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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



BIATF, doble-kayod upang matapos na ang rehabilitasyon sa Boracay bago i-turnover sa LGU

By [Bombo Radyo Kalibo](#)

-May 6, 2022 | 5:59 PM

KALIBO, Aklan – Naghahanda na ang Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) sa pangunguna ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa nakatakdang pag-turnover ng pamamahala sa Boracay sa lokal na pamahalaan ng Malay, Aklan.

Ang BIATF ay binuo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa pamamagitan ng Executive Order (EO) 53 noong Mayo 8, 2018 na siyang mamamahala sa isla gayundin ang pagsasagawa ng rehabilitasyon at paglilinis.

Ang termino ng BIATF ay nagtapos noong Setyembre 14, 2021, ngunit ito ay pinalawig pa hanggang Hunyo 30, 2022 sa bisa ng EO 147.

Kasunod ng pagtapos ng kanilang mandato sa isla, nakatakdang i-turnover ng BIATF ang pamamahala sa Boracay sa LGU-Malay.

Nauna rito, umaasa si DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna na maipagpapatuloy ng LGU-Malay ang nasimulang rehabilitasyon sa isla.

Samantala, kinumpirma ni Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group General Manager Martin Jose Despi na nananatiling ligtas paliguan ang baybayin ng Boracay.

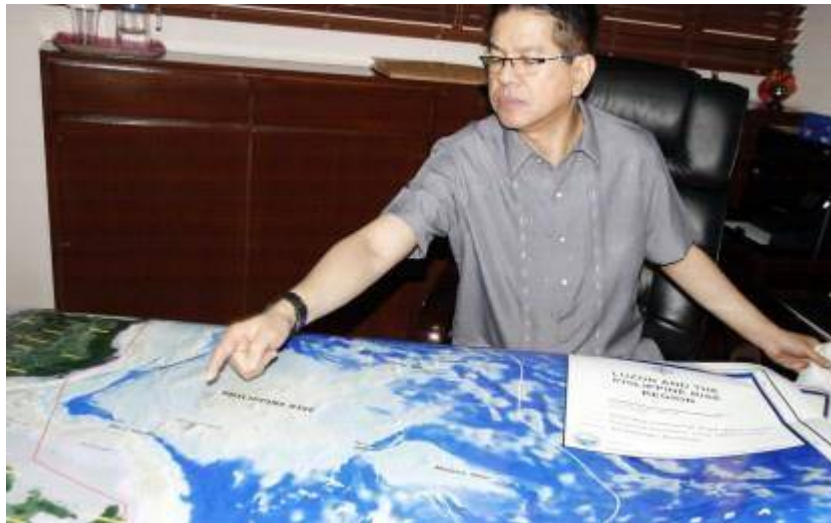
Katunayan ay pasado pa rin ito sa standard fecal coliform level na 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/biatf-doble-kayod-upang-matapos-na-ang-rehabilitasyon-sa-boracay-bago-i-turnover-sa-lgu/>



PH nominates mapping, maritime expert to UN body

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora May 6, 2022, 9:29 pm



Efren Carandang, National Mapping and Resource Information Authority Deputy Administrator *(PNA file photo by Noel D. Veloso)*

MANILA – The Philippines has nominated Filipino ocean governance expert Efren Carandang as member of the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) for 2023 to 2028.

Carandang currently serves as the Deputy Administrator of the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA).

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. hailed the official as the Philippines' foremost authority on the technical intricacies of the law of the sea.

"His stellar career of 38 years is marked by tested strategic planning and management skills, expert knowledge in the use of advanced tools and technologies, and deep, extensive experience in hydrography and understanding of its ramifications in international maritime law," Locsin said in a statement posted by the DFA on Thursday.

"Should Efren be elected, he will dedicate his skills and experience to hasten the consideration of coastal states' submissions on their continental shelves. He will share his management skills to help the CLCS overcome its operational challenges and thereby improve its performance," he added.

The DFA said the election will be held in New York on June 13.

Carandang was part of the core team that developed Manila's April 2009 submission for the 13-million-hectare Philippine Rise, formerly known as the Benham Rise, which had been recognized by the UN body in 2012.

If elected, Carandang would be the first Filipino CLCS member, a milestone for the Philippines as an archipelagic state.



PH nominates mapping, maritime expert to UN body

Locsin said the NAMRIA executive's service to the UN body would be "consistent with his advocacy for the full and consistent application of international law, including UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea), particularly on the determination of maritime entitlements, delineation of maritime zones, and delimitation of international maritime boundaries".

The CLCS was created under the UNCLOS, consisting of 21 experts in the fields of geology, geophysics, and hydrography.

The commission considers the submissions made by coastal states concerning the outer limits of their continental shelf extended beyond 200 nautical miles from baselines and makes recommendations based on the scientific and technical data provided by the coastal state.

Its members serve in their personal capacities and are elected for a term of five years. (PNA)

Trash endgame: Can recycling solve PH's plastic woes?

Job Manahan, ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 06 2022 07:26 AM | Updated as of May 06 2022 08:16 AM



Environmental activists of Greenpeace hold placards and letters as they hold a 'Break Free From Plastics' protest in front of the building where Nestle' Philippines is located, in Makati City on March 23, 2022. *Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News*

This is the last part of a 3-part series. You can read the [first part here](#), and the [second part here](#).

MANILA- While the Philippines sees the plastics upcycling industry expanding, environmentalists believe that much more must be done to address the plastic waste backlog. This is because even if the 3 firms and other recyclers are able to divert tons of plastics into recycled items, the unabated plastics production still cancels this.

Food networks and businesses should instead phase out single-use plastics, the production of which is expected to [increase by 30 percent](#) in the next 5 years, advocates have said.

The Philippines, reportedly the top plastic polluter worldwide, banks largely on sachets and single-use items, with plastic scraps [leaking mostly in rivers](#), based on a recent study.

Some Philippine recyclers have shifted to melting plastic waste and upcycles these into fresh plastic products as furniture and construction materials. A firm, on the other hand, turns polymer trash into ecobricks.

But for the Ecowaste Coalition, this recycling solution is not proactive.

"Yun yung nagiging problema when it comes to these recycling. Jina-justify din at the same time 'yung production. Ang pag-address na when it comes to recycling na more on downstream pa rin yung approach na contrary to zero-waste," its advocacy officer Coleen Salamat said in an interview.

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(That is the problem. This type of recycling justifies the production of plastics. They said this addressed the problem but the approach is still downstream contrary to zero-waste.)

[Groups, scientists bring gov't to court for alleged neglect of PH 'plastics crisis'](#)

"With increasing companies... na may ganitong program, nagiging problematic na siya kasi hindi lahat ng plastic nare-recycle lalo na dito sa Philippines. Hindi nare-recycle yung sachet, so ang ginagawa nila... shine-shred into smaller pieces."

(It is becoming a problem given that there are more companies that have these programs. It is problematic in a sense that not all plastics get recycled in the country. Sachets cannot be recycled so what they do is shred these into smaller pieces.)

In fact, under the National Solid Waste Management Commission's (NSWMC) waste management hierarchy, recycling is not top priority. The most preferred options are the avoidance and reduction of waste. Treatment and residuals management go last.



Workers sort different types of plastic at The Plastic Flamingo upcycling facility in Muntinlupa City on March 18, 2022. The company launched its new recycling line that creates an incentive for plastic sachets to be recycled and turned into materials that can be used to build furniture. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

A Global Plastics Treaty is being [negotiated](#) to cut down plastics use, with nearly 200 nations at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) agreeing to tackle the "full life cycle" of plastics and all the pollution it costs. In March, the parties agreed to make an intergovernmental committee to finalize a legally binding treaty by 2024.

Dr. Jorge Emmanuel, among the scientists who [drafted a declaration](#) backing the negotiations, agreed with the treaty's focus, given the greenhouse emissions from plastic production until they get thrown away and eventually degrade into microplastics.



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"We need to look at the pollution put out and the amount of carbon, this is the link to climate change by the way, produced during the manufacturing of these plastics," noted Emmanuel.

"The solution is not to recycle because it will just add to the pollution problem if not now, in the coming decades. And it continues to require new plastics from fossil fuel," he explained in a Zoom interview.

A study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimated that plastics have produced some [3.4 percent](#) of global greenhouse gas emissions "throughout their life cycle."

Plastics were able to generate 1.8 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2019 alone, 90 percent of which were through their production process from fossil fuels, the OECD report added.

But the organization is pushing for recycling and the prolonging of plastic products' useful life.

While patented environmental plastic solutions "increased more than threefold" from 1990 to 2017, the economic group said this only makes up around 1.2 percent of all plastics-related innovation.

"More ambitious policies are needed including a combination of investments in innovation and interventions aimed at increasing demand for circular solutions while restraining plastics consumption overall," according to the report.

Among the viable solutions that countries should take include strengthening global commitment in making plastics "more circular and achieve net zero plastic leakage."

RECYCLING WOES: 'QUESTIONABLE, LIMITED'

Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives' (GAIA) Asia Pacific coordinator Froilan Grate said plastic upcycling can be an excuse to continue using plastics instead of addressing the pollution problem long-term, describing its capacity in the country as "very limited."

"We know that plastic use is very massive. Yung percentage of that being diverted for use for planks, bricks, eco-fencing... is questionable," Grate told ABS-CBN News.

"Madaling sabihin na sige kolektahin natin lahat ng plastic, gawin nating bricks, planks, or fences pero ang tanong may demand ba for that? Saan gagamitin?" he added.

(It is easy to say that we can collect all plastics and make these as bricks, planks, or fences but the question is — will there be a demand for that? Where will they be used?)



Trash endgame: Can recycling solve PH's plastic woes?



A view of the eco-lumber inside The Plastic Flamingo upcycling factory in Muntinlupa City on March 18, 2022. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

Salamat, on the other hand, said top plastic-producing companies should change their business models instead of diverting the attention to recycling plastics. Initiatives like plastic upcycling can be considered as "false solutions."

"[They should not] produce these kinds of problematic materials, kasi at the very core, problematic na yung ganitong types of plastics and 'yung way nila to address again, hindi siya yung they are really changing their system or business models," Salamat said.

(They should not produce these kinds of problematic materials because at the very core, these plastics are a problem already and their way to address this does not really change their business models or system.)

"This is actually a false solution... because they do not address the problem at source, hindi pa rin nababawasan 'yung production [of plastics]. When we address plastic pollution, it should be reduction sa production."

(The production of plastics remain unabated.)

Environment network Break Free From Plastic's (BFFP) [brand audit](#) in 2021 showed that the same big companies are contributing to the country's plastic pollution in recent years.

Only 8 of the 10 named firms, however, are part of the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS). The coalition, made up of recycling firms and investing corporations, also aims to manage plastic waste and reduce waste generation nationwide by 2030.



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As part of their declaration for the decade, PARMs members are looking into making packaging reusable and recyclable, as well as phasing out non-recyclable products and plastic materials "where environmentally sound and economically viable alternatives exist."

According to PARMs founding president Crispian Lao, the plastic problem still lies with the public and their "lack of discipline" to properly dispose of plastics and the limited infrastructure to "properly collect and dispose" it.

"It's a loop that needs to be fixed," he said.

The rise of these firms means they are on the "right track," a reason why Filipinos must support them.

"Good news yun na lahat sila mage-expand (it is good news that all of them will expand) the beauty of it is, yes it is a niche [market] but there's more, we need more people to patronize these types of materials," said Lao, who is also the commissioner of the NSWMC representing the recycling industry.

The World Bank's Market Study for the Philippines: [Plastics Circularity Opportunities](#) and Barriers published last year noted that as long as the virgin plastic prices remains relatively low compared to recovered plastics, recyclers would struggle to compete.

The study said firms needed to reduce the cost of their recycled plastic resins by up to 30 percent just to make their prices competitive against virgin plastic resins. The cost of recycled ones continue to increase due to "higher living cost requirements for the informal sector and higher cost of waste collection and segregation."

Among the firms ABS-CBN News interviewed for this report, only Plastic Flamingo was set to offer [recycled HDPE](#) pellets, seen as an alternative to virgin plastics. A release date has yet to be et.

"When prices of virgin resins are very low, there is no incentive for converters to use recycled resins. And the product made from virgin resins will always have better performance than recycled resins. It's a disincentive to the recycling industry when virgin resin prices are low," a quote from an unnamed petrochemical company read in the report.

To drive up the demand, World Bank said, the government and industries should intervene given their "critical" roles.

"Structural and systemic corrective measures, especially supporting legislations, are needed to enable decoupling of recycled resins from virgin and to ensure that the recycling industry remains competitive against virgin plastic prices," it said.

But the global financial institution, echoing Lao, lamented the slim chances of plastics' recyclability in the country due to its design, inability of most households to segregate trash, low feedstock quality, high transportation costs, and recyclers' profitability challenges.

These were among the things that should first be addressed to ensure the viability of the country's recycling sector.

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"Due to its archipelagic nature as well as the burdensome and sometimes inconsistent regulations, the Philippines currently has the highest logistics cost base among Southeast Asian countries," the report says about the recyclers' high transportation cost just for plastic collection.

"Other commercialized recycling technologies that produce high-value recycled plastics (such as food-grade rPET, rPE and rPP) require consistent tonnages which is challenged by the complete reliance on collection through informal networks," it added.

EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY?

Lao lamented the "lack of the proper design of the material" of plastics, causing consumers to throw these away at the end of their useful threshold.

