

31 MARCH 2022, THURSDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



# DENR-BFP Pen Five-Year Partnership for Reforestation Program

Tuesday, March 29, 2022 Journal Online



In a landmark move to strengthen inter-agency reforestation initiatives, **Department of Environment and Natural Resources** (DENR) Region 3 Executive Director Paquito Moreno, Jr. and **Bureau of Fire Protection** (BFP) Chief Fire Director Louie Puracan (2nd and 3rd from left, seated) sign the five-year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to collaborate in the adoption of identified National Greening Program reforestation areas in Bulacan province. The agreement includes the planting of bamboo, forest and fruit bearing tree species and their maintenance to ensure sustainable growth. The MOA signing, held at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center on March 25, was witnessed by (left to right, seated) **DENR** Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service Director Khalil Sergio Bayam and BFP Officer-in-Charge Deputy Chief for Operation Ch Supt Wilberto Rico Neil Kwan Tiu, and Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council Executive Director Rene Madarang (2nd from right, standing).



# DENR Receives Recognition from Bureau of Fire Protection

Tuesday, March 29, 2022 Journal Online



Department of Environment and Natural Resources ([DENR](#)) Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service Director Khalil Sergio Bayam (right) accepts the token of appreciation for DENR acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna from [Bureau of Fire Protection](#) (BFP) Chief Fire Director Louie Puracan (middle) in recognition of the Department's support to the BFP environmental protection and preservation efforts through forest fire protection and prevention and reforestation programs. [DENR](#) Assistant Secretary for Administration and Human Resources Hiro V. Masuda; Biodiversity Management Bureau Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Director Natividad Y. Bernardino; and Director Bayam also received tokens during the event held on March 25 at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center. Also in photo is BFP OIC Deputy Chief for Operation Ch Supt Wilberto Rico Neil Kwan Tiu.



## Stable business regime to unlock big mining potential—COMP

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MARCH 31, 2022



**Chamber of Mines  
of the Philippines**

BIG players in the mining industry are pushing for a stable business environment to enable the sector to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) defined a stable business environment as something where “policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change midstream.”

COMP's Michael Toledo made the pitch in a speech before the members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, an association of diplomats and consular officers. With “estimated untapped mineral reserves worth US\$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 GDP, the Philippines has tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth,” Toledo said.

Mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over 2 percent of GDP, he recalled.

Gina Lopez's short stint in the DENR also saw the cancellation of 75 inactive mining contracts – 75 Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSAs) and 1 Financial and/or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) — for projects near or within watersheds, bringing cheer to environmental groups and anti-mining advocates. She also imposed a ban on open-pit mining methods for select ores.

Under Lopez's successor, Roy A. Cimatu, the mining policies she put in place were slowly reversed, giving mining relief but triggering howls of protest among anti-mining groups.

Toledo noted that in 2020, mining's share in total exports plummeted to 8 percent, and subsequently to 0.6 percent. He attributed the decline to a combination of factors, among them the “policy roadblocks” that included the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and a 4-year ban on open-pit mining.

### **Tampakan project**

Alluding to the Tampakan Project in Mindanao that is being stalled by a provincial code that still bans open pit mining, Toledo said the industry needs “the next government to harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground.”

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and King-king, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost US \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million pesos per year. Royalties to indigenous tribes, Toledo added, will increase by over P600 million per year.



“The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts to be one of the most advanced mining laws,” he said. “Its social and environmental provisions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it.

“We wish the next government will further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector,” Toledo added. He Cited the Mines and Geosciences Bureau’s support for COMP’s adoption of the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) by allowing the industry association’s members to allocate a portion of their mandated social development funds for this initiative.

TSM is a growing global standard for best practices in mining. Started in 2004 by the Mining Association of Canada, TSM has proven to be very effective in raising the standards of mining in that country. It is now being implemented in 10 countries.

He said COMP also hopes the next government will continue encouraging increased transparency and reporting of ESG practices in mining.

“With strong support from our current government, our participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) allowed us to further demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in business,” Toledo said.

The Philippines was the first of 51 implementing EITI countries found to have satisfactorily met the 2017 EITI Standard for fiscal transparency in the extractives sector.

“We in the Chamber are determined to be a strong partner in nation-building—one with a strong focus on social development, on minimizing the impact of our operations on the environment, and on ensuring a fair division of economic and financial benefits of mining,” Toledo said.

“But first, please allow us to flourish. Modern mining technology, global mining standards, and the increasingly stringent laws of the land governing mining have evolved in the last two decades to assist, enable, and guide the industry to become a responsive partner. We like to think that we have also evolved in lockstep with these developments.”



# NegOr arboretum now home to more native trees

By Mary Judaline Partlow [March 30, 2022, 9:02 pm](#)



**NEW ARBORETUM.** Officials and representatives of Silliman University and geothermal firm, Energy Development Corporation, pose after planting 100 native tree seedlings at a new arboretum in Valencia, Negros Oriental on Wednesday (March 30, 2022). Among the endangered Philippine tree species that were planted were banuyo (*Wallaceodendron celebicum*), ipil (Borneo teak), taba (*Tristaniopsis littoralis*), baguilombang (*Reutalis trisperma*), yakal (*Shorea astylosa*), and lisok-lisok, among others. (Photo courtesy of EDC)

**DUMAGUETE CITY** – A geothermal power firm and Silliman University (SU) on Wednesday planted 100 endangered native tree species to establish an arboretum in Negros Oriental.

The botanical collection dubbed "BINHI" is composed exclusively of a variety of tree species and is located at the Christian institution's field laboratory grounds in Barangay Palinpinon, Valencia town.

The Energy Development Corporation (EDC) said the project will provide a safe haven for the long-term survival of Philippine native trees.

Among the endangered Philippine tree species that were planted were *banuyo* (*Wallaceodendron celebicum*), *ipil* (Borneo teak), *taba* (*Tristaniopsis littoralis*), *baguilombang* (*Reutalis trisperma*), *yakal* (*Shorea astylosa*), *lisok-lisok*, *malakatmon*, *basilan-yakal*, *quisumbing gisok*, *red lauan*, *kamagong ponce*, *bagtikan*, *duguan*, *narra*, *kamagong*, and *molave*.

EDC-Negros corporate relations department head Norreen Bautista and SU vice president for Development, Jane Annette Belarmino, led other officials in the planting activity.

"Recognizing our calling to be stewards of creation, we, at Silliman University, are committed to the prevention of environmental pollution and a conservation and enhancement of our natural resources and environmental sustainability," Belarmino said.

The university appreciates its collaboration and partnership with EDC, "because of shared vision and goals".

EDC will provide SU with the native tree seedlings from its priority species, as well as technical assistance in monitoring and maintaining the planted trees.

Belarmino also said the Environmental Learning Resource Center intends to house a multi-disciplinary collection of environmentally-relevant best practices, outputs, and programs of the university anchored on conservation awareness and environmental sustainability.



“We intend to put green architecture, demonstration areas, which includes the arboretum, information materials as well as programs that showcase their resource center. Thus, the significance and relevance of the arboretum project with EDC that strengthens our program on forest diversity, biotechnology, conservation biology, for instruction, research, and extension,” she said.

Bautista, for her part, said the people should celebrate every day the International Day of Forests, which is usually remembered every March 21.

“This year’s theme for the International Day of Forests is Forest and Sustainable Production and Consumption. Forests are not just a source of raw materials but as means of absorbing carbon and helping to sustain life on this planet,” Bautista said.

