

11 MAY 2022, WEDNESDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE





## Another coral garden discovered in Cavite

A CLUSTER of coral gardens was discovered by a group of divers in Ternate, Cavite on April 2, disproving beliefs that the Manila Bay is dead and barren.

The cluster of coral gardens was found during an underwater cleanup and coral monitoring by the scuba divers of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (Penro)-Cavite, Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary (PCGA), the uniformed volunteer arm of the Coast Guard.

The first coral garden was discovered on May 17, 2021 by the same group of professional divers while installing marker buoys on the boundaries of the Core Zone of Ternate

Marine Park (TMP).

"It was found approximately 20 meters away from the seashore and 26 feet deep," says Andrea Panganiban, a development management officer at Penro Cavite.

Panganiban added that the garden is composed of soft and hard corals with indicator species within.

"It could be opened for ecotourism such as responsible diving," she said.

The newly discovered corals were found 30 meters away from the first garden.

Twenty-five marker buoys were installed in the area by divers to protect the core zone of the marine park. Marine litter was also

removed from the coral reefs and a payaw, a fish aggregate device, was deployed in the area to attract pelagic fish.

Panganiban said that the discovery of more coral gardens in Ternate Marine Park will boost the morale of the Ternate community, thus urging them to protect the area from overfishing.

"The purpose of TMP is to boost eco-tourism and promote fish abundance," she said.

The corals were discovered by a team of volunteer divers from the 107th and 125th Squadrons of the Coast Guard Auxiliary District NCR-Central Luzon, assisted by Penro-Cavite, Coast Guard Special Operations Unit, Coast Guard Station Cavite, and the Com-

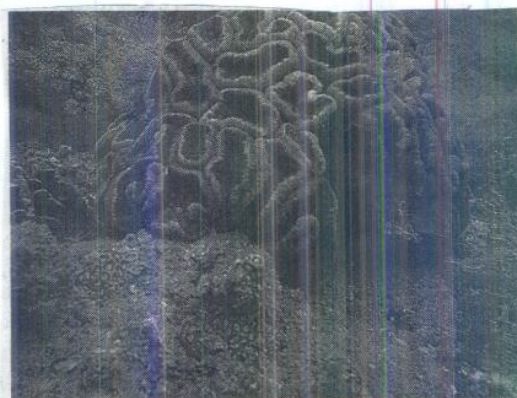
munity Relations Service of the Coast Guard Aviation Force.

Marine Environmental Protection is among the functions of the PCG and the PCGA.

Manila Bay is situated in the western part of Luzon and is bounded by Cavite and Marikina on the east, Bulacan and Pampanga on the north, and Bataan on the west and northwest.

Meanwhile, a first Marine Protected Area Forum will be held on May 17 with the theme "Innovating Partnership for Cavite MPAs Roadmap." The forum was organized by Penro-Cavite.

YASHIKA F. TORIB



■ A coral garden found during an underwater cleanup and coral monitoring by the scuba divers of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources-Cavite on April 2, 2022. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



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# Manila Standard

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**WATERSHED PROTECTION.** A Department of Environment and Natural Resources project to build socio-economic resilience in the Catubig Watershed will protect the Samar Protected Landscape and Seascape while supporting the livelihood of rice farmers, craftsmen and fishers. The Small Grants Program Phase 7, funded by the Global Environment Facility, was launched by DENR on April 8.





## After Election Day, what to do with campaign materials

By FAITH ARGOSINO

**N**ow that Election Day is over, what do we do with the campaign materials that we still have at home – the tarps, comics, ballers, fans, t-shirts – or hanging in public places?

The easiest would be to put them in a bag and then pass on the responsibility of disposing them to the garbage collectors who pass by our houses at least three times a week.

That action would just add to the mountains of solid waste that we now have. According to the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), 59,846 tons of solid waste per day is generated around the country. The figure was taken before the election campaign season so we can expect a huge increase in our solid waste per day, a simple observation of all the campaign posters and leaflets show.

In a 2019 report, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) disclosed that it had collected 29 truckloads equivalent to 200.37 tons or 705.34 cubic meters of campaign-generated waste from the May 13 midterm elections campaign season (from March 1 to May 16, 2019).

Then MMDA Chairman Danilo Lim said that the agency did not throw the discarded campaign materials in landfills. Instead, these materials were converted to reusable bags, placemats, baskets, and school supplies.

Aside from causing pollution, experts from the environmental group EWC said that they found campaign tarpaulins contain cadmium from the 2013 and 2016 elections – a highly toxic and cancer-causing chemical.

### What to do with discarded campaign materials

In a May 10 press statement, EWC shared ways to repurpose campaign materials. EWC National Coordinator Aileen Lucero said that reusing campaign-generated trash will lessen the country's solid waste.

"While reusing and repurposing is surely not a perfect solution, especially for campaign materials laden with harmful chemicals, it will undoubtedly lessen the volume of trash collected and hauled to disposal facilities or spilled into the natural environment, including water bodies," Lucero said.

She added that this alternative would reduce disposal costs, prevent releases of chemical pollutants into the environment, conserve resources and instill environmental awareness and responsibility among our people, the EWC said.

Lucero suggested alternatives and shared that the group has repurposed

sample ballots into notepads by using binding glue, fastener, ribbon, or string. At the same time, cardboard posters were created into bookmarks, envelopes, folders, nameplates, and other school supplies.

She said that polyethylene plastic posters were reused as book and notebook covers. On the other hand, sturdier polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic tarpaulin posters were sewn into carry bags of various sizes. The group also turned the materials into other items like laundry and toiletry bags, aprons, and tool organizers.

However, EWC advised "to only

### Solid waste initiatives

In line with its goal to address all issues surrounding solid waste, the DENR vowed to strengthen the implementation of its solid waste management plans in line with the 21st anniversary RA 9003 this year.

RA 9003 covers proper segregation, collection, transport, treatment, and disposal of solid waste to protect public health and the environment. In line with this, the agency will coordinate with LGUs nationwide to ensure the rehabilitation of 335 closed dumpsites.

Leones explained that the de-



Hanging campaign posters. (Manila Bulletin file photo)

reuse or repurpose tarps for non-food and non-child applications as tarps may contain hazardous chemicals, particularly cadmium and phthalates, which can contaminate food or expose children to chemical risks."

### Solid waste in the country

According to DENR-Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Assistant Director Vizmindia Osorio, the country generates 59,846 tons of solid waste per day this year.

To address this issue, the department closed 335 open and illegal dumpsites in 2021 for violating the environment and health standards stated in Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The DENR-EMB data also showed that from eight sanitary landfills (SLFs) in 2006, the country now has 245 SLFs serving 478 local government units (LGUs), only 29 percent of the nation's cities and municipalities.

partment continuously helps LGUs implement proper waste disposal by monitoring them.

"The barangays collect the waste and put them in a temporary transfer station. The municipality will then collect and bring the wastes to treatment facilities to sanitize them before throwing them to final disposal sites," Leones said in Pilipino.

Aside from monitoring LGUs, the DENR, through EMB, had also initiated the hiring of geologists and civil and sanitary engineers to assist LGUs in finding suitable areas for SLFs in line with the implementation of 1,171 ongoing solid waste management plans, which was approved last year Dec. 7.

The agency and the Department of Transportation (DOTr) have also partnered to install yellow bins or bags in all public utility vehicles nationwide to ensure the proper segregation of health care waste and other solid waste.





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## Littering rampant in MM on election day -- Ecowaste

**By Joel dela Torre**

**THE EcoWaste Coalition said Metro Manila and Bulacan were the areas with rampant littering on election day.**

"We are dismayed by the unrestrained littering, especially of unofficial sample ballots, in some polling centers," said Aileen Lucero, national coordinator for EcoWaste Coalition, adding "as if litterbugs were having a field day."

Lucero blamed the unchecked dissemination of unofficial

sample ballots outside the voting precincts for the mess.

"The unlawful distribution of sample ballots during the actual polling day by paid individuals has resulted to the ugly litter often seen at school gates and immediate surroundings," she said.

Lucero pointed out that even children were used to hand out sample ballots to voters near school premises.

Section 3 of Comelec Resolution No. 10730 states "it is unlawful for any person or for any political party, or association of

persons to engage in an election campaign or partisan political activity on... Election Day."

Aside from littered sample ballots and other campaign materials like promotional paper fans, the group's Basura Patrollers also monitored the reckless disposal of single-use food and beverage packaging materials in polling centers, especially plastic water bottles. Even discarded face masks were also seen.

Littering is prohibited under Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Man-

agement Act, Metro Manila Development Authority Resolution No. 96-009, or the anti-littering regulation as amended, as well as in related local government ordinances banning littering in public places.