What they are pushing for instead is an "inclusive" extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme to manage plastic wastes with stakeholders. This is what the Senate also proposed earlier this year, believing that this could solve Philippines' plastic pollution in the long-run.

The Senate's EPR wanted big plastic producing firms to get the biggest share of accountability on polymer trash.

It fundamentally obliges firms to properly and effectively recover, treat, recycle and dispose of their plastics once they get sold and used. The measure also aims "to reduce packaging waste generation and improve the recyclability and reusability of packaging wastes."

"It is not a solution in itself, but it is a move in the right direction, I believe. We need to rescue our country from being a marine litter culprit and demonstrate that a developing country can and will make this work," said Senator Cynthia Villar, who chairs the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change.

An EPR that PARMS wanted was something that could empower recycling firms and local governments' materials recovery facilities, proposing instead a concept of "plastic credits."



Workers shred and pack plastic bottles at one of Green Antz' sites in Plaridel, Bulacan. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*



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Based on the organization's model, waste diverters, for example a recycling firm or LGU, get credits according to how much plastics they were able to divert from landfills and nature. A separate body will audit this according to their accounting standards and certify their work. These credits can be sold to entities for their EPR initiatives.

The non-profit group, composed of several fast-moving consumer goods companies, is also suggesting a "certification of the diversion output" for accountability purposes.

"Waste footprint owners can directly recover and divert waste, enter into an agreement with a waste diverter or put up recycling and treatment infrastructure to reach their diversion rate target or buy credits from licensed waste footprint diverters to meet their target," it reads.

Aside from this, PARMS is promoting bulk purchases and the shift to colorless plastic bottles, to increase the products' recyclability.

"They have to go above board to go documented also. We help them bring them above. We have a better accounting of how much materials, what those materials, what [is] being done with the materials rather than the quantity," the commissioner said of the importance of their proposal.

"We will address. While we are promoting or looking more to circularity, the infrastructure for that circular model will also be provided... at least now that we have a roadmap to guide us. The roadmap.... will be continuously developed."

While Grate agreed that the EPR bill should involve stakeholders, the emphasis should not be on plastics alone: "It should be covering all waste stream."

The public should watch out, he noted, for possible narratives that will be "friendly" to companies, including shifting the burden to consumers "to divert the attention from the producer to everyone on board."

"I think what is worth celebrating is the recognition, na yung pananagutan ng kumpanya does not end the moment they produce and they sell the product, and in fact, sa buong life cycle ng produkto na binebenta nila, may pananagutan sila," he said.

(That the company's accountability does not end the moment they produce and they sell the product, and in fact they will be accountable for the plastic products' whole life cycle.)

"Tama naman may pananagutan yung consumer, yung local governments, pero yung pananagutan na yun, follows after na-address ng kumpanya yung problem nila. It is not about passing the blame, it is about solving the problem sa umpisa pa lang."

(It is true that the consumer and local governments must be held accountable too but this follows only after the company addressed their own plastics problem already.)

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS: TO STOP OR NOT TO STOP

But for newly-installed Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna, a country's capacity and capability to manage, recycle, and recover plastic wastes [should be taken into consideration](#) given the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations.



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Sampulna emphasized the need for urgency in responding to environmental problems, including plastic pollution, as the public continues to experience "the massive choking of our oceans because of plastics, the rise of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19, and the deterioration of our health from chemical and wastes."

"The environmental repercussions we are experiencing are all traceable to us humans such as climate change that intensifies hazards creating disasters worldwide," his statement reads.

He has also called for the phasing out of single-use plastics, fearing that plastic pollution has already become "uncontrollable."

"I myself, the DENR is supporting the bill banning the use of small plastic, ano. Kasi iyan ang hindi natin naku-control - shampoo, sabon, all of these things, hindi natin naku-control ito," he said in mid-March.

(We cannot control it anymore - shampoo, soaps (plastic products), all of these things cannot be controlled anymore.)

This problem was recognized by the Supreme Court last year when it issued a [Writ of Kalikasan](#) against the government over the sale and manufacture of unacceptable plastic products, a move that aimed to regulate single-use plastics.

Around 50 members of Oceana Philippines, scientists, and fisherfolk [brought the government to court](#) last year for its alleged neglect of the country's plastic pollution problem.

"The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act has faced more than two decades of neglect by the NSWMC, compounding the burgeoning plastic crisis in the Philippines," Oceana said.

For Emmanuel, recycling is "not a solution" even if it "plays an important role for the interim."

"We need to start working on alternatives... We will still need some plastics, even a treaty it will take some time, that's why recycling of safe plastics will continue to be something that will be needed," he said, stressing the need to cut down single-use plastics production.

Lao urged caution on phasing out single-use plastics and even banning them. Several areas in the country, including [Quezon City](#), have banned plastic straws and plastic bags, and other single-use materials.

The plastics industry recognizes the problem of plastic pollution, he said, but there must be an alternative packaging before the ban on plastics comes into full force.

"We have to be cognizant that if we move towards less plastics, better plastics, and no plastic at all, we have to make sure that we avoid the unintended consequence of multimedia transfer of environmental impacts other way," he explained.

"There are a lot of plastics in the system than what can be addressed...at the end of [its useful] life... While we are searching for alternatives to plastic packaging that would meet the objective of serving and protecting the consumers at the lowest cost possible, we are also developing the pathways and the infrastructure to address the waste," he explained.



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"If we are not using plastics, what are we going to use?"

For Oceana, Greenpeace, and GAIA, the shift to refillable containers and zero-waste initiatives are still the best alternatives for now, noting that these are not foreign concepts to Filipinos. The call for phasing out single-use plastics must also be sustained.

"Introducing reusable containers from the end of the consumers and also the consumer goods industry, they could start supplying or developing mga goods or products that are more for refilling," said Ledesma.

"If you have liquids, provide products in bulk to retailers and then set up reuse systems so people can just refill... That's a more circular solution," she added.

Oceana, meanwhile, urged the public to keep their homes plastics-free through [these methods](#):
How to make your household environment-friendly, plastics-free

Gloria Ramos, Oceana Philippines vice president, last month called for more refillable glass bottles since recycling "is not working" anymore to save the oceans.

"There is no way to fully control where a single-use plastic bottle ends up. It could be in a recycle bin, in the trash, on the street, or in the ocean," Ramos said in her presentation for Earth Day, April 22.

Local governments share the burden now on plastic pollution, which she said "can no longer be managed."

GAIA, meanwhile, is suggesting zero-waste initiatives, which they said reduce waste output by up to 80 percent. This has been attainable in some 400 municipalities in Europe, they said, with cities in the region and Asia also following suit.

This can begin through the following:

Reducing waste generation by being conscious consumers, and by focusing on reuse and repair

Separating discards

Home composting

Creating new business out of recyclables and organics

Educating the public to increase participation in such initiatives.

EXPERTS: SOLUTION LIES WITH PUBLIC, GOVERNMENT

But for Jove Benosa, Ecowaste Coalition's zero waste campaign officer, unless the country has a proper and enabling infrastructure to "effectively" recycle plastics, the pollution will continue.

"Bahagi ang recycling ng 3Rs pero may mga missteps doon sa recycling at may mga gaps sa paraan ng recycling. Nandoon yung incorrect sorting, tapos yung waste contaminated na, nadagdagan pa ng... kulang pa ang infrastructure sa kasalukuyan para effectively ma-recycle ang product or material," noted Benosa.

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(Recycling is part of the 3Rs but there were missteps and gaps in recycling. There is the incorrect sorting, the contamination of waste, and the lacking infrastructure to effectively recycle the product or material.)

The World Bank also raised the challenges some leaders face when it comes to waste management. A local chief executive, for example, can only sign solid waste management contracts for the duration of their time in office, limiting them from implementing long-term policies.

"The lack of funding to implement the legislation and infrastructure such as [materials recovery facilities are] cited as the key contributing factor to the failure to have widespread source-segregation," it said.

"Regulatory actions are necessary to create an enabling environment for plastics circularity. While voluntary commitments by the industry are a step in the right direction, they are not enough to divert plastic waste away from landfills and the open environment or tackle the marine plastics issue."

The upcycling industry in the country can still improve as long as this is strengthened and developed to include government support, UP Diliman teaching associate and materials engineer Ricardo Sirot, Jr., told ABS-CBN News.

"Once you have the right technology in place, adapted locally, all you need is the enabling environment – yung mga (the) policies, regulations, national, local policies and a comprehensive solid waste management framework," he said.



Workers produce bricks mixed with upcycled plastics at Green Antz' site in Plaridel, Bulacan. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*



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The EPR bill, once signed into a law for example, can "promulgate" such industries and can be a "stepping stone in achieving proper waste management."

"You are encouraging these producers, plastics, to manage their own waste... By such, I think lalago yung industry by then," he added.

(I think the industry will grow by then.)

For his part, Emmanuel said the public plays a key role in solving plastic pollution by being conscious with their behaviors as consumers, urging them to also think about the children.

"I believe very strongly that the problem with waste is not a technological problem. It is an issue having to do with our behaviors as consumers," the scientist said.

"This is the environment not only for ourselves but for future generations. That is an important moral imperative for all of us."

This series was done under the GAIA-Break Free From Plastic Asia Pacific fellowship.



'Vote for those who'll stop river dredging'



By [Leander C. Domingo](#)

May 6, 2022

APARRI, Cagayan: Fisherfolk here have called on the electorate to vote for candidates who oppose the [Cagayan River Restoration Project](#) that they say has sharply decreased the catch and destroyed the livelihood of 15,000 people and their families.

"Those behind the river dredging for black sand mining in Cagayan have no regard for life," according to this town's fishermen who spoke at a virtual news conference on Tuesday.

"Our catch has dwindled since the dredging began. The tons of fish we usually get are gone," Marlyne Bugarin, wife of a fisherman and dried fish vendor, said in the vernacular.

The fishermen claim that dredging activities have shattered the habitat and spawning cycles of fish and other marine resources including the aramang or soft-shelled link shrimps, the binnek and unnok clams and catadromous fishes like ludong, all endemic to the area.

They also claim that before the dredging operations began in early 2021, they earned from P3,000 to P7,000, which were reduced to P300 to P1,000 each for three days' work during the period from December 2021 to April 22 when there were already dredging activities.

The fishermen called on the next Philippine president who will be elected in the May 9, 2022 polls to issue an executive order to stop the government-led dredging that aims to desilt the Cagayan River and make way for the construction of an international seaport in this town.

Town parish priest [Fr. Manuel Catral](#) said the project presents a clear and present danger to the people.

"What use will the port have when there is no catch? What use is development when there is no food? What use is development when the environment is ruined?" Catral also said, speaking in the vernacular alongside the fishermen.

Former fisheries instructor at [Cagayan State University](#) and long-time advocate for the fisherfolk [Antonio Liquigan](#) noted that the dredging project is good to prevent flooding in upstream Cagayan including [Tuguegarao City](#).

He, however, said dredging is not the only solution, and it should take into account its impact on all communities.

"If you think about it, more lives will be sacrificed if this continues. It's as if the fisherfolk are worthless. They do not recognize that fisherfolk have the same dignity as they have," Catral added.

Earlier, the Mines and [Geosciences Bureau](#) (MGB) in Region 2 disputed claims made by the fishermen that the dredging project is related to black sand mining.

Engineer [Mario Ancheta](#), MGB Region 2 director, said an earlier bureau-led investigation has proved that there are no black sand mining activities in the dredging project of the government to desilt the Cagayan River.



'Vote for those who'll stop river dredging'

"There is no black sand mining that is taking place in the ongoing dredging of the heavily-silted Cagayan River and that the dredging will not affect the aramang catch in the coastal town of Aparri," he added.

Ancheta noted that although the [Bureau of Fisheries](#) and Aquatic Resources in Region 2 has confirmed the decrease of aramang catch in the town, he said this has been going on for the past seven years and is not in any way related to the river dredging activities.

"The fishermen have mistaken the government dredging project to restore the Cagayan River for that of black sand mining and the ongoing dredging activities," An



Burnham, sewerage projects on hold for lack of funds: TIEZA

By Liza Agoot May 6, 2022, 5:05 pm



ON HOLD. A view of Baguio City's Burnham Park, which was supposed to undergo a PHP400-million improvement project, in this file photo. The project, however, was put on hold due to the lack of funds amid the pandemic. *(PNA photo by Liza T. Agoot)*

BAUKO, Mountain Province – The Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) said the big-ticket projects they had committed to financing before the pandemic are still suspended due to lack of funding.

"They are suspended but we are not canceling the assistance to the projects," said Mark Lapid, chief operating officer, in a press conference on the sidelines of the formal re-opening of the Mount Data Hotel here on Thursday.

The official said that with the travel of people being scarce, TIEZA was unable to receive travel taxes, the agency's main source of funds.

"There is no money. The funds of TIEZA have been used for the pandemic response of the government at the height of the (coronavirus disease 2019) pandemic," Lapid said.

In 2019, TIEZA approved funds of over PHP400 million for the rehabilitation and improvement of Burnham Park, aside from the city's sewerage treatment plant.

The whole Burnham Park reservation used to be under the management of the TIEZA but was ceded to the city government in early 2000.

Lapid said TIEZA is in the process of filing a loan to finance its various projects.