The BINHI arboretum is just one of the many initiatives of Silliman University to protect the environment.

Recently, SU renewed its power supply contract with EDC for another two years. It is the only university on Negros Island and one of the few in the country to be 100 percent powered by renewable energy (RE).

It is also a pioneer partner of EDC’s recently launched Net Zero Carbon Alliance (NZCA) that aims to help companies and organizations that have committed to becoming carbon neutral.

The university is also a partner of the EDC-initiated 10 million trees in 10 years for a Greener Negros Movement (10Min10) that aims to plant, grow, and nurture at least 10 million trees to bring back the forests on Negros Island.

Bautista shared that through collaborative efforts with partners and stakeholders, EDC has completed planting 10 million trees in just six years.

The newly-launched EDC-SU arboretum is an addition to the 22 arboreta and 163 tree parks that have been established to date, together with its almost 200 BINHI partners.

EDC, owned by First Gen Corporation, owns and operates the 222.5-megawatt geothermal power plants in Valencia, Negros Oriental. **(PNA)**



# Pateros LGU bans improper disposal of face masks

Published March 30, 2022, 8:42 AM

by [Jonathan Hicap](#)

More than two years into the pandemic, the Pateros municipal government has banned the improper disposal of used face masks and other items related to Covid-19.

The Pateros Municipal Council has approved Ordinance No. 2022-04 “prohibiting the improper disposal of face masks and other Covid-19 protective gears and products in the Municipality of Pateros and providing penalties for violation thereof.”



Pateros Mayor Miguel Ponce III (Photo from Pateros municipal government)

The ordinance was passed “to stop the unsafe disposal of used face masks and related protective gears and products; to ensure the ecological management of Covid-19 waste and to promote waste workers health and safety; and to promote health awareness and environmental responsibility among the citizens.”

According to the local law, “all used face masks should be treated as hazardous and contaminated waste. As such, proper disposal of used face masks generated from household shall be observed.”

It added that in households, used face masks should be cut in half to prevent possible reuse. The used face masks should be put in a small garbage bag, which should be properly closed or sealed before disposal.

“This Ordinance shall prohibit the littering, throwing or dumping of used face masks, face shields, hand gloves, and other PPE [personal protective equipment], and related Covid-19 discarded items in public places such as streets, sidewalks, parks, canals, esteros and other water bodies,” according to the ordinance.

It added that “all offices of the Municipal Government, commercial establishment, hospitals, and medical clinics, and educational and religious institution are required to provide designated receptacles or bins properly labeled and with graphics indicating the hazardous nature of waste to ensure proper disposal of face masks and other Covid-19 protective gears and products within the premises.”

Violators of the ordinance will be fined P500 for the first offense, P1,000 for the second offense, and a fine of P2,000 or imprisonment of one month or both for the third and subsequent offenses depending on the decision of the court.





If the offender is a juridical entity like a business establishment, the fine is P1,000 for the first offense, P2,000 for the second offense, and a fine of P2,500 and revocation of business permit for the third and subsequent offenses.



## Araullo High inks deal with Plastic Bank to gather 10K kilos of plastics for 100 tablets

March 30, 2022 | 1 min read

Teachers at Araullo High School in United Nations Manila collect plastic bottles donated by their students on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The school has a signed a deal with the Plastic Bank to collect plastic in exchange for 100 tablets in every 10,000 kilograms of plastics they can gather for 10 months.



According to Wiki, Plastic Bank is a for-profit social enterprise founded and based in Vancouver, British Columbia, that builds recycling ecosystems in under-developed communities in an effort to fight both plastic pollutions in the oceans as well as high poverty levels in developing countries.

(Kiara Lauren Ibanez/BENJAMIN CUARESMA/ai/mtvn)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2022/03/30/araullo-high-inks-deal-with-plastic-bank-to-gather-10k-kilos-of-plastics-for-100-tablets/?fbclid=IwAR1KQDaN05gllVKngYKdiVcg258AHQE-lr40eCQfZ9q8eoXVHRAKPhVYVGQ>



# For the first time ever, scientists detect microplastics presence in human blood

Agence France-Presse

Posted at Mar 30 2022 11:46 PM



Workers sort and check cut-up sachet plastics before further shredding at one of Green Antz' sites in Plaridel, Bulacan. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*

PARIS, FRANCE - Scientists have discovered microplastics in human blood for the first time, warning that the ubiquitous particles could also be making their way into organs.

The tiny pieces of mostly invisible plastic have already been found almost everywhere else on Earth, from the deepest oceans to the highest mountains as well as in the air, soil and food chain.

A Dutch study published in the *Environment International* journal on Mar. 24 examined blood samples from 22 anonymous, healthy volunteers and found microplastics in nearly 80 percent of them.

Half of the blood samples showed traces of PET plastic, widely used to make drink bottles, while more than a third had polystyrene, used for disposable food containers and many other products.

"This is the first time we have actually been able to detect and quantify" such microplastics in human blood, said Dick Vethaak, an ecotoxicologist at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

"This is proof that we have plastics in our body -- and we shouldn't," he told AFP, calling for further research to investigate how it could be impacting health.

"Where is it going in your body? Can it be eliminated? Excreted? Or is it retained in certain organs, accumulating maybe, or is it even able to pass the blood-brain barrier?"

The study said the microplastics could have entered the body by many routes: via air, water or food, but also in products such as particular toothpastes, lip glosses and tattoo ink.

"It is scientifically plausible that plastic particles may be transported to organs via the bloodstream," the study added.

Vethaak also said there could be other kinds of microplastics in blood his study did not pick up -- for example, it could not detect particles larger than the diameter of the needle used to take the sample.

The study was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development as well as Common Seas, a UK-based group aimed at reducing plastic pollution.



Alice Horton, anthropogenic contaminants scientist at Britain's National Oceanography Centre, said the study "unequivocally" proved there was microplastics in blood.

"This study contributes to the evidence that plastic particles have not just pervaded throughout the environment, but are pervading our bodies too," she told the Science Media Centre.

Fay Couceiro, reader in biogeochemistry and environmental pollution at the University of Portsmouth, said that despite the small sample size and lack of data on the exposure level of participants, she felt the study was "robust and will stand up to scrutiny".

She also called for further research.

"After all blood links all the organs of our body and if plastic is there, it could be anywhere in us."

© Agence France-Presse

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/03/30/22/scientists-find-microplastics-in-blood-for-first-time?fbclid=IwAR2hfE5ghCw-ny6x0ejgKLSQ668DjwVpQYtPoc75VM0xi85GCYTGOFNLNBxA>



# Determining costs of climate action requires a holistic approach

March 31, 2022

ONE of the most stubborn arguments offered against taking certain actions to mitigate climate change, or sometimes, against taking any action at all, is that climate mitigation is too costly. Reducing harmful emissions substantially enough to keep global warming below a target of 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius, for example, will cost tens of trillions of dollars, and at least for a period of several years or even a couple of decades, cost at least a few percent in global gross domestic product (GDP).

What makes this argument so persistent and difficult to challenge is that some aspects of it are objectively true. Yes, it will cost a great deal of money to convert a world reliant on fossil fuel to technologies for transportation, energy production, industrial processes and even consumer goods that have significantly less impact on the environment. And yes, given the drastic shifts in lifestyles, labor utilization and travel patterns that conversion will require, economic productivity will inevitably suffer in some areas, and in many scenarios, enough to cause a general decline in growth.

