not forget that many environmental initiatives have also benefited from wealth created under authoritarian regimes. Prince William's "Earthshot Prize," for example, has received grants from Emirati corporate giants and Chinese tycoons.

Modern environmentalism may now need to re-examine its methods. With the war in Eastern Europe dragging on, it is already clear that the movement can no longer afford to ignore the nature of political power. The defense of self-determination and political agency now must become a fundamental principle of environmental action. Project Syndicate———Giulio Boccaletti, an honorary research associate at the University of Oxford's Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, is a former chief strategy officer of The Nature Conservancy and the author of "Water: A Biography" (Pantheon, 2021).



Bike to basics in the fight against climate change

Published March 19, 2022, 12:05 AM
by [Manila Bulletin](#)



There are situations in life when the most complicated matter can be addressed with the simplest of solutions. This is, perhaps, the same mindset when it comes to addressing the dire effects of climate change — find a simple solution first, which could easily be followed by everyone and implemented without risks.

What's a simple and basic solution to combat climate change? Bicycles. Yes, a bicycle is now a "tool to protect the environment," with a United Nations (UN) resolution backing it up. Early this week, the 193-member UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution proposed by Turkmenistan, which calls on member states to "integrate the bicycle into public transportation, in urban and rural settings."

Even at the start of the pandemic, the UN has called on nations to look into bicycles as "driver of post-Covid-19 green recovery." In a statement, the UN said, "During the lockdown, city dwellers enjoyed clear blue skies thanks to cleaner air and began to hear birds sing as noise decreased. Pollution levels in Barcelona dropped by an estimated 62 percent, and similar situations have been observed in other big European cities such as Milan, London, and Paris. Public transport usage has fallen significantly as an increasing number of people choose to walk or ride bicycles to avoid crowded mass transits and follow health authorities' advice for physical distancing. To respond to these trends, Milan, Geneva, Brussels, and London have decided to invest in flexible bike lanes."

This is also the same circumstance in our country as major cities in the National Capital Region and the provinces have started to look into bike lanes not only as a path for bikers going to work but also as an alternative from the usual gas-guzzling vehicles (which now becomes more impractical to use with the exorbitant gas prices). In fact, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) inaugurated last July 2021 the Metro Manila Bike Lane Network, the country's longest lane of its kind to date.



The 313-kilometer bike lane network traverses through 12 cities in NCR, including Quezon City, Manila, San Juan, Pasay, Pasig, etc. The lanes measure between 1.5 to three meters in width depending on the road's configuration. This project was dubbed a "game-changer" at that time, with the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) highlighting that the bike lane will "change everything, even the mindset of commuters" who will now notice that it would be more practical—healthier even—to take the bike to and from work because there is already a safe space for them on the road.

With this news comes critics who say that the UN bicycle resolution may belittle the tremendous efforts done by organizations and individuals to save the environment from further degradation. But this is not a time for disagreements as the fight for climate needs all hands on deck. Every little effort to address climate concerns at this moment of volatility in the world's affairs is welcome. And having all UN member states agree on something for the planet's sake is already a victory in itself.

The UN resolution concluded that the promotion of bike-riding will help "achieve sustainable development, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions." May these goals be achieved in our country at the soonest time, and may all of us find our healthy path — biking our way to our body's fitness and to the planet's wellness.



How we can still stop global warming

[Paco A. Pangalangan](#) - Philstar.com March 19, 2022 | 2:02pm



File photo of crops in dry land.
The STAR/Boy Santos, File photo

As sea levels continue to rise, temperature shifts and extreme weather becomes more frequent, almost half of the world's population is now highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, according to a report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The IPCC's 3,600-page report, which was released just a few weeks ago, presents a detailed assessment of the dangers of climate change. Written by 270 researchers from 67 countries—including three from the Philippines—it reviews our vulnerabilities and the capacities to adapt while also highlighting that we are approaching the limits of nature's and humanity's ability to adapt.

The report points out that climate change is affecting nature, people's lives and infrastructure everywhere, hindering basic human needs from being met and threatening sustainable development.

Increasing heat and extreme weather are changing the distribution of plants and animals across the globe, ultimately affecting food webs. This, in turn, reduces the ability of nature to provide the essential services that we depend on to survive – such as coastal protection, food supply, or climate regulation via carbon uptake and storage.

Changes in temperature, rainfall, and extreme weather have also increased the frequency and spread of diseases in wildlife, agriculture, and people. It has also led to more frequent drought, negatively affecting agriculture and energy production.

In cities, people face higher risks of heat stress, reduced air quality, lack of water, and food shortages caused by climate change on supply chains, transport networks, and other critical infrastructure.

Worse, the negative impacts of climate change are expected to intensify as the globe warms.

During COP26, the international community committed to reach a global net-zero emissions target by 2050 and keep the 1.5° global warming target within reach. However, some estimates suggest that the world might still be on track for 2.4° warming even if commitments are delivered.

While predictions are dire, the IPCC's report still offers a glimmer of hope.

During the launch of the report, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, "Investments in adaptation work. Adaptation saves lives. As climate impacts worsen – and they will – scaling up investments will be essential for survival. Adaptation and mitigation must be pursued with equal force and urgency."



There are many effective ways that society can mitigate and adapt to climate change in the near term.

For instance, insights from their forthcoming policy paper presented by Prof. Toby Monsod during a recent Stratbase ADRi event highlighted an adaptation path for countries like the Philippines.

According to the study co-authored by Monsod, “vulnerable countries with relatively small carbon footprints per capita like the Philippines are likely to do more for global efforts to reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impacts if they build robust community ownership for climate action and leverage opportunities based on their own comparative advantages.” The study went on to highlight the Philippines’ biodiversity of its marine and coastal resources as one of its comparative advantages.

Indeed, according to Hans-Otto Pörtner, co-chair of the IPCC working group II, restoring degraded ecosystems is one way we can adapt to climate change. By effectively and equitably conserving 30 to 50 percent of Earth’s land, freshwater, and ocean habitats, “society can benefit from nature’s capacity to absorb and store carbon, and we can accelerate progress towards sustainable development,” he said.

In addition, to adjust our behavior, adaptation can also mean changing our infrastructure to deal with the changing climate. For instance, in densely populated cities, we can utilize green architecture or plant trees for people and wildlife.

To help prepare communities for extreme weather, we also need essential utilities, such as power, telecommunications, and water lines, to be resilient against extreme weather. We could take a lesson from Odette and avoid toppled over utility polls by investing in underground electricity lines. This would ensure that power could be restored to other critical utilities like water and communications needed for disaster response and coordination.