"Baka maisama ang Baguio projects (We hope that the projects in Baguio will be included)," he said. *(PNA)*

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1173817>

'Work closely with communities': BAN Toxics on citizen participation in research and development in the ASGM sector in the PH

[Friday, May 6, 2022 Journal Online](#)



Several environmental organizations on Thursday, May 5, gathered during the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)'s D-Tox Session which aimed to discuss various toxic and waste issues in the Southeast Asia (SEA) region.

The topic of the D-Tox Session was Citizen Science: A strategic approach to solving toxic waste and chemical issues in the region. The event was attended by participants from the Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Taiwan.

Among the resource speakers was environmental watchdog BAN Toxics which was represented by their Policy and Research Officer, Jam Lorenzo. Lorenzo spoke about citizen participation in research and development in the Filipino artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) communities.

"[BAN Toxics](#) has been working with the ASGM sector for more than a decade, and what this has taught us is that we need to recognize community expertise and knowledge in conducting research as a valuable resource that helps us to understand situations more clearly and allows us to work more closely with communities," said Jam Lorenzo.

Founded in 2006, BAN Toxics is a non-profit, non-governmental organization whose mandate is to promote sound chemicals and wastes management. The organization was established to respond to urgent waste and chemicals issues besetting the Philippines. BAN Toxics' current grassroots interventions include capacity building programs for the ASGM communities in the Philippines.



'Work closely with communities': BAN Toxics on citizen participation in research and development in the ASGM sector in the PH

Citizen science is a [strategic tool that empowers communities](#) affected by toxic and waste issues with data and knowledge they can use to exercise their rights to a healthy and safe environment.

The D-Tox session was conceived in 2020 as a virtual platform for non-government organizations in Southeast and East Asia which are members of the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) to discuss various toxic and waste issues in the region. Additionally, D-Tox is also an online capacity-building platform that helps POs improve their performance.

Furthermore, the session was also attended by CitizenScience.Asia, EARTH Thailand, ECOTON Indonesia, Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) Philippines, Taiwan Watch Institute, and Greeners Action Hong Kong.

This D-Tox session was organized by IPEN, with the help of CitizenScience.Asia, Ecological Alert, and Recovery Thailand, and EcoWaste Coalition.

TIGNAN: Nasabat ng mga otoridad ang daan-daang sako ng mga corals na iligal na kinuha sa Barangay Dapdap, Pilar, Sorsogon at ibebenta umano sa labas ng nasabing probinsiya.

Arestado ang dalawang suspek na pawang mga residente ng Brgy. Del Rosario, Pilar Sorsogon, isang truck driver at 43-anyos na lalaki ng Brgy. Palanas, Pilar Sorsogon na inaming ang mga kontrabando ay ipapadala sa hindi pinangalanang consignee sa lalawigan ng Pampanga.

Nasa kustodiya na ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Regional Office V ang mga nakumpiskang 200 sako ng corals kabilang ang Isuzu truck, ang gamit na sasakyan.

Paglabag sa Section 96 at 97 ng Republic Act 10654 o "An Act Prevent to Deter and Eliminate illegal in Reported in Regulated Fishing" amending Republic Act 8550 o ang "Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998" ang isasampung kaso laban sa mga suspek.

Nakasulat sa section 96, ang pagbabawal sa pagsasamantala at pag-export ng corals ay labag sa batas para sa sinumang tao o korporasyon na mangalap, magmay-ari, maghatid, magbenta, o mag-export ng ordinaryong, at mahalagang mga korales, hilaw man o nasa prosesong anyo, maliban sa mga layuning pang-agham o pananaliksik.

Labag din sa batas para sa sinumang tao, korporasyon, o entity na gumawa ng anumang aktibidad na pumipinsala sa mga coral reef.

Ang may-ari/operator ng sasakyang pangingsda, kapitan ng bangka, master fisherman, at recruiter o tagapag-ayos ng mga manggagawang isda ay paparusahan ng administratibong multa na katumbas ng walong halaga ng corals na natipon, ibebenta o eexport at ito ay nagkakahalaga ng Php 500,000.00 hanggang Php 10,000,000.00, na kung saan ay mas mataas, at forfeiture ng corals. Ang nagkasala ay dapat ding magbayad ng kabayaran para sa pagpapanumbalik ng mga nasirang coral reef.

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'Climate change is human rights issue' — CHR

Published May 6, 2022, 4:30 PM

by [Czarina Nicole Ong Ki](#)



Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

"Deliberate obstinacy" on the part of the government to address climate change "could be equated to violations of the human rights of its citizens."

This was stressed by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Friday, May 6, as it released its report on National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC).

The report detailed the duties and responsibilities of the government and private businesses in addressing climate change and protecting the environment.

"The findings and recommendations in the report are informed by science and governance experts, and may be considered by political and executive branches of government, as well as by courts," the CHR said.

It said "the report intends to help identify and elaborate on basic rights and duties relative to climate change, as well as to amplify standards for corporate behavior."

The report was released at the CHR's central office in Diliman, Quezon City. Former CHR Commissioner Roberto Eugenio Cadiz released the report as focal commissioner handling the NICC.

Cadiz stressed that climate change is a human rights issue and the government has "the duty to address the issue."

In its 161-page report, the CHR recommended that the Philippine government should commit to the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs) and formulate a national action plan on business and human rights.



'Climate change is human rights issue' — CHR

The commitment, it said, will ensure that business enterprises, in the conduct of activities, do not violate the fundamental freedom of individuals and communities.

In the report, the CHR also recommended that the government declare a climate and environmental alert.

"The government must recognize the need for urgent measures to address the impacts of climate change. There must be acknowledgment that anthropogenic climate change, if left unmitigated, can lead to global extinction," it said.

It also recommended the adoption of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-Sustainable Transport Initiative to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transport sector.

"This includes policies that will discourage unnecessary travel, create more energy efficient routes, modernize railways and the public transport system, and improve vehicle energy efficiency through better inspection and enforcement," the CHR said.

To have an effective adaptation of climate action, the CHR stressed that there must be a proper framework policy mandating the sharing, reporting, and verification of climate data from scientists, meteorologists, and researchers from the government and private sector.

The framework policy will lead to better infrastructure development, coastal planning, climate risk reduction, and forest management, it pointed out.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

After a slightly cooler 2021 on the Earth's surface, the world is on track for 2022 to be somewhere between the fourth and eighth warmest year since records began in the mid-1850s.



Three women make use of their time stuck in traffic on an open-air bus in the heat and humidity of Manila, Philippines. Image: [Wayne S. Grazio, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Zeke Hausfather, [Carbon Brief](#)
10 minute read May 6, 2022

It is very unlikely to be a record warm year due to moderately strong [La Niña](#) conditions in the early part of the year that are projected to continue for at least the next six months.

Not every year is expected to set a new record for the surface – and 2022 annual temperatures will likely end up well in-line with the long-term warming trend that the world has experienced over the past five decades.

The first four months of 2022 were the fifth warmest start to a year on record so far. March 2022 saw record warmth over China and large parts of southern Asia, as well as exceptionally high temperatures in the Arctic. In Antarctica, a March heatwave saw temperatures nearly 40C above normal in the eastern part of the continent.

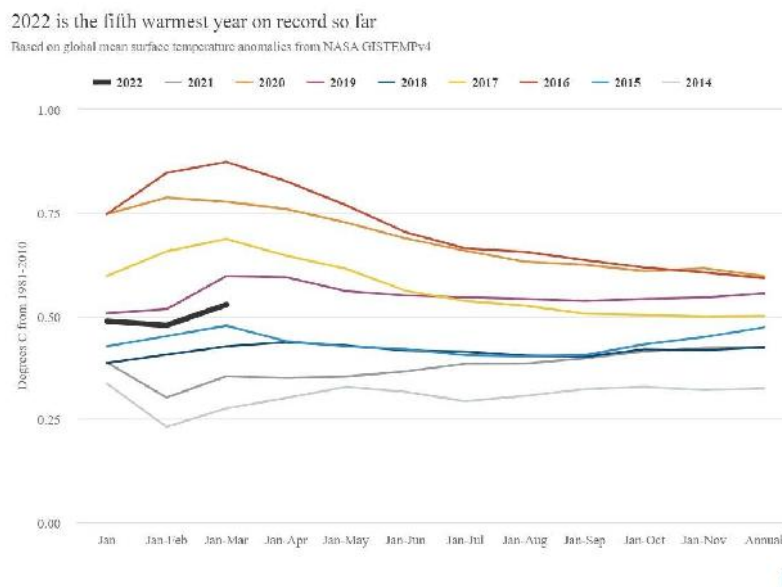
Arctic [sea ice](#) currently is on the low end of its historical range, while Antarctic sea ice saw the lowest sea ice extent on record in late February.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

Fifth warmest year on record so far

Global surface temperatures are recorded and reported by a number of different international groups, including [NASA](#), [NOAA](#), [Met Office Hadley Centre/UEA](#) and [Berkeley Earth](#). [Copernicus/ECMWF](#) also produces a surface temperature estimate based on a combination of measurements and a weather model – an approach known as “[reanalysis](#)”.

The temperatures in the first three months of 2022 were the seventh warmest first quarter of the year on record, behind all of the past six years – but warmer than every year on record prior to 2015. The figure below shows how temperatures to-date compare to prior years in the NASA dataset. It shows the temperature of the year-to-date for each month of the year, from January through to the full annual average.



Year-to-date temperature anomalies for each month from 2014 to 2022 from [NASA GISTEMP](#). Anomalies plotted with respect to a 1981-2010 baseline. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

The table below shows the ranking of months in 2022 compared to the same month in all prior years since records began.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

	NASA	Hadley/UEA	NOAA	Berkeley	Copernicus
Jan	6th	6th	6th	6th	6th
Feb	6th	9th	7th	8th	6th
Mar	5th		5th	5th	5th

Rankings of 2022 temperatures by month across different datasets. Note that Hadley and Berkeley go back to 1850, NASA and NOAA go back to 1880, and Copernicus/ECMWF is only available since 1979.

January and March were the sixth and fifth warmest, respectively, across all the datasets. February was a bit cooler, coming in at somewhere between the sixth and ninth warmest on record.

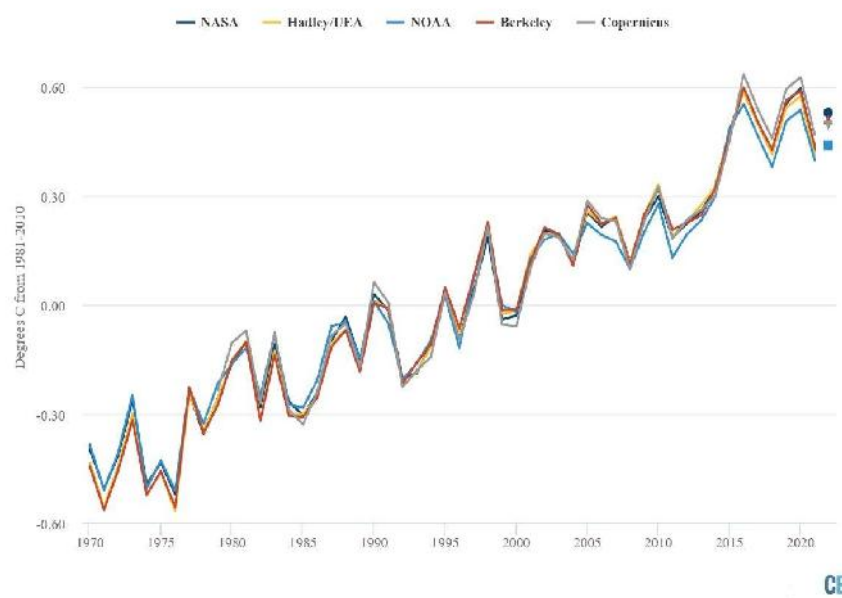
The chart below compares the annual global surface temperatures from these different groups since 1970 – or 1979 in the case of Copernicus/ECMWF. The coloured lines show the temperature for each year, while the dots on the right-hand side show the year-to-date estimate for January to March 2022.

Values are shown relative to a common [baseline period](#) – the 1981-2010 average temperature for each series. Surface temperature records have shown around 0.9C warming since the year 1970, a warming rate of about 0.19C per decade.

Year-to-date values are not yet available from Hadley/UEA due to reporting delays for March. The values in this chart will be updated when that data becomes available.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

Global surface temperature records, 1970-2021, and 2022 to-date



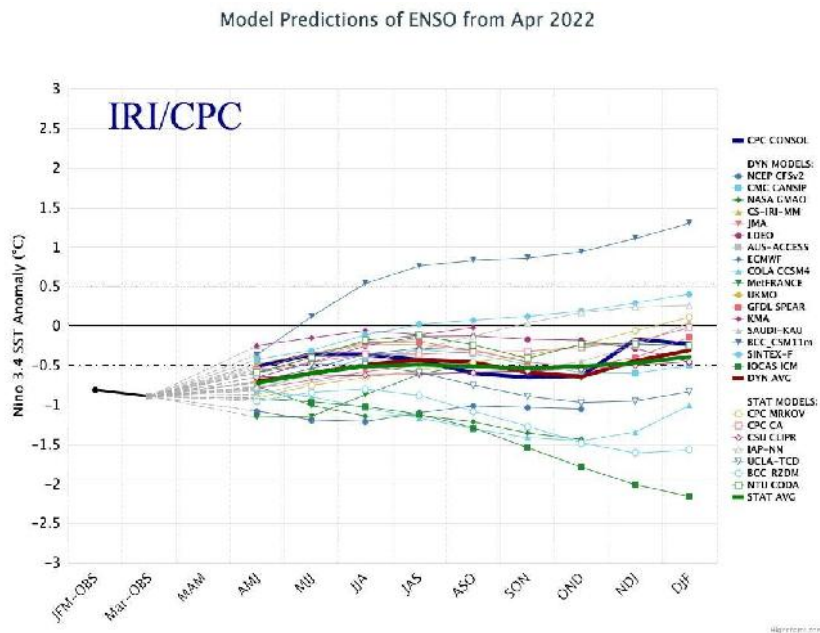
Annual global mean surface temperatures from [NASA GISTEMP](#), [NOAA GlobalTemp](#), [Hadley/UEA HadCRUT5](#), [Berkeley Earth](#), and [Copernicus/ECMWF](#) (lines), along with 2022 temperatures to-date (January-March, coloured dots). Anomalies plotted with respect to a 1981-2010 baseline. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

[El Niño and La Niña events](#) – collectively referred to as the El Niño Southern Oscillation, or ENSO – are the main driver of year-to-year variation on top of the long-term surface warming trend. ENSO events are characterised by [fluctuations in temperature](#) between the ocean and atmosphere in the tropical Pacific, which help to make some years warmer and some cooler.