Among the polling centers visited by the EcoWaste Coalition's Basura Patrollers were over 20 schools located in Caloocan, Makati, Manila, Navotas, Pasay, Quezon and Valenzuela Cities in Metro Manila, and Meycauayan City and the municipalities of Marilao and Sta. Maria in Bulacan.



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## Regional Updates



CEBU CITY GOVERNMENT

### **Election trash**

**A GARBAGE truck overflows with tarpaulins and other campaign materials collected by the Cebu City Department of Public Services inside voting centers a day after the May 9 national and local elections. The city government appealed to candidates to help in the clearing activities.**





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Agad na iplnag-utos ng Quezon City govt. ang paglilinis sa mga basurang dulot ng nagdaang eleksyon kabilang nga ang mga campaign materials ng mga kandidato. Makikita ang ilang manggagawa sa pagbabaklas sa ikinabit na mga poster ng kandidato sa may Commonwealth Avenue sa lungsod. (Kuha ni Jesse Bustos)





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## Earth given 50-50 chance of hitting key warming mark by 2026

By SETH BORENSTEIN | AP Science Writer

**T**HE world is creeping closer to the warming threshold international agreements are trying to prevent, with nearly a 50-50 chance that Earth will temporarily hit that temperature mark within the next five years, teams of meteorologists across the globe predicted.

With human-made climate change continuing, there's a 48 percent chance that the globe will reach a yearly average of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels of the late 1800s at least once between now and 2026, a bright red signal in climate change negotiations and science, a team of 11 different forecast centers predicted for the World Meteorological Organization late Monday.

The odds are inching up along with the thermometer. Last year, the same forecasters put the odds at closer to 40 percent and a decade ago it was only 10 percent.

The team, coordinated by the United Kingdom's Meteorological Office, in their five-year general outlook said there is a 93 percent chance that the world will set a record for hottest year by the end of 2026. They also said there's a 93 percent chance that the five years from 2022 to 2026

will be the hottest on record. Forecasters also predict the devastating fire-prone mega drought in the US Southwest will keep going.

"We're going to see continued warming in line with what is expected with climate change," said UK Met Office senior scientist Leon Hermanson, who coordinated the report.

These forecasts are big picture global and regional climate predictions on a yearly and seasonal time scale based on long-term averages and state of the art computer simulations. They are different than increasingly accurate weather forecasts that predict how hot or wet a certain day will be in specific places.

But even if the world hits that mark of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial times—the globe has already warmed about 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the late 1800s—that's not quite the same as the global threshold first

set by international negotiators in the 2015 Paris agreement. In 2018, a major United Nations science report predicted dramatic and dangerous effects on people and the world if warming exceeds 1.5 degrees.

The global 1.5-degree threshold is about the world being that warm not for one year, but over a 20- or 30-year time period, several scientists said. This is not what the report predicts. Meteorologists can only tell if Earth hits that average mark years, maybe a decade or two, after it is actually reached there because it is a long term average, Hermanson said.

"This is a warning of what will be just average in a few years," said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, who wasn't part of the forecast teams.

The prediction makes sense given how warm the world already is and an additional tenth of a degree Celsius (nearly two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) is expected because of human-caused climate change in the next five years, said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth, who wasn't part of the forecast teams. Add to that the likelihood of a strong El Nino—the natural periodic warm-

ing of parts of the Pacific that alter world weather—which could toss another couple tenths of a degree on top temporarily and the world gets to 1.5 degrees.

The world is in the second straight year of a La Nina, the opposite of El Nino, which has a slight global cooling effect but isn't enough to counter the overall warming of heat-trapping gases spewed by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists said. The five-year forecast says that La Nina is likely to end late this year or in 2023.

The greenhouse effect from fossil fuels is like putting global temperatures on a rising escalator. El Nino, La Nina and a handful of other natural weather variations are like taking steps up or down on that escalator, scientists said.

On a regional scale, the Arctic will still be warming during the winter at rate three times more than the globe on average. While the American Southwest and southwestern Europe are likely to be drier than normal the next five years, wetter than normal conditions are expected for Africa's often arid Sahel region, northern Europe, northeast Brazil and Australia, the report predicted.





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# Now let's turn our attention to...climate change

## Global technology company and leading conservation organization partner to promote awareness of urgent climate-related issues through the new interactive virtual museum Museo Kalikasan

**R**ecognizing the urgent need to raise the awareness among Filipinos of their role in fighting climate change, Epson and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines have teamed up to launch a virtual museum called "Museo Kalikasan," an interactive platform that can help deepen the Filipinos' understanding of climate and environmental issues.

Anchored on Epson's "Turn Down the Heat" campaign, the virtual museum raises awareness about the impact of climate change in different ecosystems and encourages action about reducing each person's impact through meaningful ways such as sustainable consumption and transitioning to cleaner sources of energy.

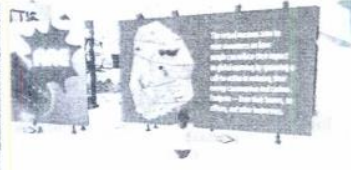
Museo Kalikasan aims to make the learning and discovery of the current state of the planet through a fun, easy-to-digest, and interactive experience for all. The virtual museum tackles climate change through a three-dimensional simulated experience, providing illustrative and immersive explanations on important themes and topics.

The three-dimensional online museum, recommended to be run on web browsers on desktops or laptops for optimal experience, also highlights the role human beings play in the continuous destruction of the environment.

With Filipinos as the main audience, Museo Kalikasan utilizes a unique and highly visual yet straight-



ONLINE CLIMATE EDUCATION The Museo Kalikasan Arctic biome in the virtual space



forward interface that anyone can follow. Akin to many online games, registered users can customize avatars to their liking before starting their virtual adventure, free to explore three educational biomes—the Arctic, the Tropics, and the City. The thematic biomes discuss a multitude of topics ranging from biodiversity in the ecosystem to the science of climate change, as well as offer virtual experiences and perspectives unique to their themes.

The Arctic biome—engulfed in planes of ice and scenes from the polar region—showcases the Arctic habitat and biodiversity present in the ecosystem for the user's appreciation, brings to light the effects

of global warming in the Arctic, especially on endangered species, and emphasizes the need for action against climate change.

The Tropics biome—all vast dryland and deep bodies of water—gives a glimpse of the distinct biodiversity in both the tropical terrestrial ecosystem and the tropical marine ecosystem. The biome goes in depth on the effect of climate change on the various tropical habitats and organisms across the world, and how the issue continues to pose as a great threat to the tropics.

**'The battle against climate change can be won by conquering the hearts and minds of people, starting with the youth, who stand to lose most if the climate crisis is inadequately addressed.'**

The City biome—full of city skylines and modern technology that users may be familiar with—calls attention to the importance of sustainable living as part of the One Planet Lifestyle. The biome illustrates waste management and pollution as some of the most persistent global problems, and provides users with examples of different and practical solutions that can be implemented in their daily lives.

At the end of the virtual journey, users are encouraged to sign a pledge board where they may choose various sustainable lifestyle practices and advocacies they can commit to. It is a small but significant step towards making a big change.

"The battle against climate change can be won by conquering the hearts and minds of people, starting with

the youth, who stand to lose most if the climate crisis is inadequately addressed. This partnership with WWF Philippines furthers Epson Philippines' commitment to building a sustainable future through projects that educate the youth on the urgency of

climate change and empowering them to take an active role in protecting the environment and the planet," said Ed Bonoan, general manager of marketing division at Epson Philippines.

"Technology plays a vital role in the implementation of environmental education in the Philippines. Especially during the pandemic, venturing into the virtual space has significantly helped us continue our work on promoting environmental awareness and spawning consciousness of sustainability among students, teachers, and citizens alike," said Dino Calderon, WWF Philippines project manager for education for sustainable development. "Thanks to our partnership with Epson Philippines, we now have Museo Kalikasan, a new three-dimensional virtual museum designed to bring an immersive experience to users from anywhere in the world. With Museo Kalikasan, visitors can learn about climate change and its impacts on the environment, and discover ways of reducing their carbon footprint, in a fun and interactive way."

The virtual museum is integrated into Camp Kalikasan, an online portal with educational materials in easy-to-understand formats such as stories, comic strips, games, puzzles, and videos about environmental topics, including habitat conservation, covering marine protected areas, bio-

diversity conservation, watersheds, rivers, lakes, mangroves; climate change mitigation, covering renewable energy, low carbon cities, climate risks; and sustainable consumption and production, covering food waste, plastic, and finance.





## COMMENTARY

# How CHR's human rights inquiry impacts fossil fuel divestment

BY JOHN LEO ALGO

THE rise of fossil fuel divestment in the Philippines has been slow for the past few years, partly due to a lack of enabling environment for corporations. Yet a recent development may have just provided the much-needed boost for this trend to accelerate.