Cities, especially, must also take full advantage of digital tools that help with climate adaptation. There is a ton of insight and data available out there that local government units can harness to make decisions on building up urban resilience and climate adaptation. For instance, taking advantage of technology, like the Liveable Cities Lab’s big data dashboard, also provides LGUs with the data and the means to more responsively engage can effectively engage stakeholders.

These examples of effective adapting to climate change hint that there is still a glimmer of hope that we still limit the severity of its impact. However, the IPCC report clarifies that the effectiveness of available adaptation options decreases with every increment of warming.

This means that minor, reactive, or incremental changes won’t cut it. Instead, urgent, more ambitious, and accelerated action is needed, and in parallel with rapid and deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

Reshaping society’s behavior is much easier said than done. But what this IPCC report has done is made abundantly clear that climate change is happening faster than expected, but that there are things we can do to stop it. The trouble is that we think we have time, but we don’t.

Paco A. Pangalangan is the executive director of think tank Stratbase ADR Institute.

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DENR, MWSI to cut pollution in Paranaque estero

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is bent on reducing pollution in Paranaque City's Estero de Tripa de Gallina with the renewed commitment from water concessionaire Maynilad Water Service Inc. (MWSI).

According to Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna, efforts in the clean-up mission have been boosted as he expressed gratitude to the MWSI and the city government upon learning of their heightened coordination through its environmental office which has jurisdiction over the cities of Paranaque, Las Pinas and Taguig along with the municipality of Pateros.

With these undertakings, the DENR chief also enjoined the public to practice the principles of ecological solid waste management, and report establishments illegally dumping their waste, whether solid or liquid, in waterways.

Communities are also encouraged to keep waterways in their areas clean, since waterways filled with waste often hamper the flow of water, especially during the rainy season, causing floods.

The DENR said these are also possible breeding grounds for pests such as rats and mosquitoes that could be carriers or spreaders of disease.

A portion of the Estero de Tripa de Gallina runs the adjacent city of Pasay, which falls under the jurisdiction of the MEO-West.

At present, estero rangers hired by the MEOs South and West conduct cleanups to help rid the waterway of garbage.

According to DENR Assistant Secretary Gilbert Gonzales, personnel from the MEO-South, the MWSI, and the Paranaque City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) have searched for areas along the Estero de Tripa de Gallina where wastewater from the sewer or drainage systems could be intercepted and treated before flowing into the Paranaque River, a major river system that drains into Manila Bay.

Joel dela Torre



MAYNILAD FACILITATES CONSTRUCTION OF 3RD WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN MUNTINLUPA. West Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) is facilitating the construction of its third treatment plant in Muntinlupa that will tap Laguna Lake as raw water source. Targeted for completion in 2023, the P10-billion Poblacion Water Treatment Plant will produce 150 million liters per day (MLD) of potable water, which is enough to serve around one million customers in the south. This facility is being constructed to increase available supply for distribution, given the higher demand for water because of a growing population and developing economy. Maynilad currently serves some 9.9 million customers and operates four water treatment plants—two at La Mesa Compound in Quezon City that gets raw water from Angat Dam, and two at Bgy. Putatan in Muntinlupa that gets raw water from Laguna Lake.



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DENR recommends global treaty on plastic waste problem

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has urged delegates of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) to enact a resolution on a legally-binding global agreement to address plastic pollution.

Albert Magalang, DENR's Climate Change Service chief of Climate Change Information and Technical Support Division, said that the legally-binding agreement on plastic pollution aims to reduce its discharge into the environment by covering all stages of its life cycle and by adopting a circular economy approach related to its design, production, use, and disposal.

Magalang, who led the Philippine delegation in the negotiations on the plastic treaty at the UNEA 5.2, however, stressed that the "global agreement should consider national capabilities and circumstances."

The agreement would also tackle plastic pollution from preventive measures in the upstream part of the

lifecycle, to the downstream addressing waste management to prevent plastic pollution in the marine and other environments.

Magalang added that the new resolution would also support the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people.

Hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEA is the global authority for the environment with programs focusing on climate, nature, pollution, and sustainable development.

In addition to UNEA 5.2, UNEP is also celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, which is considered a historic milestone for the global environmental community.

In celebration of the anniversary of UNEP, DENR acting Secretary Jim O. Sampauna stressed the importance of immediacy in promulgating policies and forging agreements for the environment.



Gov't grants new permit for mining, 1st since 2012

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The government has granted the first mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA), nearly a year after President Duterte lifted the moratorium on new mineral deals.

In a statement, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has granted MPSA 352-2022-VI to DMCI Holdings Inc. subsidiary Semirara Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) on March 10.

The MPSA is for SMPC's Hamalian Limestone Project covering the 3,807.0571-hectare contract area on Semirara Island in Caluya, Antique. It gives SMPC the exclusive right to immediately undertake mining operations within the contract

for a period of 25 years, renewable for another term.

In April last year, Duterte signed Executive Order (EO) 130, amending Sec. 4 of EO 79 issued in 2012 under the Aquino administration, which prohibits the grant of mineral agreements until a new legislation rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms shall have taken effect.

The EO allows the government to enter into new mineral agreements, subject to compliance with the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

However, the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of EO 130 were only issued in August through DENR-Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2021-25 issued by former Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

The IRR include the qualifications for apply-

ing for mineral agreements, the renegotiation of existing mining contracts and agreements and the rationalization of existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms particularly through reviews by the DENR and the Department of Finance on the impact of mining on the economy, community and environment.

MGB director Wilfredo Moncano earlier said the lifting of the ban on new mineral agreements was aimed at allowing the mining industry to boost its economic contribution and to spur the country's recovery from the pandemic.

Data from the MGB showed that the gross value added in mining contributions reached P120.4 billion in 2021, higher than the P102.3 billion the previous year.

Apart from the newly granted MPSA, the MGB said the country had a total of 306 MPSA which cover 557,493.3 hectares as of March 2.



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Chamber of Mines accredits 13 new external verifiers

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines has named 13 newly accredited verification service providers (VSPs) who will critically review the performance ratings of its members following the measurement tools prescribed by the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) program.

In a statement, COMP chairman Michael Toledo said the VSPs are experienced independent experts in social, environmental, as well as mining and other related sciences who will vigorously apply the TSM protocols.

He said they were all vetted and approved by the multi-sector TSM Community of Interest Advisory Panel.

"Where required, the VSPs can change companies' self-assessed ratings to ensure they accurately reflect the mining operations' management practices and performance," Toledo said.