The La Niña conditions seen in the early part of 2022 are likely to continue through the remainder of the year, though most models show a slight weakening of La Niña and the possibility of a “neutral” ENSO by the end of the year.

This can be seen in the figure below, which shows a range of [ENSO forecast models](#) produced by different scientific groups, with the average for each model type shown by thick red, blue and green lines. Positive values above 0.5C indicate El Niño conditions, negative values below -0.5 show La Niña conditions and values between the two represent ENSO neutral conditions.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record



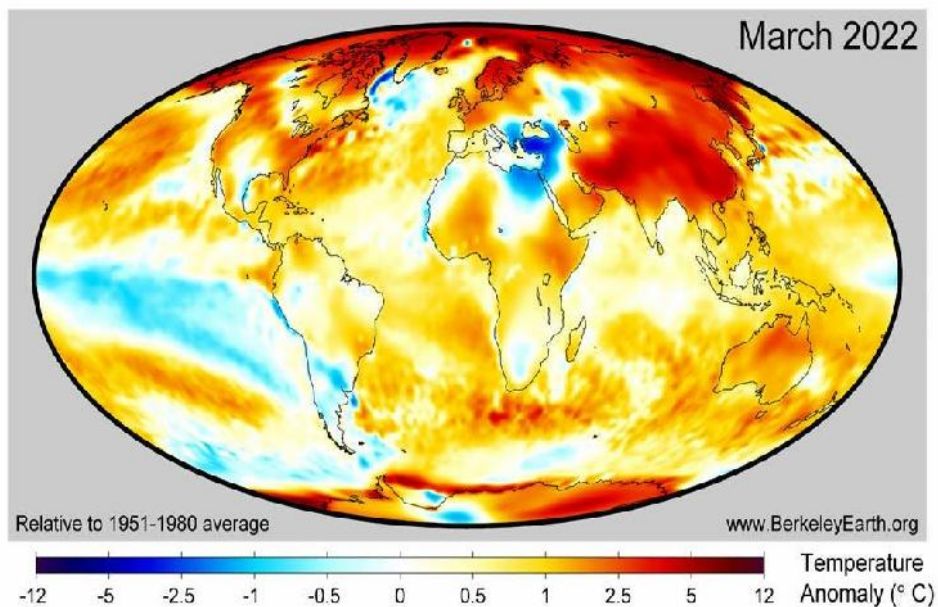
El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) forecast models for three-month periods in the [Niño3.4 region](#) (March, April, May - MAM - and so on), taken from the [IRI/CPC ENSO forecast](#).

Global temperatures tend to lag behind ENSO conditions by a few months, so the current cooler global conditions may persist even after the La Niña event has ended.

Exceptional warmth in some regions

Despite only being the fifth warmest year on record to-date, 2022 has seen exceptional warming in a number of regions in the first quarter of the year, including record-setting heatwaves in both poles. As the map below illustrates, much of Asia, the Arctic and parts of the Antarctic saw particularly warm conditions in March.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

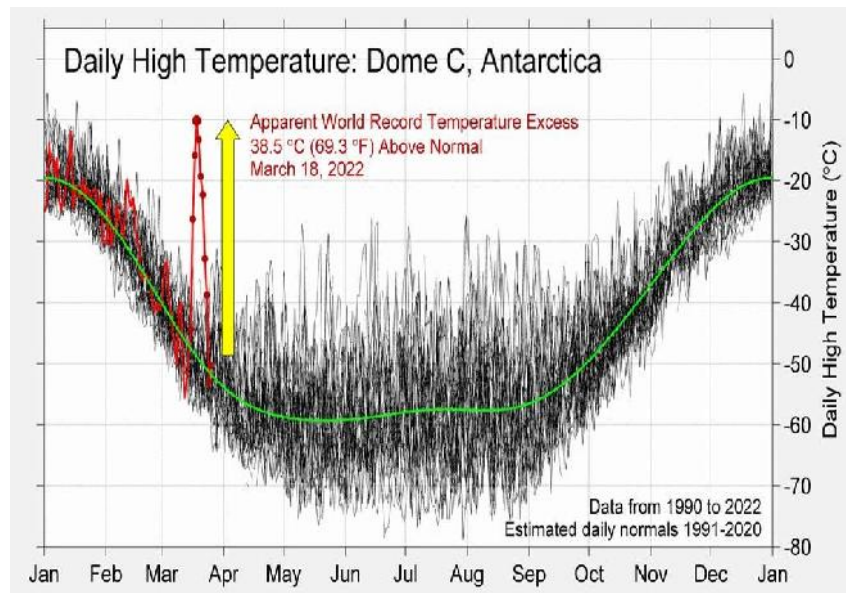


Distribution of global temperature anomalies in March 2022, relative to a 1951-80 baseline period. Figure from [Berkeley Earth](https://www.berkeleyearth.org).

Portions of southern Asia – including much of China and India – experienced record warmth in March 2022. According to analysis by [Berkeley Earth](https://www.berkeleyearth.org), 4.2 per cent of the Earth’s surface had the hottest March on record, while 79 per cent was warmer than during the 1951-80 baseline period used by Berkeley Earth. No location on Earth saw a record-cold March.

The most remarkable climate event of the first quarter of the year occurred in East Antarctica in March, where some regions experienced temperatures [nearly 40C above normal](#) for the time of year. The [Dome C temperature station](#) in Antarctica set a world record for the largest temperature excess above normal ever measured at a weather station, as shown in the figure below.

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Daily temperatures at Dome C, Antarctica, from 1990 through 2022, with the exceptional heat wave during March 2022 shown by red dots. Figure from [Berkeley Earth](#).

This event also coincided with record-low Antarctic sea ice cover and an ice shelf in East Antarctica the size of New York City [collapsed into the ocean](#).

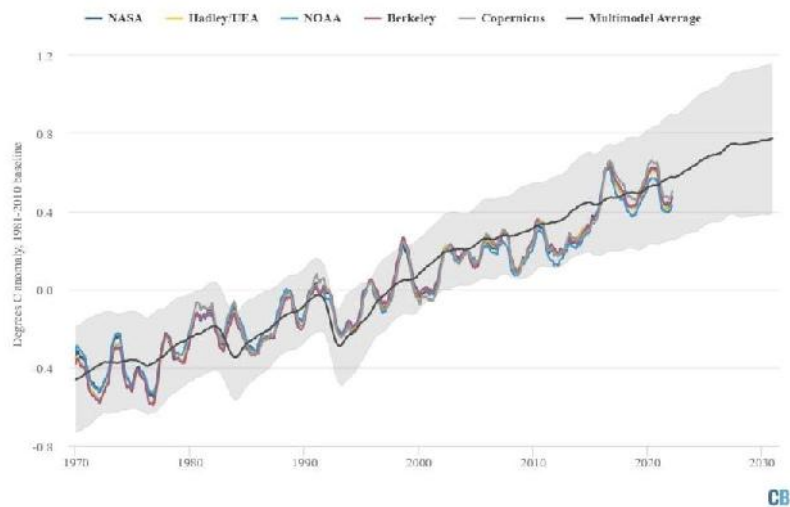
Climate models and observations

[Climate models](#) provide physics-based estimates of future warming given different assumptions about future emissions, greenhouse gas concentrations and other [climate-influencing factors](#).

The figure below shows the range of individual model forecasts featured in the IPCC's AR5 – known collectively as the [CMIP5 models](#) – between 1970 and 2030. The black line and grey shading indicate the average projection and spread, respectively, across all the models. Individual observational temperature records are represented by coloured lines.

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Global surface temperatures 1970-2022: climate models and observations



Twelve-month average global average surface temperatures from [CMIP5 models](#) and observations between 1970 and 2030. Models use RCP4.5 forcings after 2005. They include sea surface temperatures over oceans and surface air temperatures over land [to match what is measured by observations](#). Anomalies plotted with respect to a 1981-2010 baseline. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

The latest generation of models – [CMIP6](#) – are not compared to observations in this state of the climate report. The most recent report from the IPCC’s [sixth assessment report](#) (AR6) has changed the way that the ensemble of models is used.

Rather than simply taking the average of all the models (and their range) – as was the case in previous IPCC reports – the IPCC decided to use a weighted subset of models that agreed well with historical observations. This also reflected a [narrowing of climate sensitivity](#) in the most recent IPCC report – such that a number of new models fall outside the “very likely” sensitivity range.

While the IPCC AR6 provided a new set of future “assessed warming” projections, these start in the year 2015, which makes comparisons with observations over such a short period not very informative. Carbon Brief will have more on this subject soon, including a discussion of how to best use CMIP6 model data consistent with the AR6 approach.

Sea ice

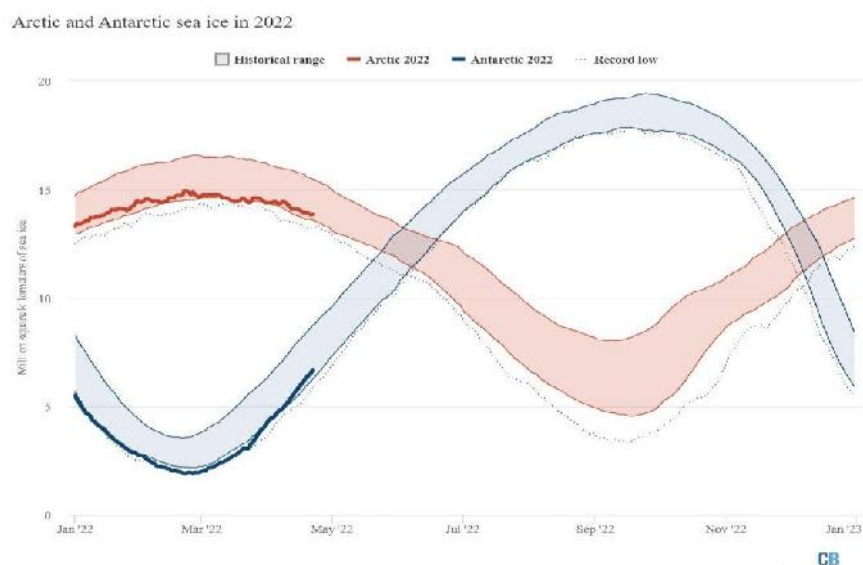
Arctic sea ice extent spent much of early 2022 [at the low end of the historical 1979-2010 range](#), but only came close to setting a new record daily low in early March. There is generally less variability in year-to-year Arctic sea ice extent in the winter than in the summer, as cold winter temperatures refreeze large portions of the Arctic even in a warmer world.

Antarctic sea ice, on the other hand, was at or near record lows for all of 2022 to date. Late February saw the [lowest Antarctic sea ice extent since records began](#), though the degree to which

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

this was driven by climate change [remains unclear](#) given the lack of a clear long-term trend in the region – unlike in the Arctic, where sea ice declines are clearly driven by warming.

The figure below shows both Arctic and Antarctic sea ice extent in 2022 (solid red and blue lines), the historical range in the record between 1979 and 2010 (shaded areas) and the record lows (dotted black line). Unlike global temperature records (which only report monthly averages), sea ice data is collected and updated on a daily basis, allowing sea ice extent to be viewed through to the present.