On May 6, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) officially publicized the findings of its National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC). The seven-year inquiry focused on examining whether fossil fuel corporations or "carbon majors" can be held liable for human rights violations associated with climate change impacts.

The NICC report is significant because it provides affirmation that the climate crisis is not just a scientific issue that seems unrelatable to many people. It frames the climate crisis as a human rights issue, a key development in a nation considered as highly vulnerable to its impacts.

Integral to the concept of climate justice is the ability of peoples to exercise their rights in pursuit of a better life, including access to basic necessities such as food and water and living in a secure environment. Because of the pollutive actions of carbon majors, these rights have been threatened, if not violated.

### Obfuscation and obstruction

By burning fossil fuels that worsen global warming and conducting destructive extractive operations, these profit-first activities have brought about numerous impacts on the most vulnerable peoples. This ranges from being displaced from their homes to losing their livelihoods.

The injustices that millions have experienced are worsened by how carbon majors have been intentionally misinforming the public about the climate crisis. As early as the 1960s, fossil fuel industries are shown to block efforts to address this global issue, from lobbying in global climate negotiations to spreading climate denial through major news platforms; the latter even occurs in high-risk nations such as the Philippines.

Such obfuscation and obstruction is

considered a violation of the United Nations Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). Endorsed in 2011 by the UN Human Rights Council, it outlines the framework for states and corporations' responsibility in protecting and respecting human rights, as well as access to remedies for persons in case of failure of these entities to do so.

What the NICC report shows us is how interdependent and interconnected our human rights are. We cannot look into environmental, social and cultural rights without considering civil and political rights, especially with an issue as complex and severe as the climate crisis. And in contrast to what carbon majors would try to say, the business and human rights issues of the climate crisis cannot be separated in this context.

In effect, this also humanizes the issue of fossil fuel divestment. This does not just involve the movement of the finances of a bank, corporation, or any other institution away from dirty energy industries into more sustainable systems. It does not just concern the reputation of board members or shareholders with direct involvement in such investments.

What happens with billions worth of funding affects the well-being of billions of people. Every cent, every emission and every word matters. The longer the necessary just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy takes means more loss and damage would be unjustly experienced by those least responsible for the climate crisis.

This is further highlighted by the findings referencing the Catholic encyclical *Laudato Si'*. In this document, Pope Francis calls for a "leadership capable of striking out on new paths and meeting the needs of the present with concern for all and without prejudice towards coming generations." Achieving sustainable development, inherently linked with protecting human rights, cannot be apart from intergenerational solidarity.

No matter which angle we use, the NICC report, the *Laudato Si'*, or the UNGPs, they all refer to the same undeniable fact: carbon majors have the moral obligation to respect human rights. It is through this context that the CHR fully supports the va-

lidity of fossil fuel divestment as a strategy to mitigate the climate crisis.

### What's next?

While the NICC report is considered legally binding, that does not mean it is a pointless process. First, these findings represent political influence and the formulation of a precedent that human rights institutions in other countries could follow. This would then result in the creation of norms that pressure corporations toward a climate-aligned transformation of its practices and policies, including on their investments.

Second, the report provides victims of climate-related disasters, civil society groups and other stakeholders the guidance needed to file climate litigation on carbon majors. The CHR cites the following as among grounds for lawsuits: lack of honesty and good faith by corporations in relevant transactions; lack of transparency in administrative and regulatory matters; and lack of proper disclosure to shareholders and investors.

Third, the State must also do its part in upholding the rights of its citizens, especially the most vulnerable communities to the climate crisis. To further enable divestment, the Philippine government needs to conduct actions, such as to discourage dependence on fossil fuels, make the UNGPs legally binding in the national context, provide legal protection to environmental defenders, and compensate victims of climate change impacts.

The NICC has been heralded as the first inquiry by a national human rights institution to decisively frame climate change as a human rights issue. What should not be lost in the conversation is its impacts on strengthening fossil fuel divestment and other key actions to initiate the right kind of change against climate change.

*John Leo is the deputy executive director of programs and campaigns of Living Laudato Si' Philippines and a member of the interim secretariat of Aksyon Klima Pilipinas. He has been representing Philippine civil society in regional and global UN conferences on climate and the environment since 2017. He has been a climate and environmental journalist since 2016.*





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COUNTERING CHINESE INFLUENCE

# US TO ANNOUNCE PLANS TO BATTLE ILLEGAL FISHING IN THE PACIFIC

WASHINGTON—The United States will soon announce plans to better battle illegal fishing in the Pacific, US Indo-Pacific coordinator Kurt Campbell said on Monday, as part of increased US engagement with the region to counter China's growing influence.

Several countries in the Indo-Pacific region chafe at China's vast fishing fleet. They say its vessels often violate their exclusive economic zones and cause environmental damage and economic losses.

"One of the biggest challenges in the Pacific is in fact illegal fishing," Campbell told a forum at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, when asked about growing cooperation between China and the Solomon Islands, a long-time traditional partner of the United States.

"We believe that in the next couple of weeks we are going to, through various institutions, announce a major set of capabilities designed to improve maritime-domain awareness," Campbell said, calling it vital to address the problem.

### Quad

Campbell spoke ahead of President Joe Biden's planned May 20-24 visit to South Korea and Japan that will include a meeting in Tokyo of the Quad group of countries—Australia, India, Japan and the United States—which have increased cooperation in the face of China's growing assertiveness.

China says it is a responsible fishing country that has been cooperating internationally to clamp down on illegal fishing, and that it fishes in relevant exclusive economic zones accord-

ing to bilateral agreements.

Campbell said "we're looking at capabilities that will continue to track shipping" when vessels fishing illegally turn off electronic identifiers. He said a number of countries were stepping up efforts with patrols boats and training.

The US Coast Guard has said illegal fishing has outpaced piracy as the top global maritime security threat, and risks heightening tensions among countries vying for overexploited fishing stocks. It has called on China to exercise more responsible control over its vessels.

### Significant concern

Campbell said Washington needed to do more to assist the Solomon Islands.

He led a US delegation to the Pacific Island country last month. Afterwards the White House

said Washington would have "significant concerns and respond accordingly" to any steps to establish a permanent Chinese military presence there.

Campbell said his delegation had respectful conversations with the Solomon Islands and added: "We will be back this September."

While Washington and its allies shared concerns in the Pacific, there had not been as much coordination as might be expected, given "the new strategic circumstances," he said in an apparent reference to China's growing ambitions.

"It is essential to step up coordination, engagement, partnership, sharing of information," he said. "This is not just the United States, Australia, New Zealand. It's Japanese friends, it's Korean friends, it's friend from the EU as well." —REUTERS





## Phl reports new bird flu cases

New cases of avian influenza or bird flu have been reported in Luzon and Mindanao.

In two follow-up reports to the World Organization for Animal Health, the Philippines said new outbreaks were recorded in Barangays San Juan, San Carlos and Camias in Pampanga; Marabulig II in Isabela, Mañarog in Nueva Ecija and Sagrada in Camarines Sur.

In Mindanao, outbreaks were reported in Barangays Kauran in Maguindanao, Manuel Roxas in South Cotabato, Bialong in North Cotabato and San Isidro in Davao del Sur.

Except for the outbreak in Sagrada, Camarines Sur, the report said all new cases have been resolved.

In Luzon, 75,448 birds died from the avian virus while 86,136 others were disposed of to stop the spread of the virus.

Up to 795 birds died of avian flu while 12,299 others were culled in Mindanao.

Bureau of Animal Industry executive director Reildrin Morales said P25 million was initially allocated from the Department of Agriculture's quick response fund to indemnify affected farmers.

He said P100 would be given for every culled chicken and duck and P15 for every culled quail.

Morales said they would request more funding if needed.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar had earlier called for stricter control and containment measures against avian influenza amid reported outbreaks in several provinces.

- Catherine Talavera



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**DENR**

# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE





# Problem of land titles

By **Malaya Business Insight** -May 11, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has vowed to fast-track land titling procedures in the country, although the term of the department's acting secretary will end on June 30.

The system of land titles processing and distribution has been dogged with challenges through the years, with graft and corruption rampant in the few offices that handle this government activity. It is, however, an essential element in the government's campaign to end land feuds, and by extension, the decades-old communist insurgency.

Environment Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the delays in land titling procedures are reportedly being capitalized by communist rebels to fuel anger among indigenous peoples who are misled on the issue of ancestral domain.

*'As President Duterte nears the end of his term, the DENR is on the right track in processing land title applications aside from ensuring that the nation's natural resources — forestry, mines, marine and land environments — are managed and preserved for the next generations.'*

In the case of Marawi City, meanwhile, the devastation and leveling of the city and efforts to reconstruct houses of residents uncovered the large-scale problem of lack of land titles.