TSM is a set of indicators to drive the performance of operating mines and ensure that key mining risks are managed responsibly, and best practices are used at members' facilities. The program was established by the Mining Association of Canada (MAC) in 2004. Its self-assessment system is rapidly evolving into the global standard for best practices in sustainable mining.

COMP adopted the program in 2017 and has since made compliance with TSM mandatory to all its members.

"Enhancing the environment, social, and governance performance of our member companies beyond the word of the law is our ultimate goal with TSM," Toledo said.

"Our VSPs will be one of the pillars who will help us achieve that. They will perform an indispensable role in helping our members adhere to TSM's Guiding Principles, hinged on accountability, transparency, and credibility," he said.

Among the newly accredited VSPs, who were trained by MAC with the support of the Canadian Embassy in the Philippines, are Joey Nelson Ayson, president of the Philippine Mining & Exploration Association and the UP Geological Society; Joselito Bacani, former president of Intex

Turn to B4



Republic of the Philippines
SAN JOSE CITY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Maharlika Highway, San Jose City 3121
(SAJELCO)
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC)

INVITATION TO BID

- The San Jose City Electric Cooperative (SAJELCO), through Bids and Awards Committee, hereby invites all interested accredited providers to bid for the supply, installation, testing and commissioning of an aerial platform for Isuzu NMR85.
- Approved budget for the contract is Three Million Seven Hundred Thousand Pesos (P3,700,000.00). Quoted price must be inclusive of VAT. Source of fund for the said contract shall come from SAJELCO's General Fund.
- Significant dates to remember for the prospective bidders are:

PARTICULARS	DATE AND TIME	VENUE
Submission of Eligibility Requirements & Purchase of Bidding Documents	March 21 - 25, 2022 (8:00 am to 5:00 pm)	BAC Secretariat, SAJELCO Office Maharlika Highway, Brgy. Abar 1 st San Jose City, Nueva Ecija
Pre - Bid Conference	March 28, 2022, 2:00pm	SAJELCO Training Center
Formal Opening of Bids	April 11, 2022, 2:00pm	SAJELCO Training Center

- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be secured by the eligible bidders from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00. Note that only those eligible bidders who are able to purchase the Bidding Documents are allowed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference.
- All bids must be submitted on or before 2:00pm of April 11, 2022. Bids submitted after the deadline shall be marked only for the purposes of recording the time of submission to the BAC Secretariat but shall not be accepted, thus, they shall be returned to the bidder unopened and intact. Bids shall be opened in the presence of the Bidders or authorized representative who choose to attend. Proposals shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond enclosed to an envelope equivalent to Five Percent (5%) of the total bid amount in the form of cash or manager's check.

- For further inquiries, please contact:

ENGR. FEDERICO G. JULIAN
BAC Chairman, SAJELCO
SAJELCO Office
Maharlika Highway, Brgy. Bar 1st, San Jose City, Nueva Ecija 3121
Tel no. (044) 940 - 5818 local 108 / (044) 463 - 1270

- SAJELCO hereby reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and all bids, declare a failure of bidding and not award the contract, to waive any defects therein, and accepts the bid that is most advantageous to the Cooperative.

Certified by:

(SIGNED)
ENGR. FEDERICO G. JULIAN
BAC Chairman

Approved by:

(SIGNED)
ENGR. CESAR B. UBUNGIN
General Manager



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Resources Phils., Inc. and a former member of the independent audit team that investigated the Rapurapu mines spill incident; and Michael Cabalda, a former social development consultant of Holcim Phils., Inc. and a former division chief of the Mining Environment and Safety Division of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

Other accredited VSPs include Jose Dagala, who has held responsible positions in various large-scale metallic mining projects as an expert in the areas of indigenous peoples relations, corporate social responsibility, community organizing, and community development; Roland de Jesus, immediate past assistant director and 12-year regional director of the MGB, and a recipient of

the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) EAGLE Award; Maria Karla Espinosa, a lawyer and former national coordinator and now consultant of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; Katrina Francisco, senior director for Climate Change and Sustainability Services of the SGV and an accredited Corporate Governance facilitator of the Securities and Exchange Commission; Karen Jago-on, a professor at the University of the Philippines School of Urban and Regional Planning and member of a Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) fact-finding team that reviewed the operations of existing mining operations following the closure and suspension orders issued by former Environment Secretary Gina Lopez.

Rounding up the list are Corinthia Naz, who also participated in

the MICC fact-finding review and a former consultant of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization as well as a review panelist of the United Nations Environment Programme; Constancio Paye, Jr., a retired 26-year regional director of the MGB and also a DENR EAGLE awardee; Fernando Sajona, an MICC fact-finding review team leader, he completed 23 years of government service, mainly in the MGB, and consulted for various structural and engineering geology projects; Ramon Santos, a mining engineer and geologist with 40 years of work experience in the mining industry; and, Benjamin Villacorte, a partner with SGV's Assurance Practice, among them in Climate Change and Sustainability Services where he assists clients in understanding and identifying key sustainability issues.



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EDITORIAL



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GLOBAL ATTRACTION The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP) is globally known for its limestone karst landscape, featuring St. Paul's Underground River Cave that stretches more than 24 kilometers. An 8.2-km underground river system winds through the cave before flowing into the West Philippine Sea. —PHOTO COURTESY OF PPSRNP PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT OFFICE

By Romar Miranda
@RVMirandaINQ

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Evangeline Cabon, a member of the indigenous peoples (IP) group Batak, is a woman on a mission.

Walking for more than four hours each day, amid heavy rain or scorching heat, is nothing to the 46-year-old community organizer if only to reach Sitio Kayasan in the village of Cabayugan, an ancestral domain within the 22,202-hectare protected area inside the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP) in Puerto Princesa, one of the few remaining green cities in the country.

Cabon is coordinator of the PPSRNP Protected Area Management Office (Pamo), which helps local communities through livelihood opportunities that are environment-friendly. She also oversees the practice of community-based sustainable tourism, providing guidance in organic farming and other income-generating projects.

"Without the park, we are nothing. The forest gives life; it provides us medicine and food. If the forest is destroyed, we will lose our source of livelihood," she said.

The national park, a major tourist attraction in Palawan, was ordered closed starting March 2020 when the pandemic was declared and as the city's borders were shut to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The shutdown meant no income for the park as well as for communities that depended on tourism activities.

As a result, about 81 percent of the 5,714 residents within the park experienced an unprecedented financial difficulty, which a Pamo study in 2021 considered as an immediate threat as people might resort to illegal activities so they could provide for their families.