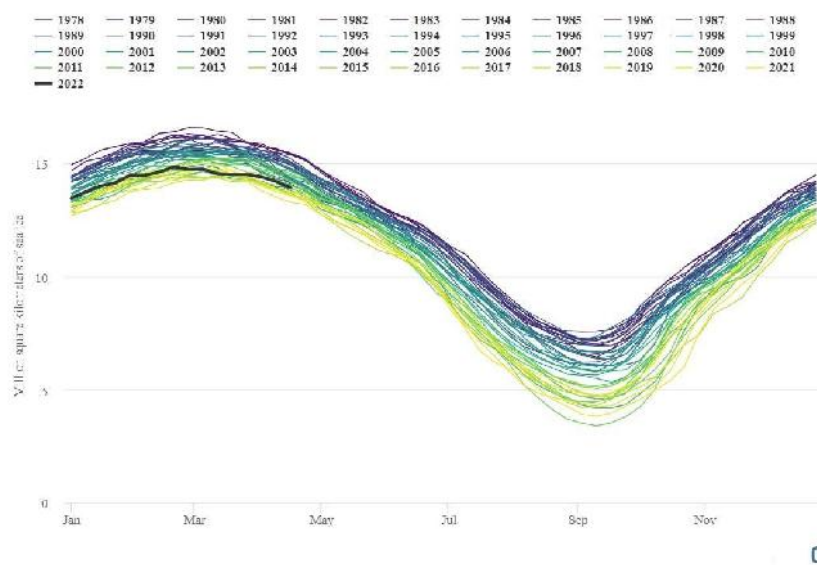
Arctic and Antarctic daily sea ice extent from the [US National Snow and Ice Data Center](#). The bold lines show daily 2022 values, the shaded area indicates the [two standard deviation range](#) in historical values between 1979 and 2010. The dotted black lines show the record lows for each pole. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

The summer Arctic sea ice minimum is a somewhat iconic figure and recent years have yet to drop below the [record low set in 2012](#). While Arctic sea ice is on the low end of its historical range, it is still too early to know where the 2022 minimum will fall as winter extent is not a clear indicator of the summer minimum.

The chart below shows the average Arctic sea ice extent for each week of the year for every year between 1978 and 2021, with 2022 to-date highlighted with a thick black line.

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Arctic sea ice extent by week, 1978 through 2022

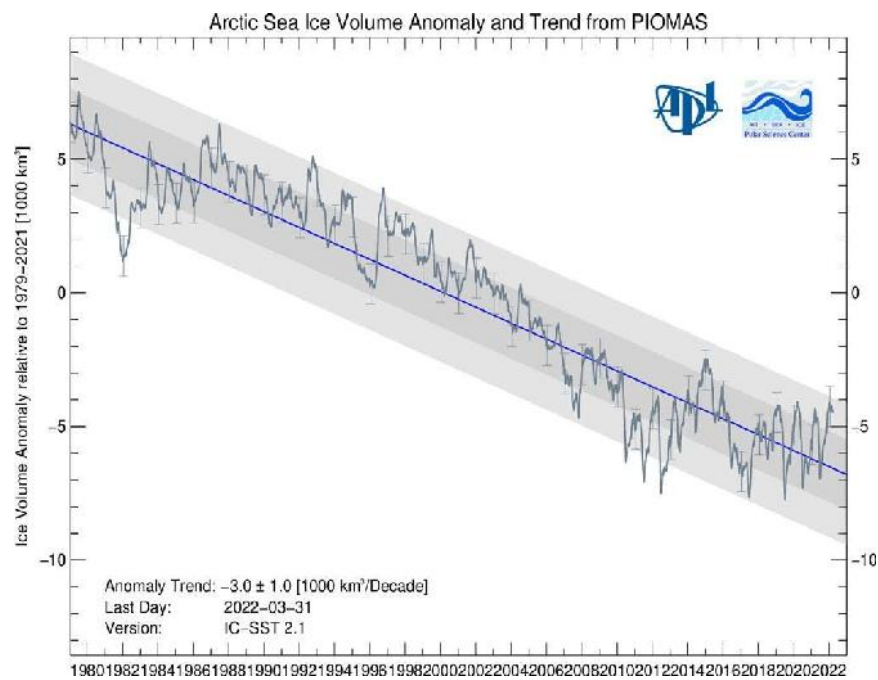


Arctic and Antarctic daily sea ice extent from the [US National Snow and Ice Data Center](#). The bold lines show daily 2022 values, the shaded area indicates the [two standard deviation range](#) in historical values between 1979 and 2010. The dotted black lines show the record lows for each pole. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

Finally, it is worth noting that sea ice extent only tells part of the story. In addition to declining ice extent, the sea ice that remains tends to be younger and thinner than ice that used to cover the region. The figure below, using data from the [Pan-Arctic Ice Ocean Modeling and Assimilation System](#) (PIOMAS), shows the Arctic sea ice thickness for every year between 1979 and 2022.

While sea ice volume is currently above its 2021 values, it is still well in-line with the long-term downward trend.

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Arctic sea-ice volume anomalies from 1979 through April 2022 from [PIOMAS](#).

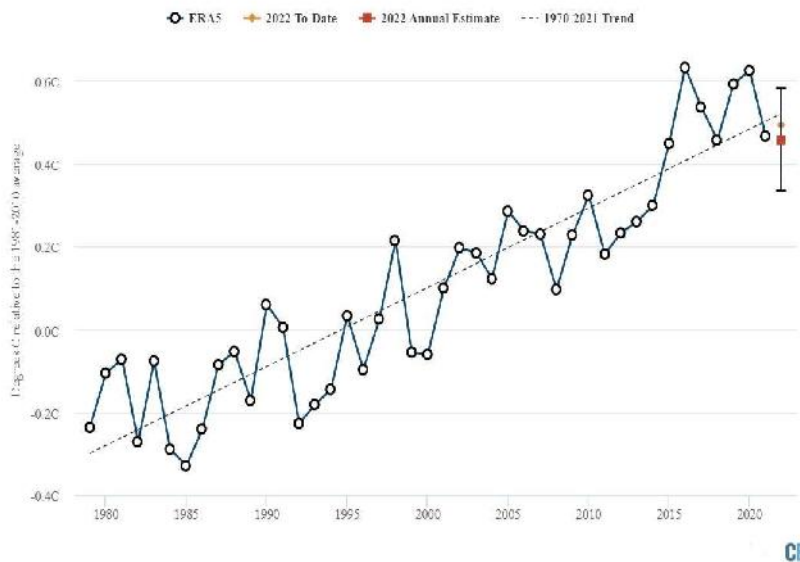
Where will 2022 end up?

The first three months of 2022 can give some sense of what to expect for the entire year. By looking at the relationship between the first quarter and the annual temperatures for every year since 1970 – as well as ENSO conditions for the first three months of the year and projected conditions for the remaining months – Carbon Brief has created a projection of what the final global average temperature for 2022 will likely turn out to be.

The analysis includes the estimated uncertainty in 2022 outcomes, given that temperatures from only the first third of the year are available so far.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record

FRA5, 1979-2021, with 2022 to-date and estimated annual value

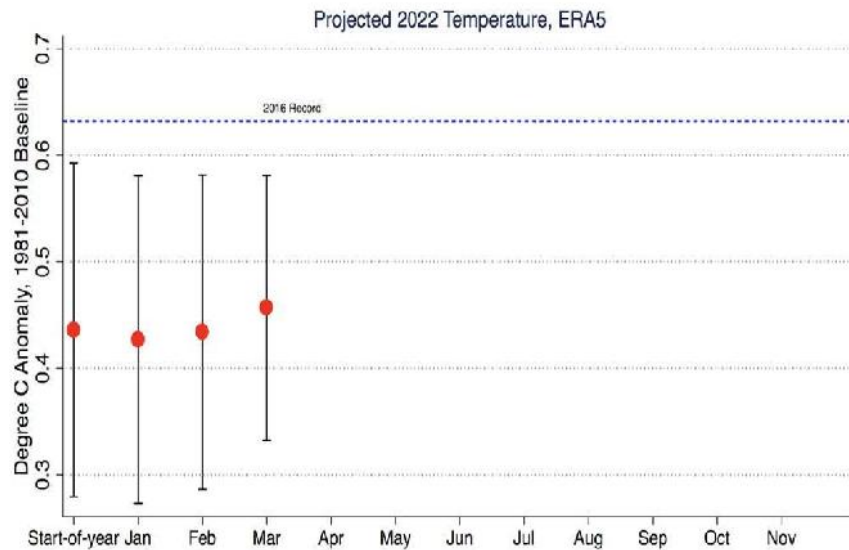


Annual global average surface temperature anomalies from [Copernicus/ECMWF](#) plotted with respect to a 1981-2010 baseline. To-date 2022 values include January-March. Estimated 2022 annual value based on relationship between the January-March temperatures and annual temperatures between 1970 and 2021. Chart by Carbon Brief using [Highcharts](#).

The projection suggests that 2022 has the best chance of ending up as somewhere between the fourth and eighth warmest year on record. Annual temperatures are likely to be a tad below what would be expected based on the long-term warming trend since 1970 – which is shown by the dashed line in the figure.

Carbon Brief [provided](#) a similar estimate of where 2022 temperatures would end up at the start of the year, prior to any 2022 monthly temperature data becoming available. The figure below shows this initial estimate, as well as ones made when January, February and March data were available.

State of the climate: start of 2022 is the fifth warmest on record



Carbon Brief projections of likely 2022 annual temperatures based on the [Copernicus/ECMWF](#) dataset at the start of the year, and after each month of data is available.

While it seems very unlikely that 2022 will be a record warm year for the world as a whole, it still may have many regional climate extremes in store. Not every year will set a new record due to short-term natural variability driven by La Niña and El Niño events, but the long-term warming trend marches on at around 0.19C warming per decade.

This story was published with permission from [Carbon Brief](#).



Greenpeace urges DR Congo to probe illegal forestry concessions



By [Agence France-Presse](#)

May 7, 2022

KINSHASA, [DR Congo](#): [Greenpeace](#) on Thursday urged a top state prosecutor in the Democratic Republic of Congo to investigate allegations that six ex-government ministers granted forestry concessions in violation of a logging moratorium. The [Congo Basin](#) Forest is the world's second-largest rainforest after the [Amazon](#), covering two-thirds of the surface of the DRC. The vast forest plays a vital role in fighting climate change as a major absorber of carbon dioxide. A moratorium on new logging concessions has been in place since 2002. On Thursday, Greenpeace and five other organizations said they had asked the state prosecutor of Congo's High Court to investigate six ex-government ministers allegedly involved in granting logging concessions between 2014 and 2020. Congolese President [Felix Tshisekedi](#) announced last October, ahead of the COP26 climate summit, that he had ordered the suspension of all "doubtful" forestry contracts.

07 MAY 2022, Saturday



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DENR seeks sustained Boracay rehabilitation

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE gains of the Boracay rehabilitation hopefully must be sustained even as the term of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) ends next month.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna made the statement during the recently-held BIATF Principals' Meeting in Boracay Island, wherein he expressed hope that the municipal government of Malay will sustain the said gains.

"We are all excited to complete the rehabilitation of Boracay. But we cannot

allow anyone to undo – immediately or otherwise – what we have accomplished or to unlawfully stand in the way to [complete] of our mission," Sampulna said.

Sampulna stressed that the dissolution of the task force does not mean the end of the rehabilitation of the world-famous resort island.

He added that the various agencies and local government units (LGUs), whether independent of each other or in partnership with one another, can continue the unfinished projects according to their respective priorities under the new administration.

The BIATF, which is chaired by the DENR with the Department of the Interior and Local Government

(DILG) as vice-chair and the Department of Tourism (DOT) as co-vice chair, was created by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte through Executive Order (EO) 53 on May 8, 2018.

On Sept. 14, 2021, the BIATF's term was extended for the second time until June 30, 2022, through EO 147.

Sampulna pointed out that the general progress of the BIATF is "nothing short of remarkable, if not awesome, particularly in the reduction of fecal coliform counts and the rehabilitation of wetlands."

"Our comfort, by then, is that we have done our part as members of this task force and that, hopefully, we will be in a position to do more or that our successors will be able to protect and build on our gains," he said.

During the meeting, Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group (BIARMG) General Manager Martin Jose V. Despi bared that Boracay's beach is Class SB-compliant or safe for swimming, as it is within the standard fecal coliform level of 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (100 MPN/100 mL).



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Semirara completes Panian mine rehab

INTEGRATED energy company Semirara Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) has completed the mine rehabilitation works in Panian, once the largest open-pit mine in the Philippines.

In a disclosure on Wednesday, SMPC said the company has spent 11.5 million man-hours to fill the pit with over 452 million bank cubic meters of earth material, which is enough to fill 217,000 Olympic-size swimming pools.

"We are mindful of our twin role as stewards and government contractor. What we ac-

complished in Panian is proof of that," said Maria Cristina Gotianun, SMPC president and chief operating officer.

Located in Semirara Island, the Panian mine spans 400 hectares with topographic elevations, ranging from 300 meters below sea level to 30 meters above sea level during its mine life. Three-hundred meters is roughly the height of a 90-story building.

SMPC fully covered the pit in six years, way ahead of the original 10-year mine rehabilitation plan. Mine rehabilitation refers

to the repair of land that was disturbed by mining activities.

Currently, the company is developing a science-based plan to reforest and restore the biodiversity in the area.

Panian had a mine life of 16 years and generated P12.7 billion in royalties for the government and SMPC host communities.

Of the total amount, P7.6 billion went to the national government while the municipality of Caluya and Barangay Semirara received P2.3 billion and P1.8 billion, respectively. About P1

billion went to Antique.

In September last year, SMPC won in the Asean Energy Awards (Special Submission category) for its accelerated rehabilitation of South Panian pit, which is considered as the fastest of its kind and scale in the Philippines. Asean is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

SMPC completely filled North Panian with earth material last January, four months ahead of its committed date to the Department of Energy.

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Can we count on SMC to be truthful?

ON a Nov. 15, 2021 letter, SMC (San Miguel Corp.) Infrastructure wrote to the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) to provide the status of its proposed project, the Pasig River Expressway (Parex), and to explain how it might affect national cultural and historical treasures in the vicinity of the Pasig River. The letter is one of the annexes to SMC Infrastructure's draft Parex environmental impact assessment (EIA) study, available at https://eia.emb.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Parex-Project-ANNEX_2022FEB04.pdf. When I read the letter, I was struck by numerous statements that were either not factual or could mislead the reader.