The reason this has persisted is because until recently, there have not been economic models that capture the other side of what in reality is an equation, with costs of climate action on one side, and the avoided costs of climate impact on the other. In a baseline scenario, one in which no action was taken, it is relatively easy to forecast economic growth as long as one overlooks the potential impact of climate change — displaced people, effects on agricultural production, public health effects such as increases in respiratory diseases, and so on. Likewise, it is easy to estimate with a fair degree of accuracy the costs of different climate actions. Thus, the effect on economic growth becomes a simple matter of subtracting the amount of money diverted to climate action from the GDP.

The reason the costs of climate change impacts are overlooked is that they have been notoriously difficult to quantify. We know these costs exist in the sense that we know some people will be displaced, some areas will not be able to produce food, or some people's health and lifespan will be negatively affected, but we do not know the costs well enough to express them in numerical terms. Without that, the argument that "the costs of not taking climate action are ultimately greater than the costs of those actions" cannot be reliably made.

However, just as our knowledge of the characteristics of human-caused climate change has evolved and expanded over time, so has our knowledge of its specific effects on people and the planet. Numerous research studies over the past two years have used that knowledge to develop increasingly accurate models of the true costs of climate change, to the extent that they properly complete the economic equation and can no longer be disregarded.

All of this means two things for a country such as the Philippines. First, it allows the argument that climate actions are too expensive for the overall economy, such as, for example, retiring coal generating plants in favor of lower-emission or renewable alternatives or removing inefficient, polluting jeepneys from the roads, to be objectively refuted. Second, detailed knowledge of climate impacts and costs allows policymakers to choose more cost-effective and efficient climate mitigation and adaptation actions, whether those are direct actions such as those mentioned above, or social actions aimed at helping affected people cope with a changing environment.



Dealing with climate change is everyone's business because everyone is and will continue to be affected by it — even those who would still like to believe it does not exist, or is not as serious as the prevailing mood of the rest of the world makes it out to be. In order to deal with it effectively, which ideally means dealing with it at the least necessary cost and disruption, a holistic approach needs to be applied, considering not only the costs of doing something, but the costs of doing nothing, or doing the wrong things.



# Alert 3 in Taal stays; de-escalation possible in 2 weeks

By Ma. Cristina Arayata [March 30, 2022, 4:54 pm](#)



Taal Volcano. (File photo)

**MANILA** – The alert status in Taal Volcano is likely to remain at Level 3 (magmatic unrest) and could be further downgraded if volcanic activity continues to go down without any explosions in the next two weeks.

"At present, the alert level 3 status could be sustained. If the (volcanic activity) would continuously decrease starting today, and there are no explosions, we could de-escalate its alert status within two weeks," Philippine Institute of Volcano and Seismology (Phivolcs) director Renato Solidum Jr. told President Rodrigo Duterte in the latter's Talk to the People Tuesday night.

Taal Volcano erupted in January 2020, July 2021, and last Saturday, March 26.

"If we compare the eruption in January 2020 as opposed to the eruption last Saturday, the recent eruption was much smaller. The height of the eruption column reached 16 kilometers in 2020, versus 3 kilometers (tall) last Saturday," he said.

Volcanic plumes are columns of hot volcanic ash and gas emitted into the atmosphere during an explosive volcanic eruption. A weaker eruption is based on the height of the plume coming out of the crater.

Phivolcs on Saturday raised the alert level of the Taal Volcano from Level 2 (increasing unrest) to Level 3, which means that magma extruding from the main crater could drive explosive eruptions.

"We recommended the evacuation from barangays Agoncillo, Banyaga, Bilibinwang, Laurel, Boso-Boso, Gulod, and eastern part ng Bugaan East," Solidum said, adding that these are the areas that could be mostly affected should there be bigger eruptions.

Solidum, meanwhile, noted that the sulfur dioxide emission from the volcano is harmful to one's health.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, who was also in the President's talk, said people should stay indoors, avoid opening the windows and doors, use wet curtains, and wear face masks.



Prepare a medicine supply for asthma and other allergies that could be triggered by ash fall, Duque added.

The Health chief also advised the use of protective goggles and avoid wearing of contact lenses. Food safety should also be ensured by washing it thoroughly and drinking water should be sealed, he said. **(PNA)**



31 MARCH 2022, THURSDAY



# NEWS ALERTS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



## DENR KINILALA NG BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION

TINATANGGAP ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service Director Khalil Sergio Bayam (kanan) ang token of appreciation mula kay Bureau of Fire Protection

(BFP) Chief Fire Director Louie Puracan (gitna) para kay DENR acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna bilang pagkilala sa suporta ng departamento sa mga environmental protection at preservation efforts ng BFP sa pamamagitan ng



forest fire protection at prevention at reforestation programs.

Nakatanggap din ng token sina DENR Assistant Secretary for Administration and Human Resources Hiro V. Masuda; Biodiversity Management Bureau Officer-in-



Charge (OIC) Director Natividad Y. Bernardino; at Director Bayam sa ginanap na programa noong Marso 25 sa Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center. Nasa larawan din si BFP OIC Deputy Chief for Operation Ch. Supt. Wilberto Rico Neil Kwan Tiu.

-ooOoo-

### BALIKATAN 2022, NAGSIMULA SA GITNA NG TENSYON SA PANATAG SHOAL

PORMAL nang binuksan nitong Lunes, March 28, nina Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff General Andres Centino at US Embassy Charge d' affaires Heather Variava ang "Balikatan 2022", sa Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon city.

Layon ng taunang pagsasanay na masiguro na ang AFP at US military ay laging handa na rumesponde sa anomang krisis o emergency sa lahat ng pagkakataon.

Ang Balikatan 2022, na-

ika-37 pagkakataon na isinagawa ng RP-US Joint Military Exercise, ang pinakamaikli sa kasaysayan nito.

Ang joint military exercise ay lalahukan ng 3,800 tauhan ng AFP at 5,100 miyembro ng US military.

Tampok sa mga aktibidad ngayong taon ang Amphibious Operations Exercise sa Claveria, Cagayan at ang Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise sa Col. Ernesto Rabina Air Base sa Tarlac.

Bukod sa mga combat exercises, lalahok din ang mga Pilipino at Amerikanong sundalo sa humanitarian at civic assistance projects at pagsasagawa ng community health activities.

Pagtitiyak din ng AFP, na taon lamang ang "Balikatan 2022" sa pinakahuling tesyon sa Panatag shoal dahil sa "close maneuvering" na ginawa ng China Coast Guard nitong March 2. Naghain na ng diplomatic protest ang Pilipinas sa Chinese Embassy sa Maynila.



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

## Rody's might (1)

“  
The  
political will  
of President  
Duterte is  
might that  
has been  
legitimately  
right.”

Power ethics claims that might is right. In this context, might is taken as a force, strength or capacity to rule. This ethical doctrine teaches that actions enhancing one's strength or capacity to rule others are morally legitimate, tracing its roots in one's will to power. Will to power is the guide in determining the morality of an action. Whenever an act enhances one's strength or capacity to rule, it is good or morally legitimate; whereas if it causes one's ineffectiveness, weakness, and febleness, it is regarded as wrong.

It was wrong for President Noynoy together with his men to have been weak, ineffective and feeble-minded, and to fail and/or to refuse to prevent the massacre of the elite SAF (Special Action Force) 44 in Mamasapano by Muslim militants.

The political will of President Duterte is might that has been legitimately right.

The sudden closure of Boracay from tourists was when Mayor Digong showed his exceptional political will.