Acting Secretary Sampulna said he had already urged the Land Management Bureau (LMB) and other DENR offices to initiate processes that would expedite the land-titling procedures.

In a recent event in Butuan City, the government distributed 7,000 land patents, in compliance with President Duterte's order to fast-track land distribution as a counter-insurgency measure in the provinces. Sampulna also directed the DENR's regional officials to fast-track the distribution of lands until the end of the year.

Republic Act 10023 or the Residential Free Patent Act mandates the DENR to accept and process applications for free patent titles of residential lands.

As President Duterte nears the end of his term, the DENR is on the right track in processing land title applications aside from ensuring that the nation's natural resources — forestry, mines, marine and land environments — are managed and preserved for the next generations.





# Mayor Belmonte, ipinag-utos ang massive clean-up drive sa QC

By Chona Yu May 10, 2022 - 05:59 PM



Inatasan ni Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte ang Department of Sanitation and Cleanup Works na magsagawa ng massive clean-up drive sa lungsod.

Ipinasasama ni Belmonte sa paglilinis ang mga presinto na ginamit sa katatapos na eleksyon.

Bilang tugon, sinabi ni DSQC OIC Richard Santuile na makipag-ugnayan sa barangay leaders para sa cleanup operations.

“This is meant to ensure that election paraphernalia will be disposed of properly and not clog the city’s waterways. Kailangan nating masiguro na mabilis at maingat nating maililigpit ang mga campaign paraphernalia at hindi maging sanhi ng anumang problema sa ating lungsod,” pahayag ni Belmonte.

Hinihikayat ni Belmonte ang local at national candidates na boluntaryong tumulong sa paglilinis.





## Plogging cleanup activity held in San Fernando



**PLOGGING CLEANUP.** Members of Siwala, the official LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) organization of San Fernando, participated in the plogging cleanup activity organized by the City Environment and Natural Resources Office and Gender and Development on May 7, 2022. (City of San Fernando Information Office)

May 10, 2022

IN LINE with the celebration of this year's Pyestang Fernandino, the local government unit of San Fernando held a cleanup activity on May 7, 2022.

Members of Siwala, the official LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) organization of the capital city, participated in the said activity organized by the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) and Gender and Development (GAD).

Dubbed as "Plogging Clean up Activity: Mulayi, Maglinis at Mamisali," the event was also in partnership with SM City San Fernando Downtown under its "Trash to Cash Recycling Market" where participants may exchange recyclable wastes for cash.

"Ito po ang kauna-unahang plogging activity na idinaos sa Siyudad, na ang layunin ay pangalagaan ang ating kalikasan at the same time po ay mapalakas ang ating adbokasiya na may pera sa basura. Ito po ay tinawag na plogging dahil habang naglilinis po ay maaaring mag-jogging o mag-ehersisyo," said Marilen Malabanan, Cenro officer.

Participants walked from Tagulod, Del Pilar to City Hall and collected bottles and items made of plastic, aluminum cans, papers and other metals.

As part of the City's program on Solid Waste Management, Cenro annually conducts a series of cleanup drives in barangays, public places, and major thoroughfares.

Mayor Edwin "EdSa" Santiago expressed his gratitude to SM Downtown and Cenro for initiating environmental activities "beneficial to the next generation."

"Nagpapasalamat ako at nakikiisa kayo sa mga ganitong aktibidades upang mapangalagaan ang ating kalikasan. Ipagpatuloy natin ang ating magandang nasimulan dahil ito po ay para sa ating mga susunod na henerasyon," said Santiago.

Malonzo added that the recyclable wastes collected by the Siwala members will be turned over to SM City Downtown and proceeds will be given to the LGBT group. **(PR)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1928660/pampanga/local-news/plogging-cleanup-activity-held-in-san-fernando>





## Reelected Angeles mayor leads post-polls clean-up



POST-ELECTION CLEANUP. Upon the instruction of Mayor Carmelo Lazatin Jr. Team Lazatin personnel and crews from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office and the Angeles City Traffic and Development Office started removing and collecting used campaign materials, which will be disposed of in accordance with the advisory from the Department of Interior and Local Government. (Contributed photo)

May 10, 2022

ONE day after the national and local elections, the team of reelectionist Angeles City Mayor Carmelo “Pogi” Lazatin Jr. led the cleanup of all election campaign materials, including posters and wall murals, from the streets of the city.

Team Lazatin personnel were in various barangays of the city removing and collecting used campaign materials, which will be disposed of in accordance with the advisory from the Department of Interior and Local Government dated May 2, 2022. They were joined by personnel from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office and the Angeles City Traffic and Development Office.

The said advisory reminds local government units to abide by the provisions of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 in disposing of campaign paraphernalia, especially ones made of plastic and other non-biodegradable materials.

“Tapos na po ang eleksyon at kampanya, now it’s time for us to clean up the propaganda materials around the city,” said Lazatin.

Since he first ran for city councilor back in 2013, Lazatin has always initiated a clean-up of propaganda materials around the city immediately after the elections. **(PR)**


Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1928664/pampanga/local-news/reelected-angeles-mayor-leads-post-polls-clean-up>





## BALITANG TOKSIK! : With the closing of voting precincts, BAN Toxics urges all candidates to conduct post-election clean up drives

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 Journal Online



**BALITANG TOKSIK!**

With the closing of voting precincts, BAN Toxics urges all candidates to conduct post-election clean up drives. Volunteers of BAN Toxics documented and captured photos of election-related waste in 7 cities in Metro Manila and Bulacan. Several campaign materials such as tarpaulins, posters, flyers, and sample ballots are scattered along walk-ways near the schools.

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [@BANTOXICS](#) **BANTOXICS** [WWW.BANTOXICS.ORG](http://WWW.BANTOXICS.ORG)

Volunteers of BAN Toxics documented and captured photos of election-related waste in 7 cities in Metro Manila and Bulacan. Several campaign materials such as tarpaulins, posters, flyers, and sample ballots are scattered along walk-ways near the schools.

“It is high time for candidates, whether they win or lose, to conduct post-election clean up drives to show that they still have a responsibility for the welfare of the people and the environment,” said Reynaldo San Juan, Executive Director of BAN Toxics.

#BANToxics #Eleksyon2022

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/balitag-toksik-with-the-closing-of-voting-precincts-ban-toxics-urges-all-candidates-to-conduct-post-election-clean-up-drives/>





## EDITORIAL - Basura ng election

Pilipino Star Ngayon May 10, 2022 | 12:00am



Tapos na ang election at naghihintay na lamang ng resulta. Pero may naiwan na hindi maganda sa paningin sa mga pinagdausan ng botohan—ang tambak ng basura. Walang makapagsabi kung sino ang maglilinis ng mga basura na kinabibilangan ng mga papel, face mask, plastic cup, straw, at marami pang iba.

Hindi lang sa loob ng school na pinagbotohan nagkalat ang basura kundi pati na sa kalsada na pinilahan ng mga tao. Nagmistulang malawak na basurahan ang bisinidad ng voting centers. Wala nang nagpaalala sa mga botante na huwag iwanan ang mga kodigo nila at ang mga plastic ng inumin. Nawalan na ng disiplina.

Tiyak na problema kung sino ang maglilinis. At wala namang ibang kikilos dito kundi ang mga guro na namahala rin sa botohan. Kawawa naman sila. Sana atasan ng Comelec ang mga kandidato na magkusang tumulong sa paglilinis dahil sangkot sila sa pagdami ng basura. Sila ang dapat na unang obligahin. Sana may magkusang kandidato.

Basura ang dahilan kaya laging bumabaha partikular sa Metro Manila. Ilang dekada na ang problemang ito subalit hanggang ngayon, problema pa rin at mas malala dahil kaunting ulan, baha agad.

Inamin na noon ng Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) na mga basura ang dahilan nang pagbaha na karamihan ay pawang plastic na hindi nabubulok. Hindi raw kaya ng pumping stations na pabilisin ang pagliit ng baha dahil sa mga basurang plastic. Ngayong malapit na ang tag-ulan, tiyak na baha na naman ang kalaban sa Metro Manila at kung hindi malilinis ang mga basura sa nagdaang election, problemang malaki. Ngayong may pandemya, nadagdag ang mga ginamit na face masks, face shields sa mga basura.





Noong nakaraang Marso 2, lumahok ang Pilipinas at iba pang bansa sa UN resolution para wakasan ang plastic pollutoin. Naganap ang historic resolution sa UN Enviromental Assemby sa Nairobi, Kenya. Sa resolution, ipinaliwanag ang full life cycle ng plastic products – mula sa produksiyon at design disposal ng mga ito. Inaasahan na ang resolution ang magwawakas sa problema sa plastic pollution sa buong mundo.