More than titles

It came as no surprise when park officials uncovered an alarming number of illegally cut trees during its post-Typhoon "Odette" (international name: Rai) inventory—another disaster that devastated the tourism-dependent communities in December 2021.

"This is very alarming. If we were able to confiscate 40 chainsaw units operating in Cabayugan alone, a protected area, how much more in other villages? The entire forest in Puerto Princesa will be gone," said park superintendent Elizabeth Maclang.

The PPSRNP, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999, and voted as one of the New7Wonders of Nature in 2012, cov-

Passion fuels forest protection in Palawan



TAGBANUA SETTLEMENT "Taraw ng Lumalayag" (Karst of the Voyager), tucked within the 22,202-hectare protected area and part of Cabayugan ancestral domain, is considered a sacred cave that housed the first Tagbanua settlers, Bayi Sinada and Apu Magsinambi. —PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOFFREY DELAUNA

Without the park, we are nothing. The forest gives life; it provides us medicine and food. If the forest is destroyed, we will lose our source of livelihood

Evangeline Cabon
PPSRNP Protected Area
Management Office Coordinator

ers three ancestral domains in the villages of Cabayugan, Tagabinet and Marufinas. These areas are home to 90 percent of the Batak, Tagbanua and Palawan communities, the three remaining ethnic groups in Puerto Princesa City.

The park is also a proclaimed geological monument, a key biodiversity area, and important bird area, and a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, with more than 800 plant species and 165 species of birds, some of which are endangered, rare or endemic.

But for Cabon, a handicraft weaver before she became a community organizer in 2016, the PPSRNP is much more than the precious titles it holds as it represents the culture of its people and serves as a lifeline of a thriving community.

The primary sources of income for IP communities in the park are farming, fishing, forestry and tourism-related income-generating activities.



ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME The management of the PPSRNP has reminded communities in Puerto Princesa City about protecting local forests after illegally cut trees are discovered during its post-Typhoon "Odette" (Rai) inventory last February. —PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH MACLANG/PPSRNP



ORGANIZER Evangeline Cabon, 46, a Batak, is a former handicraft maker who has turned to community organizing to assist villagers in Puerto Princesa's protected area in livelihood projects. —ROMAR MIRANDA

For centuries, the park has been providing for its people from the abundance of its forest.

'Debt of gratitude'

One popular source of revenue for the IPs is by going up to the mountain for several days to gather almaciga resin, or "bagtik,"—an ingredient in varnish and paint—and selling it outside the village. A sack of almaciga is sold for about P2,000, which is enough to sustain a family for a week.

Owing "debt of gratitude" to

carved too many times in order to extract resin.

Speaking for the elders, Vilma Aguilar, the city's IP mandatory representative, said that as part of the IPs' commitment to protect the natural biodiversity of the area, gatherers were allowed to collect only five sacks of resin every season.

Aguilar said the elders warned that if the harvesting of resin would continue unhampered, it would spell the end of their livelihood.

"We have to remember that we created these policies. We [made a promise] so we also have to make sure we follow [these], because this is not just for us but also for the future generations. We do not have luxuries, like expensive jewelry or makeup, we only need the essentials. We should only get what we need," Aguilar said.

Other IP families gather rattan and honey from the forests. Village women also produce woven items, flower pots, beaded necklaces, other trinkets and some indigenous household items like baskets.

"If there are no customers, we have no income. Now, at least we get training and education on how to sustainably support our needs while also taking care of nature," Cabon said.

Javier Ello, 55, a Tagbanua farmer who has been working as a park ranger for six years, considers his task as "critical" as members of his group are considered the first responders to illegal activities.

The park, for decades, has been hounded with illegal activities such as "kaingin" (slash-and-burn farming), poaching, logging, land clearing and development, and small-scale quarrying.

Within its bounds, 3,901 ha of the protected area was declared as a World Heritage Zone and

704 ha as a no-fishing zone. Human activities are prohibited in these zones to protect and preserve the key biodiversity area.

"Our job is [replete with danger]. We are the first in line [in stopping] illegal human activities," Ello said.

Hope for sustainability

For park superintendent Maclang, who has been serving as PPSRNP's chief program director for over nine years, the task of protecting Puerto Princesa's environmental treasure goes beyond their 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. work shift.

"Our environmental advocacy journey is fueled by passion. It's not just an office work that ends after an eight-hour shift. After solving one problem, another one [crops] up and these cannot be simply addressed by your desire to [receive your] salary. It is commitment," Maclang said.

But the IP communities and park administrators have found partners to sustain efforts in protecting the PPSRNP.

Since 2014, PPSRNP Pamo and Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI) have partnered in promoting backyard gardening among the communities to ensure local food security. The initiative has transformed into an alternative livelihood to this backyard gardeners as their produce are now being bought by PSFI through their "Ani para sa Bayani" program.

While most community members rely on their backyard gardens to survive, the park's own Agro-Forestry Nursery has given away vegetables for household consumption and to sustain food production.

Yamang Bukid Farm, a private organization that helps farmers in Palawan, has also donated seedlings for the community-based sustainable tourism sites in the protected area.

"Other than skills and passion, you need to have courage even though you're facing death threats. There were many illegal activities that we had to discontinue. Slowly, we gained the trust of locals [and this] eventually helped us," Maclang said.

In years to come, Maclang and the 117 park employees are hoping that local families will have sustainable means of livelihood so they can preserve the local environment.

"We hope to see a future where there is no more poaching... We want at least 90 percent of locals to have a sense of ownership in the community—[a situation where] we develop and protect our natural resources while still [earning]." Maclang said. ■

This story is produced with support from Internews' Earth Journalism Network.



UN meeting gears up to save biodiversity

GENEVA—Nearly all the world's countries kicked off a UN-backed meeting this past week aimed at preventing the loss of biodiversity—seen as critical to avoiding the extinction of many vulnerable species, the emergence of pathogens like the coronavirus, and the damage to both lives and livelihoods of people around the world, Indigenous peoples in particular.

The two-week meeting of over 190 countries on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), that started on March 14, after a two-year delay due to the Covid-19 pandemic, will be the last gathering of its kind before a major conference in the coming months in Kunming, China, that will try to adopt an international agreement on protecting biodiversity, the Associated Press (AP) reported.

"We have this one goal, which is to bend the curve on biodiversity loss and really to build that shared future to live in harmony with nature in the long term," CBD Executive Secretary Elizabeth Maruma Mrema told reporters.