The island of Boracay has been a popular travel spot for beach bums, party-lovers, and travelers who want to have fun under the sun. However, the sudden announcement of a closure from the President himself shocked local and international tourists who came to step on its white sand beaches and swim in the pristine waters of this paradise. While many people found the Boracay closure both shocking and sad, others claimed that they saw it coming, after Digong himself learned and raised the issues of cleanliness and sanitation.



THE AUDITOR  
ART BESANA

Boracay was closed for six months to protect tourists and visitors from the dangers of polluted waters and save the country from international embarrassment. After six months the island welcomed again tourists to its powdery white-sand beaches and crystal-clear waters, after the end of the painful process of rehabilitation.

Mayor Digong of Davao has always been a mayor of Filipinos who gave him a landslide win in the 2016 presidential election. He complemented his landslide victory as he powered his will and accomplished in only five months what President Noynoy and his men who are running again on 9 May 2022 failed to do in six years.

It took Digong's political will to power his might against the abuses of the oligarchs.

According to a spokesman, Lucio Tan, scared of Mayor Digong's ultimatum, paid P6 billion for PAL's settlement of an outstanding balance with government. Lucio Tan was cleared of P25.6 billion tax evasion raps.

Applying his strong will, he liberated the country from the evil clutches of drugs, resulting in the remarkable reduction of crime, and dismantled the oligarchs that for generations have exploited the country and

abused the Filipino people.

With the might of his political will, he scrapped the long-term contracts of two abusive water concessionaires.

The fact that Ayala entered into the concession agreement together with the government of Singapore made a lot of people ask questions on the reasonableness of such an idea, most especially when it was the arbitral court of Singapore that awarded the concessionaires the rate increase of P11 billion. If not for the might of Mayor Digong's political will with a show of his anger, both Ayala and Singapore could not have waived the undeserved award in favor of the Philippine government.

Mayor Digong recalled being told that when he was reviewing the contract, four-time Senate President of the Philippines, and seventh placer in the Bar examination,

“  
Sudden  
closure of  
Boracay from  
tourists was  
when Mayor  
Digong  
showed his  
exceptional  
political will.”

Frank Drilon warned Mayor Digong that the Philippine government may be penalized for interfering with it. The warning was that any damage the concessionaires may suffer because of interference in rate setting may result in indemnity payable by those causing the interference, which pushed Mayor Digong's anger to the limit.

If not for the might of Mayor Digong's will power, Metro Manila might end up mired in filth and waste because the concessionaires failed to comply with the country's Clear Water Act. Mayor Digong threatened to arrest the people behind the concessionaires.

(To be continued)



## Keeping the 'Pawikan attitude' alive in Bagac, Bataan



BPI AMTC Presiden Sheila Tan and Pag-asa Brgy. Captain John Harry Carreon hold a framed poster of a Pawikan signifying the adoption of 270 nests by BPI in support of the Pag-asa Pawikan Protection and Conservation Center in Bagac, Bataan. With them are volunteers of the Center and BPI staff along with Manila media representatives who also adopted pawikan nests named after themselves or their loved ones.

BY LEONY R. GARCIA

**T**HE 'Pawikan attitude' is alive and has become a natural occurrence among the locals of Barangay Pag-asa in Bagac, Bataan, since the health pandemic started, according to Brgy. Chairman John Harry Carreon who also leads the Pag-asa Pawikan Protection and Conservation Center.

Pawikan or sea turtles lift each other up so they could all come out of their nest once they are hatched. The eggs are buried in the sand and the strongest at the bottom hatch first. The hatchlings push their brothers and sisters up so they can all climb out of the nest in one united effort. A single nest has approximately 100 eggs. So, imagine a strong force of 100 coming out together on their will to survive.

Carreon said this is exactly how they operate the Center, borne out of the people's initiative and love for the environment. The group started the movement in December 2019 with a handful of Pawikan rangers who are mostly fisher folks. At night, from 7pm to 5am the following day, the rangers would be rounding the sea shores for sightings of Pawikans laying their eggs. After laying their eggs, the rangers carefully usher the turtles back to sea water, gather their eggs and transfer them to the hatchery which Carreon constructed in his own modest property.

During the breeding period, from September to March, Pawikans are scattered along the coastline of Bagac. People either toy with them or eat them including their eggs. Realizing the importance of the sea turtles in the ecosystem, Carreon and the rangers decided to build the hatchery and eventually established the conservation center. Carreon decided to buy the eggs at P4 per piece so that the rangers have some income when they go home to their families.

### Bantay Pawikan: From predators to rangers

"We had to shell out money from our own pockets especially during the pandemic when



For the first time, the hatchery is able to hatch and send baby green sea turtles to the sea on March 27

most people have lost their jobs," Carreon said. He said there are still poachers who buy eggs at P10-20 per piece. But most volunteers would rather sell at the Center for P4 out of their growing love for the Pawikans and Mother Earth. "Many of our volunteers today were actually former predators of sea turtles and friends of poachers," he added.

Business Mirror chanced upon Briccio Cascalan, 74, one of the many volunteer rangers since the pandemic. According to him, he has 20 years of experience as sea ranger for the nearby Montemar Beach Resort which housed the Pawikan Conservation Area, the original Pawikan hatchery in Bagac, managed by the popular resort. He said that at any time of the day, there would be eggs at the shores that he could gather. But at night, ten of them rangers would be watching the shores for more eggs.

Before the pandemic, the resort would offer the release of sea turtle hatchlings as an activity for its guests. But with the lockdowns and with tourists gone, the resort was forced to close down. And with no sea

rangers watching over the adult Pawikans hatch their eggs by the shore, the locals saw them as food, and considered their eggs an aphrodisiac.

### Adopt-a-Nest Project

With personal funds depleted in buying the Pawikan eggs, Kap. Harry and his core of volunteers thought of the adoption of Pawikan nests by concerned environmentalists and supporters. Through posting in various social sites and by word of mouth, the group successfully encourages supporters. A nest, which has approximately 100 eggs, can be adopted for as low as P400. With no government funding or private grant to support operations, the Center now has global supporters who also donate funds for off-season to ensure successful work during the breeding season.

On March 27, BPI, led by BPI Asset Management and Trust Corporation (AMTC) President and CEO Sheila Marie Tan adopted 270 nests of Pawikan on behalf of every employee of BPI AMTC.

That same day, BPI aptly launched the BPI Invest Sustainable Fund Suite, a first in the Philippines. The Fund Suite is comprised of the BPI Invest Sustainable Global Bond Fund-of-Funds, BPI Invest Sustainable Global Balanced Fund-of-Funds, and BPI Invest Sustainable Global Equity Fund-of-Funds. Following a fund-of-funds structure, each fund in the BPI Invest Sustainable Fund Suite will be invested in a portfolio of carefully selected global target funds that invest in the best-in-class companies that adhere to the highest ESG standards or are directly tied to sustainability projects and other enabling initiatives. Investors can invest in the BPI Invest Sustainable Funds starting April 1, 2022. To know more, visit <https://bit.ly/BPI-InvestSustainableFunds>.

Meanwhile, to donate and adopt a Pawikan nest, visit the Pag-asa Pawikan Hatchery and have a chance to experience releasing baby pawikans. For more information, contact @pagasapawikan on Instagram.



TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP CALLS FOR STABLE POLICIES

# COMP URGES NEXT ADMINISTRATION: ALLOW MINING INDUSTRY TO 'FLOURISH'

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) said the next administration must ensure a stable business environment whereby policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected and rules are not changed mid-stream.