SMC Infrastructure's letter stated the following:

- "Following the approval of the Parex project by the government, a thorough environmental study for securing an environmental



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compliance certificate (ECC) was conducted from 2019 to 2020."

- "In order to secure an ECC, SMC had to comply with the requirements of conducting an environmental impact assessment (EIA) in order to show that the Parex will not cause a significant negative impact on the environment. During the environmental study, there were several public hearings conducted from July to August 2020 where stakeholders from various civil groups, including the MOAC (Move as One Coalition), the public in the vicinity of the project and DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) experts were present."

- "The EIA study also included

and examined the impacts the Parex will have on the environment as well as the current state of the environment at the project site. Thereafter, an environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared, which is the report based on the findings of the EIA study. This EIS includes plans to mitigate the impacts of the project, as approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources."

The above statements could leave the reader with the false impression that:

- the Parex had already been approved by the government in 2019;
- that the EIA study needed for an ECC had already been completed by SMC Infrastructure;
- that the public hearings required for ECC processing had been carried out as early as July and August 2020;
- that the DENR had already

► **Mobility B2**

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approved measures to mitigate the impacts of the project; and

- that an ECC had already been granted.

In fact, nowhere in its Nov. 15, 2021 letter did SMC Infrastructure clarify or disclose to the NHCP that its EIA study was still under preparation and that the ECC for the Parex was still pending.

There was no government approval of the project in 2019 or 2020. The "approval" given by the Office of the President in November 2019 was limited solely to the assignment of the usufructuary rights of the Philippine National Construction Corp. over its franchise to the joint venture company to be formed between PNCC and San Miguel Holdings Corp. The Office of the President made it very clear that such "approval" of the assignment of usufructuary rights did not imply approval of the Parex project or any

part of it.

In the preparation of the draft EIA study, the earliest formal consultations with stakeholders organized by DENR staff took place on July 14, 2021 (the public scoping meeting) and on March 25, 2022 (the first public hearing for the draft EIA study). The March 25 hearing was the first opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft study. Following the hearing and the feedback received from stakeholders, the DENR required SMC Infrastructure to revise the draft study and respond to specific comments. It is apparent that the draft study is still under preparation, that impact mitigation measures have not yet been approved by the DENR, and that an ECC has not been issued.

SMC Infrastructure's Nov. 15, 2021 letter went on to assure the NHCP that the Parex would not expose national cultural treasures to any harm:

- "With all due respect, and most important to note — is that the Parex will not be anywhere near these

'40 items' considered as national cultural treasures, as the Parex will be by the Pasig River."

- "More importantly, there is nothing in the Parex project that will affect the 'physical integrity' of any of the historical sites in Manila or that Parex will 'significantly alter' any of these historical sites from its original state."

- "More importantly, as shown in the basic alignment developed with and approved by DPWH, Segment 1 of the Parex section in Manila will be positioned at the opposite side of Intramuros."

The above statements are inconsistent with information in SMC Infrastructure's own Parex documents. The draft EIA study identified "possible destruction of historical landmarks that are near the Pasig River" as one of the project's major environmental impacts. The letter also failed to disclose that the Parex's proposed alignment and ramps would touch the westernmost perimeter of Intramuros and could even encroach on the Intramuros compound. The

Parex also encroaches on the Isla de Convalescencia, where the Hospicio de San Jose is located, both national cultural treasures protected under the National Heritage Act of 2009. For Intramuros, Hospicio de San Jose and possibly other cultural treasures close to the Pasig River, the Parex will likely place historical sites and priceless built heritage at risk, as anticipated by the draft EIA study.

Are the stated values of SMC mere words without substance ("We do what is right. We believe in profit with honor. For us, this simply means doing what we'll say we'll do and acting with honesty, fairness and integrity.")? If SMC has been less than truthful on matters related to priceless national heritage, can we count on it to do "what is good for the greatest number of people?"

Robert Y. Siy is a development economist, city and regional planner, and public transport advocate. He can be reached at mobilitymatters.ph@yahoo.com or followed on Twitter @RobertRsiy



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Shell pushes community projects

BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. has been pushing several community-based projects through Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI) that promote sustainability and preservation of the environment, also resulting in communities improving their incomes.

One such green initiative is Project Coconut (Collaboration for Coconut Productivity and Nurturing Farmers' Trade) in Quezon province that promotes upcycling of coconut scraps into coconut oil, oleochemicals, and biofuels, or even into jewelry and other ornaments to create more alternative sources of revenues.

With two existing COCO Hubs, Shell is keen to ensure that the initiative is adopted by other farmers, providing clean and sustainable means of livelihood for agribusinesses in the province.

Meanwhile, PSFI established the Palawan Eco Agro Park (PEAP) to introduce organic farming to the area that imports products from other regions. This resulted in increased farm productivity and

a reduction in the prices of vegetables in Palawan.

In another initiative that nurtures nature while promoting tourism, PSFI's community-based program Tandikan (Turismo at Negosyo Dulot ng Ingat Kalikasan) preserves the pristine natural wonders of Palawan. It also provides locals alternative livelihood opportunities as destination guides or in the production and marketing of tourist-related products like T-shirts and natural soaps.

Also, through a partnership with Green Antz Builders, PSFI established the Ecobrick Hub in Cagayan De Oro to upcycle plastics that can then be used for the construction of structures, like the Pilipinas Shell's first Shell Mobility Station in the world that is made

out of eco-bricks, upcycling over 1,200 kilograms of plastic waste. The initiative also encourages nearby communities to recycle to reduce the volume of plastics going into landfills.

Meanwhile, PSFI's Shell's Access to Energy (A2E) program reaches out to far-flung and off-grid communities, which provided indigenous peoples

clean and reliable energy to support their livelihood, health and education.

PSFI took a step further and taught locals how to manage

and sustain their own energy. The Batak tribe, known for their intricately designed baskets, were able to produce and sell more because the availability of electricity enabled them to work at night. These same baskets now ornament resorts and other establishments in Puerto Princesa.

The abovementioned initiatives, according to PSPC Vice President for Corporate Relations Serge Banal, also helped uplift the lives of the targeted communities.

"Maximizing Pilipinas Shell's network and platform, we are tak-

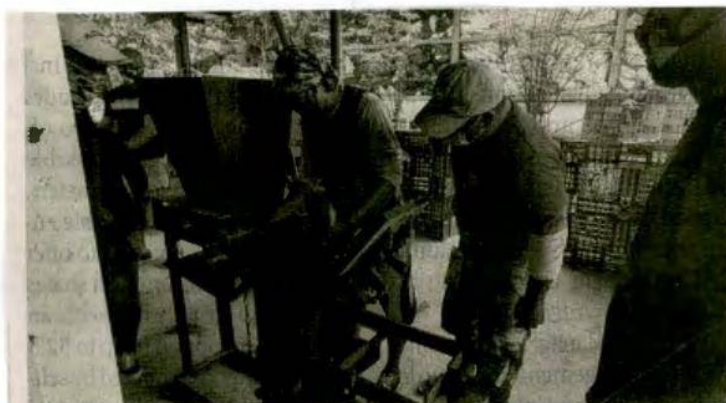


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■ Through a partnership with Green Antz Builders, Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. establishes the Ecobrick Hub in Cagayan de Oro to upcycle plastics that can then be used for the construction of structures. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ing a multi-sectoral approach to help uplift the lives of the underserved and disadvantaged sector here in the Philippines, especially those in Shell worksites and host communities," he said.

Other initiatives

In Batangas City, Pilipinas Shell through PSFI partnered with the Silangan Ibabao Batis Bulihan Araneta Proper Multi-purpose Cooperative to conduct its Maghanapbuhay sa Bahay training sessions with the community's housewives. The women were taught technical skills on sewing and given the resources needed to spur business initiatives while integrating them into a bigger socioeconomic ecosystem.

Meanwhile, PSFI also supported the rehabilitation and livelihood needs of women communities in Tacloban and Marawi, while promoting their indigenous styles of weaving through the production of face masks that are essential to a health-conscious public coping with the pandemic. As a result, this strengthened the community's economic capacity as these women now support their family's financial needs.

Meanwhile, Pilipinas Shell's Gas Mo Bukas Ko (GMBK) scholarship-program aimed to improve the lives of Shell retail station crew, and dependents of workers in the public transport sector by helping them receive the necessary education to lead productive lives. To date, thousands have graduated from technical-vocational courses through GMBK scholarships.

And with an eye toward the future, Shell LiveWIRE's Acceleration program that helps spur Filipino ingenuity and resourcefulness among the younger, next-generation of talents is again searching for community enterprises and tech startups that leverage innovation and sustainable business models. In recent years, it has selected energy-based innovators, agribusiness producers, textile artisans and craftspeople, and digital marketing creative talents. Also, Shell LiveWIRE provides them mentoring and coaching from local and international pool of business experts, additional capital funding support, and opportunities for their businesses to be integrated into Shell's value chain.



Reforestation drive launched in Clark

IN line with its thrust to promote sustainable development in the country, the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) recently launched its year-long reforestation and greening campaign through a tree-planting activity in New Clark City, Tarlac.

A total of 500 seedlings were planted within New Clark City during the campaign kick-off last April 22, organized in partnership with private sector groups led by the Abacan River and Angeles Watershed Advocacy Council Inc. (ARAW-ACI).

This event is the first in a series of tree-planting initiatives to be conducted by BCDA as part of the state organization's 30th anniversary celebration this year. It was also held in observance of Earth Day 2022 themed "Invest in Our Planet."

"New Clark City was built on the principles of sustainability, resiliency and inclusivity. While we continue the implementation of high-impact infrastructure projects to propel economic growth, we recognize our duty to give back to Mother Earth and to preserve the environment for our future generations," engineer Mark Torres, vice president for the Engineering and Social Support Department of the BCDA, said in a statement on Tuesday.

"This initiative is just one of the steps taken by BCDA to achieve inclusivity through sustainability. Moving forward and further, we hope to be instrumental in investing in the planet alongside partners," he added.

ARAW-ACI provided the seedlings for the tree-planting activity, consisting of bamboo, narra, molave and kalantas. The choice of seedlings was based on the recommendations made by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in its

Biodiversity Assessment Study for New Clark City.

"I am extending our deepest gratitude to BCDA for making us a partner-advocate in launching the greening and reforestation campaign for sustainable communities. Our shared dream and goal is to provide enough resources for future generations — that is ensuring sustainability through our advocacies for water security, food security and climate change action," ARAW-ACI President Renato Tayag Jr. said.

Cleo Kawawaki, head of ADB Office of Public-Private Partnership, said, "Smart, resilient and green — this is the way of the future. BCDA has been a trailblazer in urban development and making this dream come true. I am so excited to be a part of this tree planting to make resilience and water preservation a part of this great endeavor."

In addition to sustainability goals, the tree-planting drive also fulfills the commitment of BCDA and the Department of Transportation to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to replace trees that will be affected by the Subic-Clark Railway Project.

SCRP is a 71-kilometer freight railway connecting Subic Bay Freeport Zone and Clark Freeport Zone, linking the Port of Subic Bay and Clark International Airport and other economic hubs in the region, including New Clark City.

ARAW-ACI is a non-stock, non-profit organization registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and a long-time partner of the Angeles City local government unit in the Adopt-A-Watershed advocacy program in Barangay Sapangbato, Angeles City.

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Alaska Milk commits to zero plastic waste

APPROACHING its 50th anniversary, Alaska Milk Corp. (AMC) is celebrating another milestone as the company pledged to attain net zero plastic waste by year-end.

This, as the company signed a memorandum of agreement with Plastic Credit Exchange (PCX) last May 4, sealing AMC's commitment to offset 604 tons of plastic waste generated in 2021. This will help divert more plastic waste away from landfills and oceans.

The agreement, which is part of AMC's post-consumer plastic waste processing efforts, was signed by Nanette Medved-Po, PCX founder and executive chairman; and Tarang

Gupta, AMC managing director; with Roel van Neerbos, FrieslandCampina Food and Beverage president; and senior vice president for Asia, Harvey Uong, as witness.

Neerbos expressed his gratitude to Plastic Credit Exchange for this partnership. "The belief that strength is built from togetherness has been core to FrieslandCampina's identity," he said. "Collaboration extends to our goal of nourishing a better planet — together, we can create a sustainable future for generations to come."

Uong reiterated the value of working together to resolve the plastic waste epidemic. "It takes a collective effort to address

large-scale problems such as the global plastic waste issue. Through Alaska Milk Corp.'s cooperation with PCX, we'll be one step further in our fight against plastic pollution, while delivering the best nutrition for Filipinos nationwide."

"We commend Alaska Milk Corp.'s commitment to taking action against the plastic waste crisis," said Medved-Po. "With the cooperation of businesses such as AMC, local communities, and the government, our goals of restoring our oceans and protecting our planet becomes more possible."

For his part, Gupta said that AMC recognizes its significant role in controlling plastic waste.

"Alaska Milk Corp.'s sustainability efforts don't stop at attaining the plastic neutral status by the end of this year. Moving forward, our organization will continue to maximize our efforts in addressing plastic pollution," he added.

AMC aims to co-process, recycle or upcycle a total of 873 metric tons to achieve its plastic neutrality goal. The remaining metric tons of plastic needed to achieve this will come from other AMC programs, such as the Alaska Wrapper Redemption Program and the partnership with D&G Pacific Corp. for the establishment of a multi-layered upcycling facility in the Philippines.