Three meetings critical to developing an ambitious and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework to safeguard nature resumed in in-person sessions in Geneva, Switzerland, the Canada-based CBD said in a news release sent to the

"The world is clearly eager for urgent action to protect nature," Mrema said in the CBD news release. "And we have no time to spare. Together we must ultimately deliver a truly historic agreement that puts us firmly on the path to living in harmony with

nature."

Possible diplomatic fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine lurked in the background—potentially denting any prospects of global unity on the issue.

Russian delegates who had planned to attend had their travel plans canceled amid the closure of much of Europe's airspace to flights from Russia after the invasion, organizers said, expressing hopes that Russian diplomats based in Geneva would nevertheless participate.

An intergovernmental, science-based assessment of biodiversity worldwide three years ago cited a decline of nature at unprecedented rates and an acceleration of the extinction of species—with up to a million species facing possible disappearance in the coming decades.

The US-based Campaign For Nature says a major theme in Geneva will be a target to protect and conserve at least 30 percent of the world's lands, inland waters and oceans to help stanch habitat loss, the "overexploitation" of nature by people and businesses, and the emergence of pathogens that thrive off upheaval in the environment.

Convention managers point to five drivers of biodiversity loss: Changes to the use of land and sea; unsustainable exploitation through activities like agriculture, and climate change; pollution; and the spread of invasive alien species into new habitats. Indirectly, it says, unsustainable production and consumption also play a role.

Originally scheduled for Geneva from January 12 to 28, the three

meetings—of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 24), the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3) and the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (WG2020-3)—resumed at the Centre International de Conférences Genève, the CBD said.

SBSTTA-24 will advance discussions on a monitoring approach for the post-2020 framework. This includes marine and coastal biodiversity, biodiversity and agriculture and health, and invasive alien species.

Other issues include synthetic biology, living modified organisms risk assessment and management, and the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

SBI-3 will complete its work on key inputs to the post-2020 framework and lay a firm foundation for its adoption and implementation at the resumed Conference of Parties-15.

The agenda includes ensuring the framework mobilizes and scales-up finance for biodiversity, better aligned investments with the needs of nature and people and facilitates the disclosure of risks and impacts for nature.

Delegates will also advance work on the mechanisms to monitor, report and review implementation, and to build countries' capacity to manage and conserve biodiversity resources, benefit from ecosystem services, and achieve the framework's targets.

Plans will also be advanced to enhance outreach and public awareness

to support biodiversity action, and ensure the framework fully supports rights-based approach and respect gender equality and equal access for women to leadership, participation and decision-making.

WG2020-3 discussions will center on agreeing on actions needed to reach the 2050 Vision of living in harmony with nature, defining how performance will be tracked and reported, and ultimately determining how success will be defined.

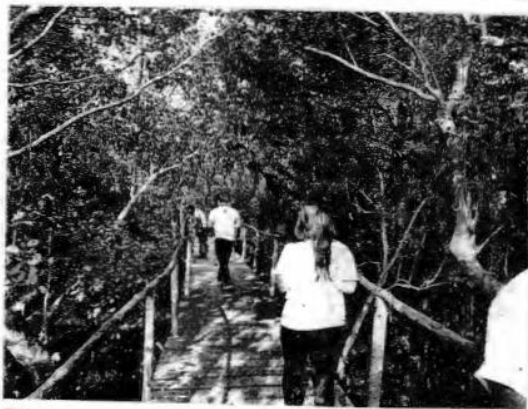
This includes addressing the five drivers of biodiversity loss—land sea use change, unsustainable exploitation, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species—and relevant indirect drivers such as unsustainable production and consumption.

The meeting is also expected to decide and announce the dates of the resumed UN Biodiversity Conference later this year in Kunming, China, at which the landmark blue print post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is due for adoption.

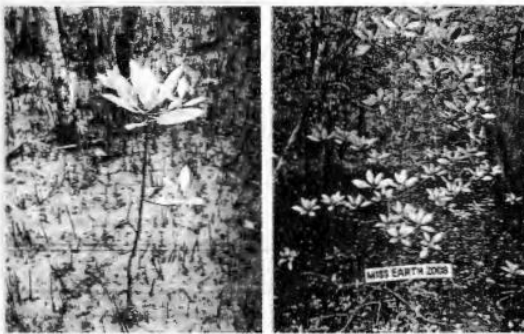
Mrema said one key issue in the conference will be efforts toward repurposing and redirecting harmful subsidies—to the tune of some \$500 billion per year currently—and how "these financial flows can move away from nature-negative to biodiversity-positive outcomes," AP said.

A draft proposal for the framework to be adopted in China would aim to require that \$700 billion would be put into sustaining or improving biodiversity.

The issue of reducing pollution from plastics is also part of the draft, she said. *Lyn B. Resurreccion with AP*



THE Bakhawan Eco Park in New Buswang, Kalibo, Aklan, was established by the Kalibo Save the Mangrove Association Inc. The mangrove park, that was photographed in June 2017, was awarded the Best in People's Organization in Mangrove Coastal Rehabilitation and Best in Mangrove Forest Management for Eco-tourism by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. PHOTOS BY LYN B. RESURRECCION



MANGROVE seedlings at the Bakhawan Eco Park in New Buswang, Kalibo, Aklan. Some seedlings were named after the Miss Earth 2008.



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CEMENT PLANT + PLASTIC WASTE = SAVING PLANET?



DENR pushes option to transform plastic refuse into a key ingredient in cement manufacturing

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

TO help reduce the country's solid waste generation, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is urging cement manufacturers to explore ways to utilize plastic waste as raw material and help cut half of the country's garbage problem.

"When all these cement plants will participate, we can dramatically reduce the volume of plastic waste which will be now regarded as raw material of the cement plants in their current processing," DENR-Environment Management Bureau Director William Cuñado said in a news statement.

He said several cement firms have already adopted the conversion of plastic waste into energy in the country.

"This measure will reduce by 40 percent to 60 percent the volume of plastic waste," he pointed out.

The DENR-EMB chief also said that the participation of local government units (LGUs) through their solid waste management efforts would contribute to the decrease in plastic waste volume.

Cuñado noted that the conver-

sion of plastic waste into raw material for cement plants would result in the reduction of plastic waste generated in cities and municipalities.

DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs and department spokesperson Atty. Jonas R. Leones also pointed out that cement plants could recycle campaign materials made out of plastics that are being used for the May 2022 elections.

"Plastic tarpaulins are also used in co-processing, in energy. These are mixed into cement as fillers; sometimes these are used to create pots," Leones, who held the position of EMB director during his early years in the DENR, pointed out.

"Plastic tarpaulins are melted to have some other products out of these plastics," he added.