"But first, please allow us to flourish. Modern mining technology, global mining standards, and the increasingly stringent laws of the land governing mining have evolved in the last two decades to assist, enable and guide the industry to become a responsive partner. We like to think that we have also evolved in lockstep with these developments," said COMP chair Michael Toledo in a speech before diplomats and consular officers on Wednesday.

He said such a stable environment would enable the industry to support the country's postpandemic recovery efforts.

Toledo said mining "has a tremendous potential to contribute to socioeconomic growth," adding the country has an estimated untapped mineral reserves of \$1 trillion, equivalent to three times its gross domestic product (GDP) in 2021.

The mining industry used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when it accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over 2 percent of GDP.

However, in 2020, the in-

dustry's share in total exports and the Philippine economy dropped to 8 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively.

Toledo attributed the decline to a combination of factors, among them the "policy roadblocks" that included the nine-year moratorium on new mining projects and the four-year ban on open-pit mining.

At the same time, the industry is asking the next administration "to harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground." Toledo alluded to the Tampakan mining project in Mindanao, which is being stalled by a provincial code that still bans open-pit mining.

Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and Kingking, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion and social expenditures by close to P800 million per year, he said.

Royalties to indigenous tribes, meanwhile, would increase by over P600 million annually, he added.

"We in the Chamber are determined to be a strong partner in nation building—one with a strong focus on social development, on minimizing the impact of our operations on the environment, and on ensuring a fair division of economic and financial benefits of mining," said Toledo. —JORDEENE B. LAGARE INQ



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

# Stable biz regime to unlock big mining potential—COMP

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA @jonmayuga

**B**IG players in the mining industry are pushing for a stable business environment to enable the sector to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) defined a stable business environment as something where "policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change midstream."

COMP's Michael Toledo made the pitch in a speech before the members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, an association of diplomats and consular officers. With "estimated untapped mineral reserves worth US\$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 GDP, the Philippines has tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth," Toledo said.

Mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of

the country's export earnings and over 2 percent of GDP, he recalled. Gina Lopez's short stint in the DENR also saw the cancellation of 75 inactive mining contracts – 75 Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSAs) and 1 Financial and/or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) -- for projects near or within watersheds, bringing cheer to environmental groups and anti-mining advocates. She also imposed a ban on open-pit mining methods for select ores.

Under Lopez's successor, Roy A. Cimatu, the mining policies she put in place were slowly reversed, giving mining relief but triggering howls of protest among anti-mining groups.

Toledo noted that in 2020, mining's share in total exports plummeted to 8 percent, and subse-

quently to 0.6 percent. He attributed the decline to a combination of factors, among them the "policy roadblocks" that included the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and a 4-year ban on open-pit mining.

## Tampakan project

ALLUDING to the Tampakan Project in Mindanao that is being stalled by a provincial code that still bans open pit mining, Toledo said the industry needs "the next government to harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground."

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and King-king, can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost US \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million pesos per year. Royalties to indigenous tribes, Toledo added, will increase by over P600 million per year.

"The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts to be one of the most advanced mining laws," he said. "Its social and environmental pro-

visions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it.

"We wish the next government will further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector," Toledo added. He cited the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's support for COMP's adoption of the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) by allowing the industry association's members to allocate a portion of their mandated social development funds for this initiative.

TSM is a growing global standard for best practices in mining. Started in 2004 by the Mining Association of Canada, TSM has proven to be very effective in raising the standards of mining in that country. It is now being implemented in 10 countries.

He said COMP also hopes the next government will continue encouraging increased transparency and reporting of ESG practices in mining.

CONTINUED ON A6

## Stable biz regime to unlock big mining potential—COMP

CONTINUED FROM A16

"With strong support from our current government, our participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) allowed us to further demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in business," Toledo said.

The Philippines was the first of 51 implementing EITI countries found to have satisfactorily met the 2017 EITI Standard for fiscal transparency in the extractives sector.

"We in the Chamber are determined to be a strong partner in nation-building—one with a strong focus on

social development, on minimizing the impact of our operations on the environment, and on ensuring a fair division of economic and financial benefits of mining," Toledo said.

"But first, please allow us to flourish. Modern mining technology, global mining standards, and the increasingly stringent laws of the land governing mining have evolved in the last two decades to assist, enable, and guide the industry to become a responsive partner. We like to think that we have also evolved in lockstep with these developments."



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

# Chamber seeks stable environment for mining

To enable the mining industry to support the country's post-pandemic recovery efforts, the next government must ensure a stable business environment "where policies are reliable, contracts and investments are protected, and the rules do not change mid-stream."

This was emphasized today by Chamber of Mines of the Philippines Chairman Michael Toledo in a speech before members of the Consular Corps of the Philippines, an association of diplomats and consular officers.

In his speech, Toledo said that mining, especially for a country with an estimated untapped mineral reserves of \$1 trillion or equivalent to three times its 2021 GDP, "has a tremendous potential to contribute to socio-economic growth."

Toledo said mining used to be a huge contributor to the Philippine economy, particularly in the 1980s when the industry accounted for 21 percent of the country's export earnings and over 2 percent of GDP.

In 2020, mining's share in total exports plummeted to 8 percent, and to 0.6 percent. He attributed the decline to a combination of factors, among them the "policy roadblocks" that included the recently lifted 9-year moratorium on new mining projects and 4-year ban on open pit mining.

Alluding to the Tampakan Project in Mindanao that is being stalled by a provincial code that still bans open pit mining, Toledo said the industry needs "the next government to harmonize local and national laws to avoid conflicts on the ground."

He said Tampakan, along with two other copper-gold projects Silangan and Kingking, can increase yearly national government revenues by ₱12 billion a year, local government revenues by ₱1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million pesos per year. Royalties to indigenous tribes, Toledo added, will increase by over P600 million per year.

"The Philippine Mining Act of 1995 is considered by many industry experts

to be one of the most advanced mining laws," he said. "Its social and environmental provisions are comparable to measures formulated in industrialized nations. What is needed is to increase the capability of government, both national and local – and the political will – to fully implement it."

"We wish the next government will further its roles as facilitator, partner, and demonstrator of environment, social, and governance (ESG) best practices in the mining sector," Toledo added, citing the Mines and Geosciences

Bureau's support for COMP's adoption of the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) by allowing the industry association's members' to allocate a portion of their mandated social development funds for this initiative.

TSM is a growing global standard for best practices in mining. Started in 2004 by the Mining Association of Canada, TSM has proven to be very effective in raising the standards of mining in that country. It is now being implemented in 10 countries.

He said COMP also wishes the next government will continue encouraging increased transparency and reporting of ESG practices in mining. "With strong support from our current government, our participation in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) allowed us to further demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability in

business," Toledo said. The Philippines was the first out of 51 implementing EITI countries found to have satisfactorily met the 2017 EITI Standard for fiscal transparency in the extractives sector.

"We in the Chamber are determined to be a strong partner in nation building – one with a strong focus on social development, on minimizing the impact of our operations on the environment, and on ensuring a fair division of economic and financial benefits of mining," Toledo said. "But first, please allow us to flourish. Modern mining technology, global mining standards, and the increasingly stringent laws of the land governing mining have evolved in the last two decades to assist, enable, and guide the industry to become a responsive partner. We like to think that we have also evolved in lockstep with these developments." (Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat)



## Angat water down; cloud seeding starts

By RAMON EFREN LAZARO

MALOLOS – Cloud-seeding operations are ongoing at Angat Dam where water elevation continues to recede.