Ipagpatuloy naman ng MMDA ang regular na paglilinis o declogging sa drainages at maging sa mga estero. Maraming nakabara at dapat maalis ang mga iyon. Ipag-utos naman ng Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) sa mga kapitan ng barangay na paigtingin ang pagbabantay sa mga magtatapon ng basura sa mga kanal, estero, sapa at imburnal. Tiyak na ang basura ng election ay hahantong sa mga daluyan ng tubig.





# Kalat mo, linis mo!

[RESPONDE](#) - [Gus Abelgas](#) - Pang-masa May 11, 2022 | 12:00am

AYAN nga at natapos na ang halalan.

Sa kabuuan ayon nga sa PNP, ay naging mapayapa.

Maliban sa ilang depektibong vote counting machines (VCMs) kung kaya nabalam ang pagboto ng ilan, walang naiulat na malalaki pang problema sa naganap na halalan.

O eh di tapos na, wait na lang sa mga ipoproklama.

Eto ngayon, bagama't sa ilang lugar nagsimula na ang paglilinis sa basura na dulot ng nagdaang halalan, marami pa rin ang hanggang sa ngayon aba'y, nandon pa rin ang kalat.

Malaking hamon ito sa mga kumandidatong nanalo man o nagwagi na magkusa na sa paglilinis ng kanilang campaign materials. Malamang na hindi na kasi maaasahan ang mga natalo, kung meron mang kikilos dyan eh mangilan-ngilan. Ika nga eh wala na silang pakialam.

Kung paano sana na minobilisa nila ang kanilang mga tauhan sa pagkakabit ng kanilang campaign materials, pakilusin uli ang mga ito sa pagbabaklas at paglilinis.

Obligasyon yan ng mga kumandidato, kung sino ang nagkalat siyang magligpit, at hindi ang kinalat nila, iba ang maglilinis.

Sa ilang araw sana ay tuluyan nang bumalik ang lahat sa normal.





## Election trash

May 10, 2022 | 7:19 pm



**CEBU CITY GOVERNMENT**

A GARBAGE truck overflows with tarpaulins and other campaign materials collected by the Cebu City Department of Public Services inside voting centers a day after the May 9 national and local elections. The city government appealed to candidates to help in the clearing activities.





# Anti-mining advocates score win in Brooke's Point

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

[Inquirer Southern Luzon](#) / 08:13 PM May 10, 2022



Cesario Benedito Jr. | PHOTO: Office of Board Member Cesareo Benedito Jr.

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY — Anti-mining advocates scored a win after the Benedito-Feliciano tandem was proclaimed winners in the southern Palawan town of Brooke's Point.

Cesario Benedito Jr. snatched the mayoral seat defeating acting mayor Jaja Quiachon with only a slim margin of 516 votes, garnering 18,125 votes versus Quiachon's 17,609.

Benedito's running mate, Mary Jean Feliciano, who was ousted from office in July 2021 following an order by the Office of the Ombudsman that found her guilty of oppression or grave abuse of authority for stopping the operations of a mining company in her town in 2018, was also proclaimed the winner in the local polls by the municipal board of canvassers on Tuesday afternoon.

Feliciano had a landslide win against opponent Rogelio Badua, with 21,681 votes against Badua's 14,448.

Also proclaimed as members of the municipal board were Sarah Jane Crespo-Abon, Tad Bales, Kiel Rodriguez, Nathan Lacanilao, Tan Lagrada, Bong Ferraris, Victoriano Colili, at Hayati Dugasan.





## ‘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 grassroot interventions include capacity building programs for the ASGM communities in the Philippines.

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.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/work-closely-with-communities-ban-toxics-on-citizen-participation-in-research-and-development-in-the-asgm-sector-in-the-ph/>



## Earth given 50-50 chance of hitting key warming mark by 2026

BY MAY 10, 2022

The world is creeping closer to the warming threshold international agreements are trying to prevent, with nearly a 50-50 chance that Earth will temporarily hit that temperature mark within the next five years, teams of meteorologists across the globe predicted.

With human-made climate change continuing, there's a 48 percent chance that the globe will reach a yearly average of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels of the late 1800s at least once between now and 2026, a bright red signal in climate change negotiations and science, a team of 11 different forecast centers predicted for the World Meteorological Organization late Monday.

The odds are inching up along with the thermometer. Last year, the same forecasters put the odds at closer to 40 percent and a decade ago it was only 10 percent.

The team, coordinated by the United Kingdom's Meteorological Office, in their five-year general outlook said there is a 93 percent chance that the world will set a record for hottest year by the end of 2026. They also said there's a 93 percent chance that the five years from 2022 to 2026 will be the hottest on record. Forecasters also predict the devastating fire-prone mega drought in the US Southwest will keep going.

"We're going to see continued warming in line with what is expected with climate change," said UK Met Office senior scientist Leon Hermanson, who coordinated the report.

These forecasts are big picture global and regional climate predictions on a yearly and seasonal time scale based on long-term averages and state of the art computer simulations. They are different than increasingly accurate weather forecasts that predict how hot or wet a certain day will be in specific places.

But even if the world hits that mark of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial times—the globe has already warmed about 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the late 1800s—that's not quite the same as the global threshold first set by international negotiators in the 2015 Paris agreement. In 2018, a major United Nations science report predicted dramatic and dangerous effects on people and the world if warming exceeds 1.5 degrees.

The global 1.5-degree threshold is about the world being that warm not for one year, but over a 20- or 30-year time period, several scientists said. This is not what the report predicts. Meteorologists can only tell if Earth hits that average mark years, maybe a decade or two, after it is actually reached there because it is a long term average, Hermanson said.

"This is a warning of what will be just average in a few years," said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, who wasn't part of the forecast teams.

The prediction makes sense given how warm the world already is and an additional tenth of a degree Celsius (nearly two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) is expected because of human-caused climate change in the next five years, said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth, who wasn't part of the forecast teams. Add to that the likelihood of a strong El Nino—the natural periodic warming of parts of the Pacific that alter world weather—which could toss another couple tenths of a degree on top temporarily and the world gets to 1.5 degrees.





The world is in the second straight year of a La Nina, the opposite of El Nino, which has a slight global cooling effect but isn't enough to counter the overall warming of heat-trapping gases spewed by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists said. The five-year forecast says that La Nina is likely to end late this year or in 2023.

The greenhouse effect from fossil fuels is like putting global temperatures on a rising escalator. El Nino, La Nina and a handful of other natural weather variations are like taking steps up or down on that escalator, scientists said.

On a regional scale, the Arctic will still be warming during the winter at rate three times more than the globe on average. While the American Southwest and southwestern Europe are likely to be drier than normal the next five years, wetter than normal conditions are expected for Africa's often arid Sahel region, northern Europe, northeast Brazil and Australia, the report predicted.

The global team has been making these predictions informally for a decade and formally for about five years, with greater than 90% accuracy, Hermanson said.

NASA top climate scientist Gavin Schmidt said the figures in this report are "a little warmer" than what the US NASA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration use. He also had doubts about skill level on long-term regional predictions.

"Regardless of what is predicted here, we are very likely to exceed 1.5 degrees C in the next decade or so, but it doesn't necessarily mean that we are committed to this in the long term—or that working to reduce further change is not worthwhile," Schmidt said in an e-mail.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/05/10/earth-given-50-50-chance-of-hitting-key-warming-mark-by-2026/?fbclid=IwAR3PtVCTLf7zaHocOdbvfpCsxYcjUp2En2m1GaKK9Gq2D5PszBMdm7pUktA>



# Community, connectivity foster healthier reefs, marine life in Bali: study

**A new review highlights improvements that can be made to the conservation of Bali's coral reefs, which face multiple local stressors alongside warming waters and coral bleaching.**



Fish and corals off the coast of Bunaken Island in Indonesia. Image: [Ilse Reijs and Jan-Noud, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Carolyn Cowan, [Mongabay.com](#) May 10, 2022

Bali lies at the heart of the Pacific Coral Triangle, an area of the ocean that supports the greatest diversity of coral species in the world. The reefs around the Indonesian island provide food and shelter to more than 800 species of fish and a cornucopia of other creatures, from anemones, urchins and sea slugs, to octopus, crab and shrimp. This delicate balance of biodiversity in turn shores up the livelihoods, diets and identity of the island's people.

But Bali's coral reefs, like their counterparts the world over, face multiple stressors. In addition to the existential threat of climate change and coral bleaching, overfishing and destructive fishing, pollution, invasive species, and the effects of excessive dive tourism are taking their toll.

To halt the decline of coral reefs, local communities, NGOs and government agencies have initiated many projects throughout the island's waters, ranging from designation of marine protected areas (MPAs), construction of artificial reefs, and implementation of coral rehabilitation and education programs. However, more needs to be done to safeguard these crucial coastal ecosystems, according to a [recent review](#) published in the *Journal for Nature Conservation*.