DENR-Environment Management Bureau Director William Cuñado: "When all these cement plants will participate, we can dramatically reduce the volume of plastic waste which will be now regarded as raw material of the cement plants in their current processing."



COLEEN SALAMAT, Plastic Solutions Campaigner of EcoWaste Coalition: "Cement kilns, incinerators, and other combustion units burning waste, especially chlorinated materials, release harmful pollutants into the environment."



MARIAN FRANCES T. LEDESMA, Zero Waste Campaigner of Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines: "Plastic-to-fuel schemes are false solutions which do not result in the behavioral changes or systemic shifts our planet needs."

While the Philippines has been implementing Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 for more than 20 years, the country is facing a looming garbage crisis.

With its estimated population of over 100 million, the country produces around 40,000 tons of garbage every day or 14.6 million tons of garbage annually. Metro Manila produces slightly less than a quarter of that figure with around 9,000 tons every day.

Environmental groups pushing for zero waste solutions questioned the DENR's proposal and

branded the use of plastic waste as fuel in co-processing and waste-to-energy as "false" environmental solutions.

'Harmful to environment'

WASTE and pollution watchdog EcoWaste Coalition said plastic waste as an alternative raw material or fuel for cement manufacturing does not address the root problem of the plastic pollution crisis, and could even potentially do more harm than good to the environment.

"Cement kilns, incinerators, and other combustion units burning

waste, especially chlorinated materials, release harmful pollutants into the environment," Coleen Salamat, Plastic Solutions Campaigner of EcoWaste Coalition, said.

"Before any blanket endorsement is made on this disposal scheme for plastic waste, we urge the authorities to make publicly available independent studies, as well as verified monitoring reports, presumably used by DENR to justify its push for such a scheme," she said.

To improve the recyclability and circularity of plastics, the government should draw up real solu-

tions such as policies that prevent and reduce the volume and toxicity of plastic waste without aggravating the already alarming climate crisis, Salamat stressed.

'Toxic emissions'

SOUGHT for reaction, Greenpeace said using plastic waste as fuel in co-processing and waste-to-energy produces significant amounts of toxic emissions and greenhouse gases, further aggravating the plastic pollution and climate crises.

"Plastic-to-fuel schemes are false solutions which do not result in the behavioral changes or systemic shifts our planet needs. They instead incentivize continued waste generation and dependence on plastic. We only get one side of the story from the proponents of such schemes, as local governments and the wider public are not well informed about the risks. The costs of refuse-derived fuel and waste-to-energy on human and environmental health are considerable. They're essentially converting plastic pollution from waste to another form—air pollutants," Marian Frances T. Ledesma, Zero Waste Campaigner of Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines, said.

"The Philippine government should not be encouraging or investing in technology that compromises the safety and health of people and the environment," she added.



Three Philippine cities are finalists in WWF's One Planet City Challenge

WHAT do the cities of Davao, Dipolog and Quezon have in common? They have been selected as national finalists in the World Wide Fund for Nature's (WWF) 2021-2022 One Planet City Challenge (OPCC) from 16 qualified cities in the Philippines.

WWF initiated the OPCC to honor cities for their climate actions and ambitions, and assess whether they align with the goals agreed upon in the Paris Agreement in limiting planet warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100, OPCC said.

The OPCC finalists will be evaluated by an international jury panel composed of experts in urban sustainability. The winners will be announced by May-June.

It should be noted that the United Nations Environment Programme pointed out that climate change directly impacts cities and urban life.

Increasing global temperatures result in rising sea levels and more extreme weather events—such as floods, droughts, and storms, particularly affecting coastal communities.

OPCC said increases in the spread of vector-borne and water-borne diseases and heat-related illnesses have affected urban populations as global temperatures increase.

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report reinforced these findings. It said that cities are areas of concentrated risk to climate change with losses due to infrastructure damage and disruption in services and affected supply chains already occurring. Cities are also areas where opportunities for delivering urgent climate action abound.

Major contributors to climate change are cities, because urban activities are significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions. An estimated 75 percent of global carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions are from cities, with transport and buildings being among the largest contributors, OPCC said.

To address the climate change challenge, some cities have started to use renewable energy sources, implement regulations to limit industrial emissions, and institute energy efficiency measures.

"Many have undertaken climate actions



PEOPLE stroll at the Dipolog Boulevard in the afternoon. PHOTO BY IMEE BELLEN, WWF-PHILIPPINES

to increase their city's resilience with its residents and businesses adapting to the changing climate. Others have also enforced laws that help to restore and preserve the environment," OPCC said.

In OPCC, cities are encouraged to present their best practices and holistic plans to substantially reduce the effects of climate change and accelerate climate transformation.

In OPCC's 2021-2022 leg, there are a total of 280 cities from 50 countries.

Since its inception 10 years ago, close to 600 cities from 53 countries in five continents have already participated in this challenge.

One Planet Cities Project Manager for WWF-Philippines Imee Bellen expressed hope that more Philippine cities will participate in OPCC in the future.

"We are always welcome to showcase inspiring transformative urban solutions to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change," Bellen said.

WWF-Philippines Climate and Energy Programme Head Atty. Angela Ibay encouraged citizens to help their respective cities to boost their capacity to respond to the climate crisis.

"The cities' plans would not come to life if it wasn't for the collective action of its residents. However, we as individuals can still make a difference on our own. Even the most trivial habits, such as reducing energy consumption, can have a long-lasting impact on the community and nature," Ibay said.

Rizal Raoul Reyes



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POWER OF 52

Youth groups call on poll bets to push for green agenda



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POWER OF 52

Youth groups call on poll bets to push for green agenda

By Pauline Joy M. Gutierrez

IN a movement dubbed "Love, 52," Greenpeace Philippines and environmental campaigners from different youth groups converged ahead of the 2022 polls and penned letters to electoral candidates, urging them to prioritize climate action.

Referencing the 52 percent young Filipinos that comprise the total voting population, co-project lead Maverick Flores pointed to the crucial role of the youth in electing public servants at a time of a global emergency.

"[The youth] have the power to decide who our new leaders are going to be. They have the most to gain or lose from election results," he said. "They are and will continue to experience the consequences of the climate crisis."

The Philippines, found to be the most climate-vulnerable nation in the world, stands to face devastating damages should the government fail to build an effective response to climate change impacts and translate policies into concrete actions on the ground, according to a statement from the group.