Angat is the primary source of potable water for Metro Manila households. It also provides water to Bustos Dam, which irrigates rice fields in Bulacan and Pampanga, as well as for power generation of the Luzon grid.

Sevillo David Jr., executive director of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), confirmed that the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration have been conducting cloud-seeding operations since last week.

Records from the Bulacan disaster risk reduction and management office showed that the water elevation of Angat was at 192.75 cubic meters

on March 23, but it dropped to 191.96 cu.m yesterday morning.

The water elevation is only 11.96 cu.m above its minimum operating level of 180, and is 20.04 cu. meters below its end of the year normal high water level of 212 cu. meters.

The receding water level prompted the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to further reduce its irrigation supply to its south and north service areas in Bulacan and some parts of Pampanga.

At the start of the dry cropping season, the NWRB allocated a total of 40 cu. m per second to two

service areas of the NIA – 12.15 cms and 28 cms for the south and north zones, respectively – being regulated by Bustos Dam.

Roberto dela Cruz, NIA provincial manager for Bulacan, said the water allocations for their service areas have been reduced, with the north zone allocated only eight cms and the south six cms.

“The reduction in the irrigation allocations in these service areas will take effect at the start of the harvest season with minimal water requirements for maturing rice crops,” David said.





## Editorial

### Determining costs of climate action requires a holistic approach

ONE of the most stubborn arguments offered against taking certain actions to mitigate climate change, or sometimes, against taking any action at all, is that climate mitigation is too costly. Reducing harmful emissions substantially enough to keep global warming below a target of 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius, for example, will cost tens of trillions of dollars, and at least for a period of several years or even a couple of decades, cost at least a few percent in global gross domestic product (GDP).

What makes this argument so persistent and difficult to challenge is that some aspects of it are objectively true. Yes, it will cost a great deal of money to convert a world reliant on fossil fuel to technologies for transportation, energy production, industrial processes and even consumer goods that have significantly less impact on the environment. And yes, given the drastic shifts in lifestyles, labor utilization and travel patterns that conversion will require, economic productivity will inevitably suffer in some areas, and in many scenarios, enough to cause a general decline in growth.

The reason this has persisted is because until recently, there have not been economic models that capture the other side of what in reality is an equation, with costs of climate action on one side, and the avoided costs of climate impact on the other. In a baseline scenario, one in which no action was taken, it is relatively easy to forecast economic growth as long as one overlooks the potential impact of climate change — displaced people, effects on agricultural production, public health effects such as increases in respiratory diseases, and so on. Likewise, it is easy to estimate with a fair degree of accuracy the costs of different climate actions. Thus, the effect on economic growth becomes a simple matter of subtracting the amount of money diverted to climate action from the GDP.

The reason the costs of climate change impacts are overlooked is that they have been notoriously difficult to quantify. We know these costs exist in the sense that we know some people will be displaced, some areas will not be able to produce food, or some people's health and lifespan will be negatively affected, but we do not know the costs well enough to express them in numerical terms. Without that, the argument that "the costs of not taking climate action are ultimately greater than the costs of those actions" cannot be reliably made.

“Dealing with climate change is everyone's business, because everyone is and will continue to be affected by it — even those who would still like to believe it does not exist....”

However, just as our knowledge of the characteristics of human-caused climate change has evolved and expanded over time, so has our knowledge of its specific effects on people and the planet. Numerous research studies over the past two years have used that knowledge to develop increasingly accurate models of the true costs of climate change, to the extent that they properly complete the economic equation and can no longer be disregarded.

All of this means two things for a country such as the Philippines. First, it allows the argument that climate actions are too expensive for the overall economy, such as, for example, retiring coal generating plants in favor of lower-emission or renewable alternatives or removing inefficient, polluting jeepneys from the roads, to be objectively refuted. Second, detailed knowledge of climate impacts and costs allows policymakers to choose more cost-effective and efficient climate mitigation and adaptation actions, whether those are direct actions such as those mentioned above, or social actions aimed at helping affected people cope with a changing environment.

Dealing with climate change is everyone's business because everyone is and will continue to be affected by it — even those who would still like to believe it does not exist, or is not as serious as the prevailing mood of the rest of the world makes it out to be. In order to deal with it effectively, which ideally means dealing with it at the least necessary cost and disruption, a holistic approach needs to be applied, considering not only the costs of doing something, but the costs of doing nothing, or doing the wrong things.



FILE:

PAGE

DATE

03-31-22

## BREAKTHROUGH

ELFREN S. CRUZ

### Two women: A tree whisperer and a friend of chimps

**I**t seems timely that as Women's Month ends and Earth Day on April 22 beckons, the lives of two women pioneers and their lifelong advocacies to Planet Earth and the environment are recognized. They are neither the superstars nor the household names that they should be, unfortunately.



I was intrigued by the idea of a tree whisperer, Canadian forest ecologist Suzanne Simard who talks to the trees, telling them, "I hope I'm helping." Her romance with trees and woodlands must have begun when, as a little girl, she would eat humus – yes, the topsoil of decayed leaves. That she was constantly putting dirt in her mouth did not have dire effects on her. In fact, she said that it was actually good for kids because it builds up their immune systems. She was born into family of loggers, so she grew up with the forest.

The *FT Weekend* (26/27 March) interview with her wittingly says, "Others could not see the forest for the timber. But Simard saw the forest, the trees, the fungi and more. She saw that each part created a 'wood wide bed.'"

When she first joined the predominantly male logging industry in the 1970s, industrial clear-cutting was the norm. A single species of trees was grown, as the old thinking dictated. A Monsanto herbicide was used to kill native seedlings, because it was felt these would crowd out the commercially prized trees. Simard's reaction to that was, planting only single species "strips the trees of all their companions that they need to do other jobs." Diversity, she is convinced, makes for a healthier ecosystem.

Simard's advocacy is not always popular with Big Business. She cites British Columbia's forests which are being turned into wood pellets for Europe as a supposedly green alternative to fossil fuels. There is Amazon shipping s\*\*\* all over the world in boxes made from old forests. She wants a moratorium on cutting down old growth forests, calling them natural "cathedrals" worldwide, except for places where the indigenous people request it.

Ultimately, she says trees and humans are more similar than we might think. Her work, she says, was for her children, especially during their growing up years when she seemed to have neglected them. "My guiding light is to protect the Earth so that we can protect our kids."

The comparison is drawn between Suzanne Simard, lover of trees, and Jane Goodall, lover of chimps, and how their advocacies have neither halted the logging of forests nor the threat to the extinction of chimps. Yet they both soldier on, believing in the good they can continue to do as activists for the environment.

Goodall first drew worldwide attention in 1960 at the age of 26 when she sat for months in the forests of Tanzania, awaiting chimpanzees to accept her presence so she could observe them closely. She made the startling discovery that chimps use tools – it used to be believed that humans were the only animals that used tools or had emotions – and are intelligent social animals. It also paved the way for tighter restrictions on using them for lab testing. It was not as easy as that, for while doing her PhD at the University of Cambridge on the study of animal behavior, she was criticized for using human names and emotions in describing them. "I didn't confront them. I just quietly went on doing what I knew was right." Meanwhile, a special relationship between the chimps and Goodall began.