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KUNG MAY MALASAKIT SA BAYAN, DAPAT MERON DIN SA KALIKASAN

NGAYONG huling araw ng campaign period, nanawagan nang malinis na pagtatapos ng kampanya ang isang environmental group sa mga kandidato at botante.

Hiling ng grupo, agad na magsagawa ng post-campaign cleanup ang mga kandidato, habang umapela naman ito sa mga botante na huwag ikalat sa mga polling center o itapon kung saan-saan ang mga sample ballot para sa Mayo 9.

Gayundin, dapat umanong ipagbawal ng Commission on Elections (Comelec) ang pamamahagi ng sample ballot dahil may ilang grupo pa rin umanong namimigay nito, na magbubunga naman

ng mga pagkakat sa polling stations.

Bukod pa rito, nagpaalala ang grupo sa mga kandidato na magsagawa ng cleanup activities, alinsunod sa Republic Act 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Act at iba pang batas-pangkalahasan upang protektahan ang kalusugan ng publiko, gayundin ang kalikasan.

Samantala, nagbabala rin ang grupo hinggil sa pagsisiga at pagtatapon ng mga basura kung saan-saan na magresulta sa polusyon.

Simple lang naman ang hiling ng grupo —maging malinis ang halalan. Kumbaga, walang nakakalat na campaign paraphernalia sa mga daan sa huling araw ng kampanya hanggang matapos ang halalan.

Kaya pakiusap sa lahat, kung kinaya nating magkabit ng mga tarpaulin o posters at mamigay ng iba pang materyales para sa kampanya, dapat kayanin din nating tumalima sa mga utos at pakiusap.

Ang panawagan ay hindi lamang para sa mga kandidato kundi para sa lahat. Kung may malasakit tayo sa bayan, 'di natin dapat kalimutan ang kalikasan.



IN TIMES OF FOOD SCARCITY

Revisiting genetically modified crops

IN the past few decades, genetic engineering has been thought of as a means to contribute to agricultural production. In light of the fact that many more countries are now beset with food scarcity (not to mention the food shortages brought about by the war in Ukraine) and to cope with overpopulation alongside poor soil and climatic conditions not conducive for increased yields, genetic engineering of crops and food is once again a topic of debate, especially as it relates to the interconnected UN Sustainable Development Goals (zero hunger, responsible production and consumption, good health and well-being, climate action, etc.).

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs), referring for the purpose of this narrative only to crops and food, were developed in a laboratory process called genetic engineering that results in a new plant organism which would possess better genes than all others in its species. GMOs are usually developed to gain better resistance against pests or other perils to the



AMBASSADORS' CORNER

AMADO S. TOLENTINO JR.

organism, and even yield more produce. Examples are: Bt maize (corn), Bt eggplant (talong), Bt soybeans, Bt canola, Bt rice, Bt tomatoes, Bt sugarcane, Bt papaya, Bt squash, Bt cotton, Bt apple and many others.

Bt talong controversy

In fact, in the Philippine jurisdiction, we have a Supreme Court decision in a case concerning Bt talong (*International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications, Inc. V. Greenpeace Southeast Asia, et al.*, GR 209271, Dec. 8, 2015 and July 26, 2016). In that case, Greenpeace and other respondents sought to restrain the BT talong field trials claiming they violated their right to a healthy environment. The BT talong, which is actually a GMO, was undergoing

field tests, and Greenpeace et al. cited various threats to the environment. The Supreme Court granted the petition and had the field tests restrained as it considered the environmental damage it could do. However, in a 2016 resolution, the Supreme Court overturned its ruling as the field trials were already completed.

Adverse effects

What are some of the adverse effects of genetically modified crops and food on human health and the environment? First, GMOs are not natural because they had their genes modified. As a consequence, they could disrupt the ecological balance and could start a slippery descent to environmental damage. It could also affect other plants and humans who consume them as pests, or various viruses could potentially evolve due to the high concentration of bacterium toxins (which are used to make GMOs pest-resistant). Second, when pests

are forced away from GMOs which have become pest-resistant, the pests would then go to a different plant which used to be unthreatened. This carries risks because it would endanger a different crop instead.

On the other hand, while GMOs could be more resistant to insect damage, herbicides and plant viruses, those living modified organisms could yield more produce which is vital to solve world hunger. But then again, in attaining the goal of food sufficiency, we must also take care of the environment as part of our inter-generational responsibility. We cannot sacrifice the environment for our advancement — both man and nature must thrive in harmony.

At this point, genetically modified food and crops have already been introduced and made available worldwide. Almost simultaneously during the past decades, an environmental law principle, popularly referred to as the precautionary principle, evolved from being a "soft law aspi-

► TolentinoAS

rational goal" to its present status as an authoritative norm recognized by governments and international organizations as a firm guide to activities affecting the environment. From its original connotation of "take care" or "better safe than sorry," the precautionary principle mandates that studies precede action and requires that we proceed slowly in the face of uncertainty. Ultimately, the principle requires constant testing and monitoring the effects of GMOs.

Environmental agreements

The precautionary requirements have been included in a wide variety of multilateral environmental agreements, among them, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the

Cartagena Biosafety Protocol. Thus, the Biodiversity Convention states in its preamble that "when there is a threat of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid or minimize such a threat. ..." The Cartagena Biosafety Protocol which governs modified living organisms, on the other hand, states, "Lack of scientific certainty ... shall not prevent that Party from making a decision, as appropriate, with regard to the import of that living modified organism intended for direct use as food or feed, or processing in order to avoid or minimize such potential adverse effects."

Exactly how these sanctions translate into action varies with each

problem. A situation requires "an anticipatory response in instances of uncertainty where a violation has not yet occurred and no harm has been done, but where a strong risk of such a violation exists." Actually, the principle has transformed the process of decision-making, by recognizing the validity of environmental concerns and requiring some level of clarity and certainty before risky initiatives are begun or made public.

Polarized debate

Be that as it may, the debate on genetic engineering to ensure food security remains polarized. Critics still view GM crops as destructive of nature, undermine human health and makes farmers dependent on seed producers.



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Revisiting genetically modified crops

The industry and pro-GM products tend to play down any risk of genetic engineering saying in particular that there is now a win-win situation with a commercial seed company and the farmers making profits at the same time, especially in developing countries. The reality, however, is that while some may profit from the technology, others may not. Only an unbiased look at GMOs in practice will show what it takes to make farmers' lives easier and what needs to be done to minimize risks.

What is most important in the debates over GMOs is that science is not ignored. In fact, the precautionary principle promotes more science because it requires continuous monitoring as well as research into less polluting alternatives. Good science

disseminated by those who are into the technology can calm fears and persuade the public that the genetically modified seed is safe.

Some commentators have explained the precautionary principle by emphasizing that it shifts the burden of proof: "When scientific information is in doubt, the party that wishes to develop a new crop, for instance, has the burden of demonstrating that the proposed change will not produce unacceptable adverse impacts on existing resources and species including humans."

On our part, we should keep an open mind and consider the opportunities that genetically modified crops provide in terms of food security. In that connection, a review of the government's regulatory framework on

genetic engineering should be done and proper labeling of GMOs relating to crops and food already in the market ought to be pursued in earnest.

With more time and experience, the details of the precautionary principle will come into clearer focus. Most important of all, it has recognized the validity of environmental concerns by requiring some level of clarity and certainty before risky genetic engineering is done, released or made available commercially.

As a Chinese saying goes, "A calamity is a time for opportunity." The outbreak of the war in Ukraine could be an opportunity for further transformative food systems research to confront two of the biggest challenges faced by humanity—climate change and food inaccessibility and insecurity.



Midnight thoughts on the climate crisis

THE world continues to get warmer and with it comes long-lasting changes to the climate system. The climate crisis is unfolding right before our own eyes. We have seen, many times, the impact of extreme natural hazards and the prevalence of disaster risks, which affects areas like food production, water security, jobs and livelihoods, poverty reduction, economic growth and the overall pursuit of sustainable development.

The latest climate science warns that we barely have less than a decade before the window of opportunity for achieving the Paris Agreement's 1.5-degree Celsius long-term temperature goal closes. The 1.5-degree goal is the global warming threshold that will enable vulnerable developing countries like ours to survive and thrive.

We know that the planet has already warmed by 1.1 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Beyond the 1.5-degree threshold, we risk experiencing bigger, more



ALL ABOUT CHOICES

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destructive climate-related disasters that will disproportionately affect the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized. This has been made more challenging by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ordinary people have a limited understanding of this until they are painfully introduced to the impacts of extremely harsh weather, flooding, declining fish catch and harvests, water scarcity, extinctions, displacements, the demise of low-lying areas and even heightened health issues.

The global climate strike has become more crucial as a platform to unite our voices with fellow developing countries in the urgent call for climate justice. We must maintain the resolve to urge devel-

oped nations to provide sufficient climate finance, technologies and means for capacity building to aid us as we continue to face the intensifying impacts of climate change.

We are hopeful that developed nations or those that have the historical accountability for causing climate change do their fair share to combat the crisis.

We must continue to call for greater leadership and action — demand what is right and just for Filipinos — to improve our capacity to adapt and mitigate. We all have the right to ecological security and to live without fear for our homes, livelihoods and cultures. We all have the right to life, and that includes the right to survive and thrive as human beings. The controlling narrative must be saving humanity.

As long-time climate and environmental advocates, we must give light to the urgency of responding to climate injustices as well as create and generate striking envi-

ronmental consciousness that will amplify our call for climate action.

As we celebrate the whole month of May for the ocean, meanwhile, I find it appropriate to dedicate half of this column to the Verde Island Passage, a 10-mile-wide strait that separates the islands of Luzon and Mindoro. Because of its rich marine life, it is internationally acknowledged as the "center of the center of marine biodiversity" and the richest marine biodiversity area in the entire Coral Triangle. It provides food, livelihood and other benefits to over 2 million people.

The passage's marine biodiversity, however, is threatened by increasing unsustainable economic activities: plastic pollution, illegal and destructive fishing, commercial vessels discharging pollutants, and irresponsible tourism. The worsening climate is also contributing to the destruction.

Scientific studies have shown that with climate change, our country's marine biodiversity and

fishing industry are under grave threat. By 2050, 90 percent of our coral reefs will have died or become degraded. Keeping global warming low until the end of the century could allow the coral to recover.

Urgent marine and coastal protection is a much-needed response. I know and believe that with our collective resolve, we will succeed in the mission of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity in addressing climate change.

Verde Island Passage is not an isolated case. Almost all marine ecosystems — not only here in the Philippines but across the globe — are threatened. We are at the crucial moment to act, otherwise everything will be lost in time.

As long as there is hope to save corals and other marine life from extinction, we must hold on to it. As long as there is a chance to stop global warming at a level that

allows humanity to survive and thrive, we must seize it.

I am one with all advocates in pursuing concrete actions to revive our ailing ecosystems. Numerous landmark laws have been enacted but greater action from our institutions, local governments, stakeholders and individuals is needed to bring life to these policies.

As stewards of the planet, we must rally our people to embrace the advocacy of caring for our environment toward a more secure, habitable and sustainable future for all.

The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum and a nonresident fellow of Stratbase ADR Institute. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia and an executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University. You can email him at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @WiggyFederigan.



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Science and technology must back leaders who aid innovation

Science at times needs to take political stands because there are those who respect it and those who ignore it

By Joaquin de Castro
@Inq_Lifestyle

National Innovation Day was just a few weeks ago. The objective of the occasion, according to the Commission on Higher Education, was to promote "public awareness and national support for innovation."

Even for a developing country like the Philippines, science, technology and innovation certainly play important roles. Yet in the context of the looming national elections, it may raise questions whether these things should be neutral when it comes to governance and politics.

In 1987, Robert Solow received the Nobel Prize in Economics for his contributions to economic growth theories. One of his conclusions was that a major driver of economic growth is technological innovation. While this is something qualitative at a

glance, advancements such as those in flight and transistors certainly opened up more economic opportunities and enabled further applications down the line.

Professor Paul Romer, another recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, added to this by identifying research talent as key factors in technological innovations. These factors are examined together in economics professor Richard Nelson's book on National Innovation Systems. These systems are essentially government and private institutions that influence innovations.

Science and government

With these three considerations, the connection of science, technology and innovation to the government is clear. Leaders wanting to push economic growth in the country ought to consider research and development (R&D). Governments also directly influence

R&D through education and training. Policies that jeopardize education also undermine science and technology, and deprive industries of much-needed research capital.

Finally, the government is a major actor in a country's innovation system, especially with regard to technology policies, fiscal tax, funding, etc. These factors can affect whether scientific research can eventually bring about technological advances for the community.

How then can science and technology be agnostic to government actions and politics if they heavily influence R&D? For 2021, while the Department of Science and Technology's budget was increased from the previous year, this was still much lower than the budget it initially proposed. Government funding for R&D would clearly have an impact on relevant sectors and stifle innovation in underdeveloped industries.



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Moreover, the government's foreign partnerships may play an important role in stimulating innovation, and the Philippines' foreign policy would directly affect this. These would include foreign direct investments to provide capital and skill-building, as well as strategic bilateral partnerships such as with the United States.

Climate change

Science does at times need to take political stands because there are those who respect it and those who ignore it.