[The most important thing to protect reefs worldwide is a global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. This needs to happen to stop ocean warming and acidification, thus safeguarding corals from bleaching.](#)

[Zach Boakes, doctoral candidate, University of Bournemouth](#)

The study highlights the need for community involvement to enhance compliance and locally-led enforcement of regulations, and the potential to link up Bali's MPAs into a larger, interconnected network.

Zach Boakes, a doctoral candidate at the University of Bournemouth, and his colleagues reviewed the body of scientific and local literature investigating marine conservation issues in Bali. While they identified many examples of marine conservation best practices, they also found gaps in MPA management that continue to allow noncompliance with regulations.

"Stakeholder involvement has played a big part in the successes/failures of Bali's MPAs, with the most successful MPAs being the ones that involve the community the most," Boakes, who is also co-founder of Bali-based nonprofit North Bali Reef Conservation (NBRC), told Mongabay in an email. He added that some MPAs have failed to garner compliance from fishers due to authorities implementing a top-down method of management with little stakeholder involvement. As a result, destructive practices have continued.





“Now, more and more local-scale, [community-managed] MPAs are popping up across the island,” he said. “This is great because these projects involve the community in every step, and often are even enforced by the local people ... Inevitably, these projects are more successful.”

Harnessing the power of communities is also a key driver of success in individual coral reef restoration initiatives. According to another [review](#) of more than 500 [coral reef restoration projects in Indonesia](#) over the past three decades, projects tend to fail due to inadequate long-term monitoring and evaluation. The authors found that community-led projects were far more likely to feature these crucial components and therefore lead to reef health improvements.

Boakes has firsthand experience of community-led action to address ecosystem degradation. Since 2016, he has worked with NBRC alongside community members in Tianyar, a small fishing village in northeast Bali, to restore a nearby reef that was destroyed by unsustainable fishing. To date, villagers and volunteers have installed roughly 8,500 artificial reef structures, resulting in an almost tenfold increase in marine biodiversity.

The authors recommend that marine resource managers work in a more coordinated way by collaborating across administrative regions to link up Bali’s three officially recognised MPAs — West Bali National Park, Pemutaran MPA and Nusa Penida Island — with the wealth of community-managed MPAs that exist in the island’s waters to create a large, highly connected network.

According to the authors, such a network would better protect large migratory and mobile animals like turtles, sharks and marine mammals and important commercial fishery species, while also enhancing opportunities to share best practices.

Boakes said progress is being made toward creating an MPA network off the northeast coast of the island: “It is my hope that these projects will be successfully established and will continue to be set up across other regions of the island.”

The authors also call on MPA managers to clearly mark zone boundaries in marine parks using buoys, beach signs, or through regular public meetings. Clearer delineation of zonation would boost compliance, they say, by making stakeholders, such as fishers, more aware of restrictions and regulations.

Besides scaling up community-led reef conservation initiatives and improving MPA management, Boakes said education programs, continued restoration of degraded coral reefs, and better waste management could also contribute to improving the health of Bali’s coral reefs.

Nonetheless, these multiple localised actions have their limits, according to Boakes. “The most important thing to protect reefs worldwide is a global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions,” he said. “This needs to happen to stop ocean warming and acidification, thus safeguarding corals from bleaching [which is] the number one threat to reefs across the globe.”

*This story was published with permission from [Mongabay.com](#).*

# Booming shorebirds at Borneo wetland buck East Asia's downward trend

Numbers of endangered migratory shorebirds are growing at Bako-Buntal Bay, in Malaysian Borneo. But scientists warn the trend could reflect problems elsewhere on the critical East Asian flyway.



Great knots wade through waters in the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Cebu, Philippines. Image: [Tom Benson, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Siew Lyn Wong, [China Dialogue](#) May 10, 2022

The tide comes in quickly. “You have to move, move, move,” says Rose Au. “Within a few minutes, it’s up to your knees!” Coupled with the dangers of getting stuck in the mud or encountering a crocodile, the business of counting birds has never sounded more thrilling.

Au and the other amateur birders of the Malaysian Nature Society Kuching Branch (MNS) in Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo, have been braving these dangers and more for the last 16 years. Their aim: to count the thousands of shorebirds which come to Sarawak every year en route south from their breeding grounds in Siberia.

Their site of choice is Bako-Buntal Bay, the core area of which comprises a scenic 15km half-moon of intertidal mud and sand flats fringed by mangroves and bookended by the sacred forested Mount Santubong and the rocky Bako peninsula.

These citizen scientists’ loyal counting efforts have revealed that the bay is special: as confirmed in a [2021 scientific paper](#) on the bay, it has been attracting ever larger numbers of migratory shorebirds (smallish birds such as sandpipers which mostly feed in the sand and mud of wetlands).

The total number of shorebirds recorded in Buntal Bay (calculated by combining the highest maximum counts per species) remained stable between 2006 and 2019, with a peak of 9,335 birds in 2011. In 2019, the most birds counted in a single day was 8,374.

This is astonishing considering that populations of migratory shorebirds are [plunging globally](#). The trend is even more surprising when drilled down to specific species.

For instance, the global population of the endangered great knot, a species of sandpiper which breeds in eastern Siberia, has [decreased by 77.8 per cent](#) over three generations according to Birdlife International.

The birds depend on a bunch of sites as they move from one point to the other point. If one very important site is badly impacted, then downstream will be affected to some extent.

Yong Ding Li, Asia-Pacific regional coordinator, Birdlife International





Yet the number of great knots counted at Buntal more than doubled between 2011 and 2019. The bay has “globally significant populations” of the species, said the lead author of the 2021 paper, scientist Batrisyia Teepol, who is also a shorebird researcher with MNS. Teepol has been studying the site’s shorebirds since 2018.

From 2003, MNS birders also started counting birds roosting inland at high tide, at the man-made ash ponds of the Sejingkat coal power station, built to dispose of ash from the plant. In 2018, Teepol’s single-day count of waterbirds at Sejingkat (8,785) surpassed the seaside location’s highest count. Most notably, in recent years the ponds have been attracting increasing numbers of another threatened shorebird: the [Far Eastern curlew](#).

“It is the star of Buntal,” says Teepol, “the bird everyone who comes to Bako-Buntal Bay always looks out for. It is also the largest shorebird in the world.”

Breeding in Kamchatka and northern China, the curlew is globally [endangered](#), its population having declined by 80 per cent in the last 30 years. Yet at Sejingkat, its numbers grew from 660 in 2011 to a record 970 in 2019, the highest number since surveys began in 2003.

### ***What is the secret of Bako-Buntal Bay?***

Teepol’s paper suggests several hypotheses for why Bako-Buntal may be bucking the global trend. Though cautious as this has not been confirmed by research, she suggests that birds may be flocking to the bay because the wetland is in better condition than the others they traditionally stop at when flying south, which have been degraded.

Buntal is only one of several pit stops for its visiting shorebirds, which nest thousands of kilometres to the north in Siberia or Alaska. To escape the Arctic winter, they undertake long, tiring journeys to warmer climes in Australia or New Zealand, making the reverse journey in the northern spring.

Along the way, they need to rest and re-fuel several times. This means relying on coastal wetlands rich in energy-giving molluscs, worms and insects.

The migration route, known as the [East Asian–Australasian Flyway](#), spans 85 million square kilometres, and supports [more species](#) of bird than any other flyway. It is also the one most threatened by land reclamation and degradation.

There are many and complex possible reasons why migratory bird numbers go up and down at a given site, says the 2021 paper’s co-author, Yong Ding Li, who is the Asia-Pacific regional coordinator for Birdlife International.

“But there are things we know for sure,” he says. “The birds depend on a bunch of sites as they move from one point to the other point. If one very important site is badly impacted, then downstream will be affected to some extent.”

### ***Connecting the dots along the flyway***

So, what is the state of the sites to which the Buntal shorebirds are linked?

To figure this out, Teepol started systematically looking for ‘clues’ in 2019. At the ‘bird-counting’ sandbar in Buntal, safely distanced from rising tides and crocodiles, she would strain through her spotting scope, trying to identify tiny flags among the masses of birds.

One 2019 day turned out to be a good one for finding flags, which are attached to the birds’ legs during monitoring studies along their migration route. She spotted four – all on great knots – which she carefully noted down: “BW/ Right tibia flag, metal ring left tibia/AU7; BW/AK2; BY/AVF; BY/X1”.



This cryptic code was in fact precious evidence. It indicated that these individual birds were caught and flagged in Chongming Island, China and Kamchatka, Russia, respectively.