In the same way that Simard finds company and comfort among the trees ("It is never a quiet place, it's never alone, it's always regenerating and that's the beauty"), so does Goodall feel a special "spiritual connection" with the forest and the animals. "If you're alone, you feel part of nature." She who says she has always loved being by herself continues to feel that link with nature but now hears a plea for help.

When she shifted from research to activism in the 1980s, her non-confrontational approach allowed her to emerge as "one of the most prolific environmentalists in modern history." In the *TIME* magazine Oct. 11/Oct. 18, 2021 cover story on Jane Goodall, it is said that drawing on her life story of a woman living among the animals was a powerful image that enthused people about environmentalism.

The Jane Goodall Institute has since been founded and it has fundraised for habitat conservation, poverty alleviation and animal sanctuaries. Today, the JGI has chapters in 24 countries. She became a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2004.

It is striking how both impassioned advocates for the environment and the earth's resources continue with their efforts infused by much hope. Simard's rage about the old forests disappearing is tempered by optimism. Her research has shown that forests will regenerate and spread rapidly in areas where "mother trees" are left standing.

From where does Goodall's hope emerge in the midst of environmental destruction and violent human conflicts? She cites four reasons: "the amazing human intellect, the resilience of nature, the power of young people and the indomitable human spirit." She considers this hope and her plan to spread it a plan of action so necessary for humanity's survival. Her encouraging words, "If you don't hope that your actions can make a difference, then you sink into apathy." And, "If young people succumb to the doom and gloom – if they lose – that's the end."

We are ready for summer!

Young Writers' Hangouts are on April 9 with Mary Ann Ordinario and April 23 with Roel Cruz. Write Things' six-day summer workshop "Writefest" (now on its 8th year) on May 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27 is now open for registration. Open to 8-17 year olds, it will run from 3-4:30 pm every session.

Contact [writethingsph@gmail.com](mailto:writethingsph@gmail.com). 0945.2273216  
Email: [elfrencruz@gmail.com](mailto:elfrencruz@gmail.com)



# LGUs urged to prioritize ecological concerns

INTERNATIONAL advocacy organization Oceana urged local governments to prioritize fisheries management, ecological protection, promote food and nutritional security, and ensure resiliency of marine habitats and communities from dump-and-fill projects and climate change.

"The local governments have a shared responsibility with national agencies in the maintenance of ecological balance and thus should take the overall responsibility in their jurisdiction that proposed projects do not harm coastal and marine resources and the livelihoods of their constituents including those in residing along the coasts. Allowing ecologically disastrous projects such as dump-and-fill known as land reclamation is inconsistent with that mandate," said Oceana vice presi-

dent Gloria Estenzo Ramos.

Oceana lauded the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) for the strong policy action to deter these projects that violate the right of the people to a healthful and balanced ecology by reminding the local authorities to prioritize ecological protection. "These should be in accord with the local development plans, coastal resource management plan, land use plan, climate change action plan, among others, which local government are tasked to perform," Ramos said.

Oceana unveiled on Tuesday the Citizen Scorecard to strengthen the said policy issuance by the DILG and provide a guiding tool for citizens in the environmental impact assessment and legal safeguards.

The DILG also issued Mem-

orandum Circular 2022-018 that reiterates the responsibility of all LGUs over projects covered by the Philippine Environmental Impact Assessment Statement System (PEISS) and provides the necessary guidelines for them.

Under the PEISS Act and several environmental laws, proposed projects such as dump-and-fill have to be thoroughly assessed in their environmental, climate, cultural, social and health impacts. Violators of the various laws face administrative, civil or criminal liability.

"The scorecard will enable constituents to assess compliance with the existing environmental, fisheries and other related laws in processing application and approval of reclamation projects. Citizens have the most to lose if destructive dump-and-fill proj-

ects and other unwarranted development of coastlines continue to persist," Ramos said.

She explained that the proponents of such projects, including local governments, must not be allowed to circumvent relevant rules and regulations, and cause us to be more vulnerable to the continuing loss and damages on our coasts and oceans amid the declining state of fisheries, biodiversity degradation and climate vulnerability.

Oceana emphasized that dump-and-fill activities all over the country are causing massive and irreversible impacts on coastal and marine ecosystems. "We must protect these resources from which we derive food, livelihood, nutritional security and climate resiliency," Ramos said.

"We urge our fellow Filipinos to use this scorecard as this is an empowering tool for participatory and accountable governance and preventing further environmental impacts of these projects," she added.

**EIREENE  
JAIREE GOMEZ**



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

## 'Prioritize fisheries protection'

BY JED MACAPAGAL

INTERNATIONAL organization Oceana urged local government units (LGUs) to prioritize fisheries management and ecological protection to promote food and nutritional security.

The group cited the need to ensure resiliency of marine habitats

and communities from the effects of dump-and-fill projects, land reclamation and climate change.

"The Philippines has the fifth longest coastline in the world. About 60 percent of its municipalities and cities are coastal, with 10 of the largest cities located along the coast. We rank second in the world (among countries with

the most number of people highly dependent on a healthy marine ecosystem, next to Indonesia. It is incumbent upon LGUs of these municipalities and cities to strictly follow the safeguards in the Philippine EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) system and related

See 'PRIORITIZE' Page A2

rules and regulations," said Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Oceana vice president.

In a statement, Estenzo said LGUs must "exercise great care and caution when they deliberate on dump-and-fill proposals" citing these projects cause permanent and irreversible damage to coastal habitats and estuaries which serve as spawning grounds of many economically important fishes.

Oceana launched the Citizen Scorecard as a tool for citizens in following EIS and legal safeguards to help in avoiding possible harm to marine environment from destructive projects.

"The scorecard will enable constituents to assess compliance with the existing environmental, fisheries and other related laws in processing application and

approval of reclamation projects. Citizens have the most to lose if destructive dump-and-fill projects and other unwarranted development of coastlines continue to persist. The proponents of these projects, including local governments, must not be allowed to circumvent relevant rules and regulations and cause us to be more vulnerable to the continuing loss and damage to our coasts and oceans amid the declining state of fisheries, biodiversity degradation and climate vulnerability," Ramos said.

Oceana said it devised the scorecard for citizens and stakeholders to rate the compliance by proponents of dump-and-fill activities and check if all required steps are fulfilled.

One of the information sought

is whether or not genuine public consultations and public hearings are conducted on the environmental impact study of the project.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said the country's fisheries production last year slightly dropped in 2021 to 4.25 million metric tons (MT) from 4.4 million MT due to lower contribution from commercial fisheries and aquaculture.

Eduardo Gongona, BFAR national director, said at the Blue Economy Growth and Prospects briefing hosted by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, last year's fisheries production totaled 871,236 MT from commercial fisheries, 1.13 million MT from municipal fisheries and 2.25 million MT from aquaculture.



### Maynilad inutusan sa P323 solid-bayad

Makakukuha ng refund na P323 ang mga kostumer ng Maynilad Water Services Inc. sa Parañaque, Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, Pasay City at Cavite dahil sa palpak nitong serbisyo na nagsimula pa noong Disyembre 2021.

Ayon kay Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System

(MWSS) deputy administrator Evelyn Agustin, nasa 198,315 account ang makakatanggap ng rebate na kinuwenta batay sa mga hindi natupad na service obligation ng Maynilad.

Obligado kasi ang Maynilad na bigyan ng 24/7 na tubig ang mga kostumer nila na dapat may lakas o pressure

na 7psi.