"We need platforms on comprehensive discussions about this," Flores said, adding that climate change-induced calamities such as Typhoon Odette, a category 5 storm that hit the coastal areas of Visayas



THE panel for the recent "Love, 52 Youth and Elections Movement Press Briefing and Virtual Launch" includes Mei Senika, Youth for Mental Health Coalition; Rorei Asinero, TreeBuk Project; Jessie John Legaspi and Cris Jamil Hertz, Better Normal Youth Movement; Vince Pacarot, National Society of Parliamentarians, Inc.; and Joanna Sustento, Co-Project Lead, Love, 52

and Mindanao last year, "will only continue to worsen."

In 2021, the Philippines ranked 125th out of 146 countries in the Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI), which indicates the ability of nations to protect the environment.

"We cannot have a government that takes the climate crisis seriously if we will not elect leaders who prioritize the environment," said National Society of Parliamentarians Inc.'s Vince Davidson Pacarot.

Where they stand

SEVERAL presidential aspirants have already outlined their plans to mitigate the impact of climate change in recent months.

Vice President Leni Robredo pushes for the inclusion of climate change programs in all plans of the government and calls for a concerted effort to shift to more renewable sources of energy.

Labor rights activist Leody de Guzman also advocates for the transition to renewable energy and the closure of coal-fired power plants.

Former senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. likewise pushed for the development of renewable energy sources.

Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso said he would push for a massive rehabilitation, recovery, and reforestation of the country's denuded forests.

In a radio interview, Senator Ping Lacson said he wants to implement better carbon emission testing and reforestation programs as part of his initial plans to curb global warming.

Lastly, Senator Manny Pacquiao said Congress should move for the creation of a "super agency" that would focus not only on disaster resilience and response but on creating long-term disaster adaptation strategies.

The youth's sentiment

"WE feel that the discussions around the 2022 elections, so far, have been missing key issues that matter to the youth and our loved ones," said Cris Jamil Hertz, 20, of the Better Normal Youth Movement.

The group submitted a Better Normal Youth Agenda to President Duterte in 2020, expressing the youth's vision of the country's post-pandemic recovery. It states, "At a time when both a health and a climate crisis are upon us, and with the most crucial election of our generation coming up, we have to listen

to those who will reap the fruits—or consequences—of today's actions."

Rorei Asinero, 22, of the TreeBuk Project, believes that while the spirit of *Bayanihan* lives and we have our individual responsibilities, we can only do so much as citizens.

"If these candidates truly love the country, as they say during their campaign sorties, they must show that love by protecting the Philippines and Filipinos from the worsening impacts of the climate crisis," he said.

Greenpeace considers 2022 as a crucial window for climate action, given the urgency of addressing the climate crisis. An Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released earlier this year affirmed that the climate system is rapidly changing, and the scale of change is unprecedented, with extreme weathers that will be more intense and more frequent.

"Our next leaders have a prime opportunity to put the nation on alert and institute policies that would help us in the struggle for climate justice," said Greenpeace campaigner Joanna Sustento. "The strength of those vying for power should be tested on destructive industries such as fossil fuels and single-use plastic production, who should be held accountable for their contributions to the climate crisis."

The environmental group is urging Filipino voters, especially the youth who comprise a majority of the voting population, to consider these pressing matters in choosing the right leaders.

"This is not just shading on a ballot—we are talking about the future of our country and our next generations," Sustento said. "2022 should not just be another year of loss and statistics; it must be the year of climate justice."



Filipinos, Asean residents urge leaders to solve biodiversity crisis

By RIZAL RAOUL REYES

MANY Filipinos, like their Indonesian and Malaysian counterparts, are urging their respective governments to champion the United Nation protection target as a solution to the world's biodiversity crisis.

In a three-day poll commissioned by Atri Advisory in February in biodiverse-rich countries of the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia showed an overpowering support for a global target to protect at least 30 percent of the planet's land and ocean by 2030, known as 30x30.

"Almost all respondents—96 percent in Malaysia, 98 percent in Indonesia and 95 percent in the Philippines—support the global goal, and 84 percent of Malaysians, 94 percent of Indonesians and 85 percent of Filipinos want their respective governments to also support the global target," the report said in a material sent to the BusinessMirror.

The survey was conducted by Vase. ai, a well-established polling company in the region.

The poll was the first-ever to measure public opinion in the three countries on the global 30x30 goal in the lead up to a major biodiversity summit later this year in Kunming, China.

Around 190 countries—including

Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines—are expected to finalize and approve a global strategy, known as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), designed to stave off a biodiversity crisis that threatens up to 1-million species with extinction in the coming decades.

Negotiators from these countries are currently meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, to iron out the details of the GBF, which includes a target to protect 30x30 as one of its central elements.

The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC), an intergovernmental coalition of more than 80 countries co-chaired by Costa Rica, France and the US, is championing the 30x30 goal.

Cambodia is the first and currently only HAC member from the Asean region. Other Asian members include Japan, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan and the Maldives.

Overwhelming scientific evidence and economic data shows that conserving at least 30 percent of the planet's land and ocean is key to help address global biodiversity loss—in addition to storing carbon, preventing future pandemics, bolstering economic growth, increasing fisheries' production, and advancing Indigenous rights.

Southeast Asia comprises just 3 percent of Earth's land mass, but it contains almost 20 percent of the world's biodiversity.

The poll shows that people in the region fully appreciate the value of biodiversity to development, and appreciate the role it can play in preserving it.

The poll is a public mandate for the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to embrace the 30x30 global goal.

"The survey reflects the staggering support of citizens in the region for their governments to endorse the proposal to protect 30 percent of the planet by 2030 and to take urgent steps to halt biodiversity loss. To do otherwise is not an option," explained Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, chairman of Atri Advisory and Science Advisor to the Campaign for Nature.

"It is incumbent upon our political leaders and policy-makers to listen to the people and join the rest of the world in this crucial effort," Zakri, founding chairman of Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, said.

Dr. Tony La Vina, former undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Philippines, said: "Southeast Asia comprises just 3 percent of Earth's land mass, but it contains almost 20 percent of the world's biodiversity."

An Associate Director for Climate Policy and International Relations of Manila Observatory, La Viña added, "The poll shows that people in the region fully appreciate

the value of this biodiversity to our own development and appreciate the role we can play in preserving it. This poll is a public mandate for the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to embrace the 30x30 global goal."

The HAC pointed out that the economic benefits of 30x30 are strong. The group said an independent study prepared by more than 100 economists and experts found that meeting the 30 percent target will generate financial and ecosystem services benefits at least five times the cost.

In an interview, 80 percent of Malaysian respondents, 92 percent of Indonesians and 95 percent of Filipinos said they were either extremely or very concerned about the biodiversity crisis.