Compiling these and previous flagged bird observations made from 2003 to 2021, Teepol and MNS volunteer Ng Jia Jie have been able to confirm that birds recorded at Buntal had visited 17 or so wetlands along the East Asian–Australasian Flyway. Of these, the Chinese sites of Chongming, Yalujiang and Tangshan are located in the Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf region, a critical halfway point in the birds' exhausting long-distance migration.

But the region's once extensive mudflats are now [30 per cent their former size](#). Birdlife's Yong says "infrastructure development and other threats on the Yellow Sea coastline have driven the extensive loss and degradation of intertidal mudflats on the China and Korean coasts." This is despite China-wide restrictions placed on coastal reclamation, and the 2019 listing of the Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf as a World Heritage Site.

The last decade has seen a steady decline in the global population of the great knot, at least based on monitoring work done by researchers at various wetlands in Australia – where a large proportion of the world population spends the winter. Yet from around 2009, the number of great knots counted at Southeast Asian sites appeared to [increase](#). A possible reason for this, says Yong, could be the loss of critical refuelling sites in the Yellow Sea, meaning many birds simply did not have enough energy to fly all the way to Australia.

#### *Protecting Bako-Buntal Bay*

Yong lists three mega port cities close to the Chinese coastal sites linked to Buntal: Shanghai, the world's most populous city and busiest container port; Dandong, the economic gateway to North Korea; and [steelmaking](#) hub Tangshan.

Buntal is a world away from these metropolises. Two lightly populated fishing villages perch on either end of the bay. Aside from fishing, the other main economic activity is burgeoning tourism, as city folks drive to the villages to enjoy seafood on the beach.

The importance of Buntal for migratory birds was internationally recognised back in 2003, as part of a larger 3,590-hectare Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA). Then, in 2013, based on data collected by MNS citizen scientists, it was recognised as an important [Network Site](#) on the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, Malaysia's only such site.

Bako-Buntal Bay has been managed by the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) since 2017, says Oswald Braken Tisen, the SFC's deputy chief executive officer. Oswald says the SFC has been involved in the bird counts, engages with local communities on threats such as hunting (which has since stopped), and works with the Sejingkat power plant to ensure the longevity of the ash ponds.

Importantly for bird conservation, Oswald says, "our [Sarawak] Premier gave us the green light to [designate] Bako-Buntal Bay as a totally protected area, including the fringe mangroves as well as the mudflats and sea area."

While the exact type of protection has not been decided, Oswald says it is critical that local communities benefit, whether through continued sustainable harvesting of natural resources like fish or clams, or sustainable tourism activities like birding boat trips or seafood restaurants. Through such sustainable use of Buntal, says Oswald, "the birds can benefit, the community can benefit."

He points out that the Kampung Buntal restaurant strip is well-known for another Buntal migratory star: the Chinese egret. Among the rarest herons in the world, the species nests in the Yellow Sea and Russia. At Buntal, perched on traditional fishing stilts, the white birds are strikingly photogenic.





Future plans for Buntal include a mangrove education centre and tourist walkways, says Oswald. But he says that any development would maintain the integrity of the birds' habitat and involve stakeholder consultation.

Key to all this is raising local awareness of conservation, he adds, particularly with the help of NGOs. MNS, along with the SFC, are now engaging with village management committees, fishers and schools to teach them about the importance of the habitat. But they are not starting from scratch.

"The fishers actually know about the birds," says Teepol. "They can differentiate them from their size and have local names for them."

*This article was originally published on [China Dialogue](#) under a Creative Commons licence.*



# There's a 50:50 chance the planet will pass the 1.5C warming threshold in the next 5 years

By Hannah Ryan, CNN

Updated 1148 GMT (1948 HKT) May 10, 2022



A dry section of the US' biggest manmade reservoir, Lake Mead, where water levels are rapidly plummeting amid a megadrought.

**(CNN)**There's now a 50:50 chance that the world will surpass a critical threshold of [1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming](#) in the next five years, a new World Meteorological Organization report shows, warning of heating that could have devastating impacts on systems like coral reefs as well as Arctic ice.

The report says that surpassing the limit is likely to be temporary -- temperatures could come back down again -- but science shows that even a temporary overshoot could bring [irreversible changes](#) to the planet.

The report warns that at least one year between 2022 and 2026 will surpass the 1.5C mark and that there is a 93% chance that the period will see the warmest year on record. It's also almost certain that, on average, the next five years will be hotter than the last five.

In 2015, the chances of world temperatures temporarily exceeding 1.5C over the next five years were close to zero. Those odds have been inching up ever since as humans continue to emit greenhouse gas, primarily from the use of fossil fuels.

Scientists have warned that the world needs to limit global warming to 1.5C above the temperatures experienced before industrialization to avoid the more catastrophic effects of the climate crisis. In 2015, most of the world signed onto the Paris Agreement, aiming to limit temperature rise to 2C, but preferably 1.5C.

The world is already at least 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than it was before industrialization.

"This study shows -- with a high level of scientific skill -- that we are getting measurably closer to temporarily reaching the lower target of the [Paris Agreement](#) on Climate Change," WMO Secretary General Petteri Taalas said in a statement accompanying the Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update.

"The 1.5°C figure is not some random statistic," he added. "It is rather an indicator of the point at which climate impacts will become increasingly harmful for people and indeed the entire planet."

An authoritative climate report published in [February by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) said that some of the changes that could come as a result of the planet heating up by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius could be permanent -- even if the planet does cool back down.



Even at 1.5C, many of the world's coral reefs will be wiped out, and permafrost in some places could reach a tipping point. Permafrost is "permanently" frozen ground that lies under much of the Arctic, keeping huge stores of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) locked away. As it melts in warmer temperatures, it releases CO<sub>2</sub> and adds to climate change.

"A single year of exceedance above 1.5°C does not mean we have breached the iconic threshold of the Paris Agreement," said Leon Hermanson from the UK's Met Office, which led the report, "but it does reveal that we are edging ever closer to a situation where 1.5 °C could be exceeded for an extended period."



Workers use their helmets to pour water to cool themselves down as a heatwave rages in India

The WMO report was published on the heels of [heatwaves in India and Pakistan](#), which had experts questioning the ability for humans to survive in such high temperatures.

In the US, the largest manmade reservoir -- [Lake Mead](#) -- has seen [water levels plunge to an unprecedented low](#) over the last two months. Mead is a key source of water for millions of people across California, Nevada and Arizona.

In California, which is entirely in drought conditions, two of the state's largest reservoirs — Shasta Lake and Lake Oroville — are at "critically low levels," according to the US Drought Monitor.

The plummeting water levels at the lake are the result of a climate-change fueled megadrought in the American West. A study published by [Nature Climate Change](#) found the period from 2000 to 2021 was the driest in 1,200 years in the area.

"For as long as we continue to emit greenhouse gases, temperatures will continue to rise," Taalas said.

"And alongside that, our oceans will continue to become warmer and more acidic, sea ice and glaciers will continue to melt, sea level will continue to rise and our weather will become more extreme. Arctic warming is disproportionately high and what happens in the Arctic affects all of us."

Ice sheet and glacier melt in the [Arctic](#) will lead to [accelerated sea level rise](#), which could be both irreversible for centuries and disastrous for the planet as the risks of extreme flooding increase.

The report highlights how fast humans are warming the planet, said Andrew King, a lecturer in Climate Science at the University of Melbourne.

"Our greenhouse gas emissions are still at near-record highs and until we get emissions down to net-zero, we're going to continue to see global warming," he said.



Net zero refers to a state where the world reduces its greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, and offsets any that are hard to avoid, whether through the use of technology or tree-planting to capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

King added: "If we fail to take that action we will have much worse heatwaves and bushfire conditions as well as coral reefs that have been decimated beyond recognition."



# Climate disasters drive Bangladesh children from classrooms to work

**A growing flood of Bangladeshi children are seeing their education end permanently as they flee climate impacts for urban slums.**



Young boys work at a construction site in Dhaka. Image: [BBC World Service, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

[Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) May 10, 2022

Twelve-year-old Alamin's house rested on the bank of the Isha river in southern Bangladesh until last year, when the surging river eroded it and the family's farmland away, forcing them to flee to a slum in Keraniganj, close to the capital Dhaka.

Now Alamin - whose father died of cancer a couple years back - works on a shipbreaking crew and his mother cooks for the workers. Together they earn just enough to feed and house themselves and Alamin's two younger siblings, now 3 and 5.

"Once we were solvent. My husband earned from our cultivable land and my son was reading in a local primary school," said Amina Begum, Alamin's mother.

**[For the first time, we have clear evidence of the impact of climate change on millions of children in South. Climate change has created an alarming crisis for South Asian children.](#)**

[George Laryea-Adjei](#), regional director for South Asia, UNICEF

But after losing their property to the river and their savings to failed cancer treatments, work is all Alamin can now expect, she lamented.