Ayon kay MWSS chief regulator Patrick Lester Ty, ang multang P63.97 milyon ng ahensiya sa Maynilad na gagawing rebate para sa mga kostumer ang pinakamalaking multa na ipinataw sa naturang water concessionaire. **(Eileen Mencias)**

31 MARCH 2022, THURSDAY



**DENR**

**NEWS  
ALERTS**

**COVID-19  
NEWS**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



# PH among Asean countries with lowest daily Covid-19 cases

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [March 30, 2022, 1:21 pm](#)



Health Secretary Francisco Duque III

**MANILA** – The Philippines is one of the Asean countries that have logged the lowest number of daily new confirmed Covid-19 cases, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said Tuesday night.

In his presentation to President Rodrigo Duterte, Duque noted that the Philippines only logs 3.45 new infections for every 1 million individuals per day as of March 28.

The Philippines is followed by Cambodia with 3.61 cases; Myanmar with 4.52; and Indonesia, with 17.82.

Citing Our World in Data figures, the countries with the most number of cases include Brunei with 1,968.79 infections; Vietnam, 1,724.56; Singapore, 1,295.34; Malaysia, 615.65; Thailand, 360.67; and Laos, 293.52.

*"Tingnan niyo naman naglipana ang kaso sa mga nasa itaas ng listahan. So, dapat ito ay ipagpatuloy lang natin, basta't maganda po at consistent ang ating pong pagsasakatuparan ng ating mga interventions sa pandemic response na ito (Look at how high the cases are at the top of the list. So, we must continue, good and consistent implementation of our pandemic response interventions),"* Duque said.

In Asia, China has logged the lowest number of cases at only 1.3 per 1 million population.

Covid-19 cases continue to rise in countries in the region due to the spread of the more transmissible Omicron subvariant, BA.2.

The Philippines' cases peaked in January when the Omicron variant entered in December 2021.

For the week of March 23 to 29, the country logged 2,651 new cases, lower than the 3,319 infections from the previous week.

The average daily cases per day is 378.

Only one case was added to the severe and critical cases tally.



The nation's cumulative case fatality rate remained low at 1.61 percent while the recovery rate is at 97.3 percent.

Laboratories nationwide are able to test 21,875 per day and the positivity rate went down to 2 percent this week from last week's 2.5 percent based on the seven-day moving average.

For the healthcare utilization rate, only 17.5 percent of the non-intensive care unit (ICU) beds are utilized while 14.5 percent ICU beds are used.

Severe and critical admissions are at 11.6 percent or 752 of the 6,509 total hospital admissions. **(PNA)**





# 'Don't let your guard down, Covid-19 still exists,' public told

By Lade Jean Kabagani [March 30, 2022, 8:48 pm](#)



(PNA file photo)

**MANILA** – National Task Force (NTF) Against Covid-19 medical adviser Dr. Ted Herbosa on Wednesday cautioned the public anew over being complacent amid the decline of active coronavirus cases in the country.

*“Huwag nating kakalimutan ibaon ang ating mga face mask, surgical mask at N-95 mask. Tuluy-tuloy pa rin ang recommendation ko na huwag nating alisin iyang recommendation na iyan (Don't forget to bring extra face mask, surgical mask and N-95 mask. I continue to recommend that, we should not forgo of that recommendation),”* Herbosa said at the Laging Handa briefing.

Herbosa said there is still a need to continue adhering to the public minimum health standards, even if the vaccination coverage is increasing.

*“Ang experience ng ibang bansa na mataas ang vaccination rate, inalis nila lahat ng mga restrictions, iyong hindi pagsuot ng mask, tinanggal nila. Inalis na nila iyong mask then tumataas iyong kaso nila (We see the experiences of the other countries with high vaccination rate, they remove all the restrictions including wearing of mask. They remove mask requirement, then their cases are now increasing),”* he said.

Herbosa noted the dreaded coronavirus still exists in the country, even in areas under a less restrictive Alert Level 1 system.

*“So, ako ang recommendation ko habang tayo ay nandito pa rin sa alert level 1, mayroon pa ring paisa-isang may Covid diyan at pag nagkasimtomang tayo kahit tayo nasa bakasyon, mag-isolate po tayo para hindi na natin maikalat iyong – kasi siyempre very important iyong minimum public health standards (So my recommendation is that, while we are still under Alert Level 1, there are still few Covid around us and if we have symptoms while in the vacation, we still need to isolate so that we can't spread the virus – because it is still important to adhere to minimum public health standards),”* he said.

Herbosa said people should be vigilant in going to crowded areas because there is also a high chance of spreading the virus.

*“Mas maganda iyong mga bakasyon na medyo hindi masyadong risky. So, gamitin natin iyong ating kaalaman at common sense sa dalawang taon na naman nating ginagawa (Much better if you would go on vacation in not so risky areas. So, we should use our knowledge and common sense, we have been doing this for two years),”* he said.



“So, *hindi na dapat maiba* (it should not change), even if we are allowed to do family vacation or visiting tourist destination *dito sa Pilipinas* (here in the Philippines),” he added.

The Philippines logged 2,651 new cases from March 23 to 29—lower than the 3,319 infections from the previous week.

The average number of daily cases is at 378, with only one case was added to the severe and critical cases tally.

The nation's cumulative case fatality rate remained low at 1.61 percent while the recovery rate is at 97.3 percent. **(PNA)**

31 MARCH 2022, THURSDAY



**DENR**

**NEWS**

**ALERTS**

**VLOGS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



**Please click this link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EhvHfB4Pvc>

MANILA

MANILA BAY TODAY 03-30-2022 DOLOMITE BEACH

4,249 views • Mar 30, 2022

182 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



**KUYARONS TV**  
100K subscribers

**SUBSCRIBE**

03-30-2022 DOLOMITE BEACH MANILA BAY

#manilabay

#dolomitebeach

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UpiL9lbAI0>

#manilabay

MANILA BAY UPDATE MARCH 30, 2022

2,164 views • Mar 30, 2022

78 DISLIKE SHARE THANKS SAVE ...



BTV Pinas  
73.2K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay

SHOW MORE








Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTqTyNAb5vw>

#manilabay

Manila Bay Update March 30, 2022

1,667 views · Mar 30, 2022

 58  DISLIKE  SHARE  THANKS  SAVE ...



BTV Pinas  
73.2K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay

SHOW MORE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqv4Qv8i26g>

#manilabay #rehabilitation #battleformanilabay

Manila Bay Update: March 30, 2022

3,120 views • Mar 30, 2022

126 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



PINOY BLOGGER PH  
29.1K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay #rehabilitation #battleformanilabay #dolomitebeach

SHOW MORE



**Please click this link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iy5ONd1noag>

#manilabay #kainaman #lobobatangas

Maging Ganito lang kaganda ang Manila Bay Wow! Lobo Batangas Long Beach

308 views · Mar 30, 2022

👍 10    🗨️ DISLIKE    ➦ SHARE    💰 THANKS    ⌵ SAVE    ...



**BTV Pinas**  
73.2K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#manilabay  
#kainaman  
#lobobatangas

SHOW MORE





Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDtUJDPj97k>

#MangroverFarm #TayoAngKalikasan #DENR

SUCCESS STORY NG LAGADLARIN MANGROVE FOREST ALAMIN!

1,210 views · Mar 30, 2022

79 DISLIKE SHARE CLIP SAVE ...



engr. berto

194K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

#MangroverFarm #TayoAngKalikasan #DENR

Please don't forget to like, share & subscribe.

SHOW MORE