A timely example is climate change. Sparked by the release of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, scientists from over 20 countries around the world went on protests to compel governments to take action.

Despite endless documentation, reports and research papers presented to policymakers, the bold steps need-

ed to mitigate climate change in time are still unrealized. It gives rise to the question of whether scientists should play a bigger role in society and how much longer science has to remain equivocal.

But this is not the only time scientists have spoken up on politicized issues. At the height of the Cold War in the 1950s, the Russel-Einstein manifesto appealed to world leaders to reject the use of nuclear weapons and "find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters in dispute between them." A series of conferences immediately followed, providing a platform for many members of the scientific community to be recognized.

What's almost paradoxical is that taking "political" stands requires rising above political influence. Conversely, remaining "neutral" means siding with politicians who neglect science. It's not so much science trespassing into politics but polit-

ical elements encroaching on science. When politicians label scientific arguments as partisan or propaganda, how can scientists and researchers remain silent? The problem is not science being political but rather people politicizing science.

In summary, innovation is deeply connected with governance and politics. It is therefore only right that those in science and technology advocate for leaders who will facilitate innovation and with it economic growth. Scientists and researchers should also be able to call out those who ignore or manipulate facts and evidence. At the same time, science should also support good governance and policies.

All that said, at the end of the day, science cannot be attached to a single political party, because ultimately—just like politics—science should serve the people and the world around them. —CONTRIBUTED INQ



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor NIA Bldg., EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

**HAPPY WELL MANAGEMENT AND
COLLECTION SERVICES, INC.,**

Applicant.

Case No. 22-3304

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NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Lynville Residences Malvar 2 Subdivision, Barangay Santiago, municipality of Malvar, province of Batangas, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
1/2"	₱ 141.50	31.00	33.40	43.70	48.80	53.90

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min.)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
1/2"	₱ 808.50	67.40	80.90	80.90	80.90

This application will be initially heard by the Board on 30 May 2022. The hearing will start at 9:00 o'clock in the morning at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Batangas and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 13th day of April 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

The Barangay Chairman
Barangay Santiago
Malvar, Batangas

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
Sangguniang Bayan
Malvar, Batangas

The Homeowners Assn. President
Lynville Residences Malvar 2 Subdivision
Barangay Santiago, Malvar, Batangas



TITLE: _____

PAGE 1/2

DATE _____

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor MA Bldg., EOM, Daman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

PAMANA WATER CORPORATION,
Applicant.

Case No. **22-3309**

X.....X

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within the municipality of Binmaley, province of Pangasinan, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
3/4"	P 131.00	27.60	28.90	31.50	35.40	39.40
1"	P 210.00	44.10	46.20	50.40	56.70	63.00
1 1/2"	P 420.00	88.20	92.40	100.80	113.40	126.00
2"	P 1,049.50	229.40	239.90	251.90	283.40	314.90

Residential and Commercial

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
3/4"	P 131.00	27.60	28.90	31.50	35.40	39.40
1"	P 210.00	44.10	46.20	50.40	56.70	63.00
1 1/2"	P 420.00	88.20	92.40	100.80	113.40	126.00

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
3/4"	P 787.50	55.10	60.40	68.30	78.70
1"	P 1,260.00	88.20	95.60	109.20	126.00
1 1/2"	P 2,518.50	176.30	191.10	218.30	251.90
2"	P 6,297.00	440.80	482.80	545.80	629.80
2 1/2"	P 15,744.00	1,102.10	1,207.00	1,364.50	1,574.40
3"	P 28,179.50	1,983.70	2,172.70	2,456.10	2,823.90
4"	P 56,679.00	3,967.50	4,345.50	4,912.10	5,667.80

Bulk

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
1"	P 147.90

Others

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
3/4"	P 84.00

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **23 May 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o'clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the province of Pangasinan and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 13th day of April 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

(Sgd.)

Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
Sangguniang Panlungsod
Binmaley, Pangasinan

The General Manager
Binmaley City Water District
Caloocan Sur. Poblacion
Binmaley, Pangasinan 2417

The Barangay Chairman
All the affected Barangays w/
in Binmaley, Pangasinan

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor MA Bldg., EOM, Daman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

PAMANA WATER CORPORATION,
Applicant.

Case No. **22-3296**

X.....X

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Dagupan City, province of Pangasinan, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
3/4"	P 118.00	24.30	25.50	27.20	29.60	33.10
1"	P 189.00	39.00	40.80	43.50	47.30	53.00
1 1/2"	P 378.00	77.90	81.70	87.00	94.60	105.90
2"	P 945.50	194.80	204.20	217.50	236.40	264.80

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
3/4"	P 709.50	48.70	52.00	56.70	66.20
1"	P 1,134.00	77.90	83.20	90.80	105.90
1 1/2"	P 2,269.50	155.80	166.40	181.60	211.80
2"	P 5,673.00	389.60	416.10	453.90	529.50
2 1/2"	P 14,184.00	974.00	1,048.20	1,134.70	1,323.80
3"	P 25,531.50	1,753.10	1,873.30	2,042.50	2,382.90
4"	P 51,063.00	3,506.30	3,744.60	4,085.00	4,765.80

Bulk

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
1"	P 151.30

Others

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
3/4"	P 75.60

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **23 May 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o'clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the province of Pangasinan and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 24th day of March 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

(Sgd.)

Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
Sangguniang Panlungsod
Dagupan City, Pangasinan

The Barangay Chairman
All the affected Barangays w/in
Dagupan City, Pangasinan

The General Manager
Dagupan City Water District
Tambac District, Mangin-Tebang Rd.
Dagupan City, Pangasinan 2400



05-07-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE 2/2

DATE _____



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor MA Bldg., EOM, Daman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

PAMANA WATER CORPORATION,
Applicant.

Case No. 22-3313

X.....X

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within the municipality of San Manuel, province of Pangasinan, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m ³ (min)	6-10 m ³	11-20 m ³	21-30 m ³	31-40 m ³	Over 40 m ³
1/2"	P 147.00	30.60	32.30	34.70	41.10	47.00
3/4"	P 235.00	49.40	51.70	58.80	65.00	75.20
1"	P 430.00	98.70	103.60	117.50	131.60	156.40
1 1/2"	P 1,135.00	246.80	258.50	293.80	329.10	376.10

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m ³ (min.)	16-30 m ³	31-500 m ³	501-1000 m ³	Over 1000 m ³
1/2"	P 882.00	63.50	70.50	79.30	94.60
3/4"	P 1,410.00	191.50	112.80	126.90	150.40
1"	P 2,820.00	283.10	225.60	253.80	300.90
1 1/2"	P 7,851.50	597.70	564.10	634.60	752.10
2"	P 17,638.00	1,269.20	1,410.30	1,586.50	1,880.30
3"	P 31,731.00	2,384.60	2,538.40	2,855.70	3,384.60
4"	P 63,462.50	4,569.20	5,076.90	5,711.50	6,769.20

Bulk

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
1"	P 188.00

Others

Pipe Size	Per cu. m.
1/2"	P 94.00

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **23 May 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the province of Pangasinan and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 18th day of April 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

(Sgd.)

Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
Sangguniang Panlungsod
San Manuel, Pangasinan

The General Manager S
an Manuel Water District
San Manuel, Pangasinan
2438

The Barangay Chairman
All the affected Barangays w/in
San Manuel, Pangasinan

07 MAY 2022, Saturday



DENR

NEWS

ALERTS

COVID-19

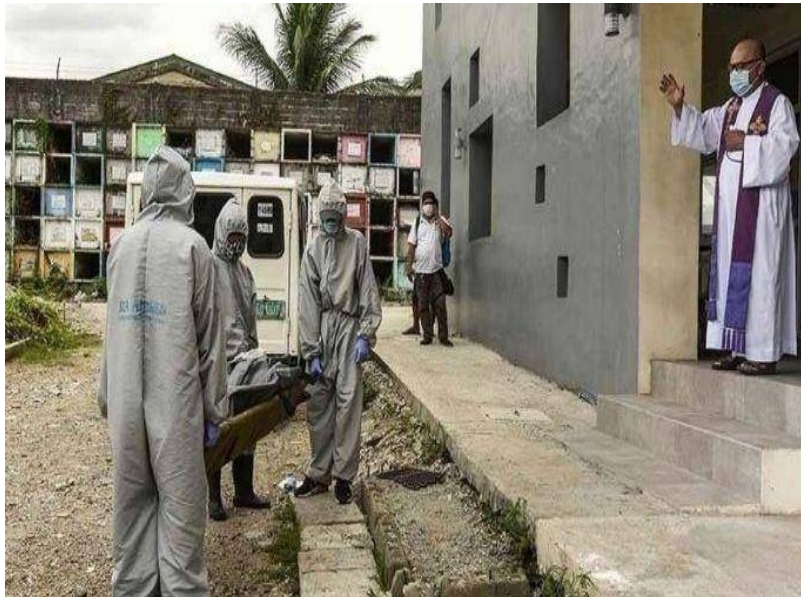
NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



WHO: 17 milyong patay sa COVID-19 mula 2020-2021

By [Danilo Garcia](#) (Pang-Masa)
- May 7, 2022 - 12:00am



Sa bagong pagtataya ng WHO, ipinapakita na ang kabuuang death toll na direkta o hindi direkta sa COVID-19 mula Enero 1, 2020 hanggang Disyembre 31, 2021 ay nasa 14.9 milyon.

AFP / Maria Tan

MANILA, Philippines — Inihayag ng World Health Organization (WHO) na nasa 13.3 hanggang 16.6 milyong katao ang nasawi sa COVID-19 mula nang dumapo ang pandemya sa mundo mula 2020 hanggang 2021.

Sa bagong pagtataya ng WHO, ipinapakita na ang kabuuang death toll na direkta o hindi direkta sa COVID-19 mula Enero 1, 2020 hanggang Disyembre 31, 2021 ay nasa 14.9 milyon.

Ayon sa WHO, ang nakakagimbal na datos ay hindi lamang tumutukoy sa matinding epekto ng pandemya ngunit isang uri ng paggising sa lahat ng bansa na mag-invest sa mas maayos na sistemang pangkalusugan na kayang sumagupa tuwing may krisis at dapat idagdag pa ang mas malakas na sistema sa impormasyon at edukasyong pangkalusugan.

Ang pagtataya ay tinatawag na 'excess mortality' na kinabibilangan ng mga direktang nasawi dahil sa COVID-19 at mga pumanaw dahil sa epekto ng pandemya sa sistemang pangkalusugan ng mga bansa at ng antas ng pamumuhay.

Unang idineklara ng WHO ang COVID-19 na isang internasyunal na 'public health emergency' noong Enero 30, 2020, makaraang unang kumalat ito sa China at iniulat ng mga bansa sa mundo na nasa 5.42 milyon ang nasawi noong 2020 at 2021 at nasa 6.24 milyon na ito ngayon kapag isinama ang mga pumanaw ngayong 2022.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/police-metro/2022/05/07/2179273/who-17-milyong-patay-sa-covid-19-mula-2020-2021/amp/>

07 MAY 2022, Saturday



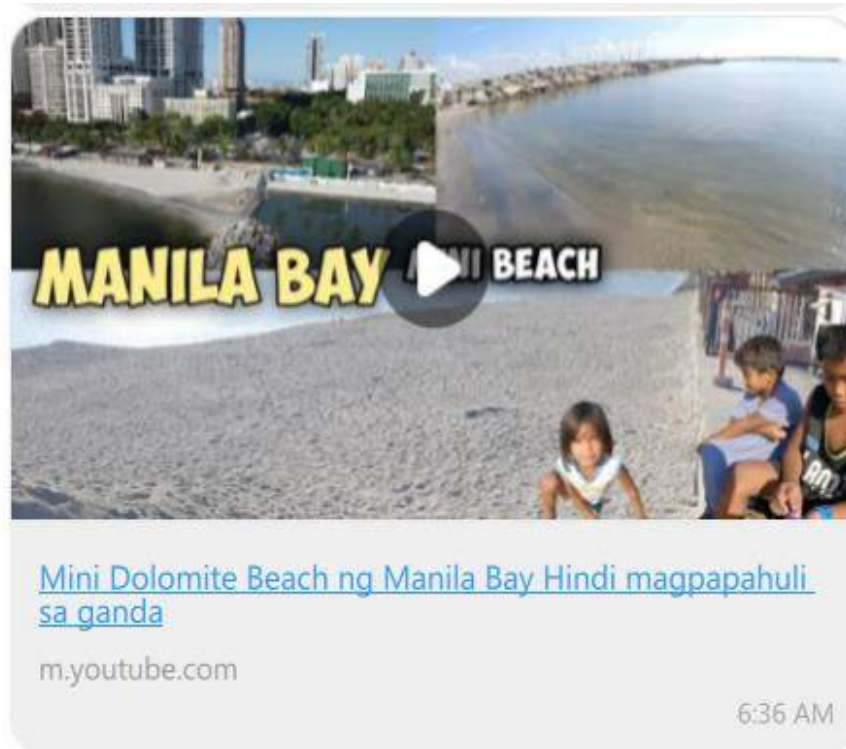
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NEWS

ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

Source: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=FydJKUds1uw&t=103s>

#ManilaBay #ManilaBayUpdate #DENR
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Manila Bay Update as of May 5, 2022. Mini Dolomite Beach Update.

[#ManilaBay](#)
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Manila Bay Update May 5, 2022.

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Sam Alburo
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Sam Albu
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