On the awareness of global negotiations on the new set of rules on biodiversity goals and targets, scheduled for agreement in Kunming, 87 percent of Chinese respondents said they are updated, while 93 percent of Malaysians and 91 percent of Filipinos said they are well informed.

Yongyuth Yuthavong, senior advisor to the president of National Science and Technology Development Agency, former deputy prime minister of Thailand, and Global Steering Committee member of Campaign for Nature, said science has shown that there is lot to be done in protecting Planet Earth, and warned that time is running out.



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How to design an effective

treaty to curb plastic pollution

PLASTIC pollution is accumulating worldwide, on land and in the oceans. According to a study commissioned by the World Economic Forum, without changes to current practices, there may be more plastic by weight than fish in the ocean by 2050.

On March 2, representatives from 175 nations around the world took a historic step toward ending that pollution. The United Nations Environment Assembly voted to task a committee with forging a legally binding global treaty on plastic pollution by 2024. UN Environment Program Executive Director Inger Andersen described it as "an insurance policy for this generation and future ones, so they may

live with plastic and not be doomed by it."

To address this problem, the US has focused on waste management and recycling rather than regulating plastic producers and businesses that use plastic in their products. Failing to address the sources means that policies have limited impact.

Some countries, such as France and Kenya, have banned single-use plastics. Others, like Germany, have mandated plastic bottle deposit schemes. Canada has classified manufactured plastic items as toxic, which gives its national government broad power to regulate them.

Plastic pollution crosses boundaries, so countries need to work together to curb it. Countries have come together to solve en-

vironmental problems before. The global community has successfully addressed acid rain, stratospheric ozone depletion and mercury contamination through international treaties. These agreements, which include the US, offer strategies for a plastics treaty.

Based on these precedents, plastic is a good candidate for an international treaty. Like ozone, sulfur and mercury, plastic comes from specific, identifiable human activities that occur across the globe. Many countries contribute, so the problem is transboundary in nature.

In addition to providing a framework for keeping plastic out of the ocean, a plastic pollution treaty should

include reduction targets for both producing less plastic and generating less waste that are specific, measurable and achievable. The treaty should be binding but flexible, allowing countries to meet these targets as they choose.

Negotiations should consider the interests of those who experience the disproportionate impacts of plastic, as well as those who make a living off recycling waste as part of the informal economy. Finally, an international treaty should promote collaboration and sharing of data, resources and best practices.

Since plastic pollution doesn't stay in one place, all nations will benefit from finding ways to curb it. **The Conversation**



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KINUMPISKA ng Bureau of Customs (BoC) ang dalawang package na naglalaman ng iba't ibang uri ng wildlife animal.

Ayon sa BoC, una nilang narekober ang shipment mula sa Thailand na naglalaman ng walong butiking gecko na ipapadala sana sa isang claimant sa Parañaque.

Habang limang tarantula at 40 spiderlings naman ang nakuha sa isang indibidwal sa Pasay.

Dagdag ng BoC personnel, nakadeklara bilang cosmetic products ang mga gagamba na ipapadala sana sa Dubai.

Samantala, hawak na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga hayop.

Sa ngayon, nahaharap ang mga suspek sa kasong paglabag sa Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

PACKAGE NA MAY LAMANG BUTIKI, TARANTULA BUKING



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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DOH notes slow decline in new COVID-19 cases

By [Gaea Katreena Cabico](#)(Philstar.com) - March 18, 2022 - 2:59pm



Commuters disembark from a train at a station in Manila on February 16, 2022.

AFP/Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health said Friday it is seeing a slow decline in the number of new COVID-19 infections in the country.

“Our epidemic curve shows that while a swift decline followed the peak of cases, this decline has markedly slowed down over the past weeks,” DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said.

From March 10 to 16, the country logged an average of 534 additional cases per day. The figure was 29% lower than the daily average from the previous week.

Vergeire also reported that only 12% of hospital admissions in the country had severe and critical illness.

The utilization of all COVID-19 beds nationwide remained at low risk, with only 18% of the beds occupied. Meanwhile, the national ICU utilization rate dropped to 19% from 51% during the peak of the surge driven by Omicron.

“Ito ay bunga ng ating pagtutulungan sa pamamagitan ng pagsunod sa minimum public health standards at pagpapaturok ng bakuna. Ipagpatuloy natin ito nang sa gayon ay tuloy-tuloy tayong mag-martsa tungo sa ating better normal,” Vergeire said.

(These are the outcomes of our adherence to minimum public health standards and vaccination. Let's continue doing these so we can march toward better normal.)

The agency earlier said the entire Philippines is considered low risk for COVID-19 spread.

Metro Manila and 47 other areas are under Alert Level 1 until the end of the month. Health chief Francisco Duque III said Thursday that the country will likely stay at Alert Level 1 until the term of President Rodrigo Duterte ends in June.

The Philippines has reported over 3.67 million COVID-19 cases since the pandemic started, with 57,880 deaths.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/03/18/2168213/doh-notes-slow-decline-new-covid-19-cases/amp/>



WHO naalarma sa muling pagtaas ng COVID-19 cases sa ibang panig ng mundo

[Danilo Garcia](#) - Pang-masa March 19, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Muling naalarma ngayon ang World Health Organization (WHO) sa panibagong pagtaas ng mga kaso ng impeksyon ng COVID sa ilang bahagi ng mundo habang bumabagsak naman ang testing rates sa ibang mga bansa.

Dahil sa panibagong outbreak, nagpatupad na ng lockdown ang ilang bansa sa Asya partikular sa Hong Kong at sa probinsya ng Jilin sa China. Tinitingnan ang ilang kumbinasyon ng dahilan sa panibagong outbreak.

Ito ay dahil sa mas nakakahawang Omicron variant at sub-variant na BA. 2 at pagluluwag sa mga restriksyon para buksan ang ekonomiya.

Nakakabahala rin umano ang mababang 'vaccination rate' sa ilang bansa na dulot ng mga kumakalat na misimpormasyon at pag-uumpisang magrelaks ng gobyerno at publiko. Sa kanilang datos, umakyat ng 8% ang mga bagong impeksyon sa buong mundo na katumbas ng 11 milyong bagong kaso at higit sa 43,000 bilang ng mga bagong nasawi mula Marso 7 hanggang 13. Ito ang kauna-unahang mataas na bilang mula noong katapusan ng Enero.

Pinakamalaking itinaas sa mga bilang ang Western Pacific region, partikular ang South Korea at China na nakapagtala ng 25% dagdag na kaso at 27% dagdag na nasawi.

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