As more extreme weather drives worsening flooding, erosion and storms in low-lying Bangladesh, thousands of families like hers are moving to the slums of Dhaka.

For many of their children - who are battling climate change impacts alongside their parents - the move means the end of education, and the start of a lifetime of hard work.

In an August report, UNICEF, the UN children's agency, said children in the South Asian nations of Bangladesh, Afghanistan and India now face "extremely high" risks from climate change impacts.

Globally about a billion children in 33 countries face that level of threat, it added.

"For the first time, we have clear evidence of the impact of climate change on millions of children in South Asia," said George Laryea-Adjei, UNICEF's regional director for South Asia, in the report.



Droughts, floods and river erosion across the region have left millions of children homeless, hungry, lacking healthcare and safe water - and in many cases out of school, UNICEF officials said.

“Climate change has created an alarming crisis for South Asian children,” Laryea-Adjei noted.

### **1.7 million working children**

In Bangladesh, a fertile delta nation of close to 700 rivers, a difficult combination of more flood-driven erosion and little land for resettlement is driving many once-rural families into urban slums.

Children, who make up about 40 per cent of the population of the country of more than 160 million, are paying a particularly high price in the move, researchers say.

Most Bangladeshi children not attending primary school live in urban slums, or in hard-to-reach or disaster-prone areas, according to UNICEF.

About 1.7 million children in the country are labourers, one in four of them 11 years old or younger, the agency’s research shows. Girls, who often work as domestic labourers, rarely even show up in the statistics, UNICEF noted.

In slums around Dhaka, children are evident working in tanneries, shipyards, tailoring, or repairing automobiles. Others labour at vegetable markets or carrying luggage in bus, train and boat terminals.

Many say they once lived in the countryside, before being forced to the city.

A sweating Alauddin, 10, has worked at a vegetable market in Dhaka for a few months now, carrying out tasks such as cleaning and shifting potatoes in metal bowls he can scarcely budge.

He said he used to study at Debraipatch Primary School, near the northeast city of Jamalpur, until a powerful flood last year wrecked the school and his family’s home and land.

They moved to a Dhaka slum, where his father now pulls a rickshaw and his mother works part-time as a cleaner at a private school.

Alauddin’s work contributes 100 taka (\$1.15) a day to the family finances, money the family can’t do without, his father said.

“My children will never go back to school,” he admitted. “We are struggling with rent and our daily livelihood. How would we bear (my son’s) educational expenses?”

Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, Bangladesh’s deputy state minister of education, said in a telephone interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation that floods last year inundated more than 500 educational institutions in 10 districts across the country.

While a few were entirely washed away, most have since dried out - but only a few have been repaired sufficiently to be available for classes, he said.

The new flood-related closures come on the heels of long pandemic-related shutdowns, and mean even children who do not have to work are still out of classrooms in many places.

Bangladesh’s Annual Primary School Census for 2021 showed 10.24 million students attending 65,000 government primary schools - but noted the drop-out rate in 2021 was over 17 per cent, with more than 2 million children leaving classes.

Global warming impacts were a top driver of that flight from classrooms, educational officials said.



Alamgir Mohammad Mansurul Alam, director general of the Directorate of Primary Education, called the drop-out rate “alarming” and noted “one of the big reasons is climate change”.

“Last year we observed that more than 500 schools were damaged by flooding. The students could not go school for a long time,” he said in an interview.

What became evident, he said, is that “a large number of them never come back to school and are involved in different work to support their family.”

More than 14,000 private primary schools in Bangladesh also were at least temporarily shuttered by the Covid-19 pandemic, said Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury, chairman of the country’s private primary school association.

Altogether 37 million children in Bangladesh have seen their education disrupted by school closures since the start of the pandemic in 2020, according to an October report by UNICEF and UNESCO, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

### *Big burdens, small shoulders*

Rupa, 9, is among the children now in work instead of school.

After her family’s home in Khulna Shyamnagar was destroyed by a cyclone last year, her family came to join an aunt living in a slum near Dhaka.

Rupa’s mother eventually abandoned her blind husband, who could not work, leaving her daughter behind with him. The girl now earns 100 taka (\$1.15) a day helping unload watermelons at the wharf.

“I realize it’s really hard for a little girl to work with adult workers but I’m helpless. I also have a year-old baby and family to maintain,” said her aunt, who works as a cook.

Syeda Munira Sultana, national project coordinator for the International Labour Organization in Bangladesh, said she had met many girls like Rupa, forced into work by extreme weather or other climate change impacts.

“I was surprised to see many girls younger than 10 years old working in a factory near Keraniganj, where women’s dresses are produced,” she said.

“I talked to them and they said most of them came from climate-vulnerable areas like Barisal, Khulna and Satkhira - and all of them are dropouts from school,” she added.

Children forced to work can face both physical and mental harm as well as losing their chance at an education, which can restrict their future opportunities and lead to inter-generational cycles of poverty and child labour, said Tuomo Poutiainen, director of the ILO’s Bangladesh office.

“Children are paying a high price for climate change,” added Sheldon Yett, UNICEF’s representative in Bangladesh.

*This story was published with permission from [Thomson Reuters Foundation](http://news.trust.org/climate), the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, resilience, women’s rights, trafficking and property rights. Visit <http://news.trust.org/climate>.*

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/climate-disasters-drive-bangladesh-children-from-classrooms-to-work/>

11 MAY 2022, WEDNESDAY



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# Possible effects of poll activities on COVID-19 cases seen in two weeks — DOH

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com May 10, 2022 | 4:07pm



People queue before casting their votes during the presidential election at a polling station in Manila on May 9, 2022.

AFP / Chaideer Mahyuddin

MANILA, Philippines — It will take about two weeks to see the effects of election-related activities on COVID-19 cases in the country, the Department of Health said Tuesday.

In a briefing, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said health protocols were enforced properly in some polling centers. But poor adherence to public health safety safeguards, such as physical distancing rules, was also observed in other voting centers.

Around 67 million people registered to cast their ballot on Monday's election day that saw long lines and packed polling places.

"Nevertheless, we are closely monitoring the situation," Vergeire said.

"As long as people are wearing their masks properly, there is adequate ventilation in classrooms, and syempre dapat bakunado ang ating kababayan. Sana 'yung mga bumoto kahapon ay bakunado ating mami-mitigate 'yung risks na naidudulot nitong possibility na baka tumaas ang ating kaso," she added.

(As long as people are wearing their masks properly, there is adequate ventilation in classrooms, and of course, our fellow Filipinos must be vaccinated. I am hoping that those who voted yesterday were immunized against COVID-19 to mitigate the risks that may be caused by a possible increase in cases.)

The DOH said there could be a surge in cases by the end of May if compliance with public health safeguards decline by 30% to 50%.

Over 68.4 million Filipinos have completed vaccination against COVID-19. Of the figure, only 13.4 million got booster shots.

From May 2 to May 8, the Philippines recorded 1,124 additional cases and verified 42 deaths.

The country is currently under minimal risk classification despite a "slight increase in cases," Vergeire said.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/05/10/2180110/possible-effects-poll-activities-covid-19-cases-seen-two-weeks-doh>



# Next admin should focus on implementation of Universal Health Care — DOH

Philstar.com May 10, 2022 | 10:16pm



A medical worker counts syringes with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine during the inoculation of the population aged 12-17 at a stadium in San Juan City, suburban Manila on November 3, 2021.

AFP / Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health said the next administration should focus on the implementation of the Universal Health Care Act, which seeks to expand people's access to health services.

In a briefing, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the agency will brief President Rodrigo Duterte's successor on its strategies for the implementation of the UHC Act, which was signed into law in 2019.

"When the pandemic started, medyo na-temporarily delay tayo sa sinasagawa natin for UHC. But it became an opportunity for all of us. Na-realize natin toward the end na 'yung ginagawa natin during this time of pandemic were all attuned sa implementation strategies ng UHC," Vergeire said.

(When the pandemic started, what we were doing for UHC was temporarily delayed. But it became an opportunity for all of us. We realized toward the end that what we're doing during the pandemic were all attuned to the implementation strategies of UHC.)

The department will also provide the country's next leaders with its plans for moving forward from the pandemic which is "to live with the virus."

"Iha-highlight natin with emphasis ang patuloy na pagbabakuna at patuloy na pagpapatupad ng minimum public health standards," Vergeire said.

(We will highlight and emphasize the continued vaccination and enforcement of the minimum of minimum public health standards.)

The DOH will also push for the creation of the country's Center for Disease Prevention and Control, and the Virology Institute of the Philippines.

The country's CDC, similar to that in the United States, will be tasked to develop and maintain an integrated surveillance system of diseases, injuries, and disabilities. Meanwhile, the virology institute will be a venue for scientists, research institutes, and other groups in the country and abroad for collaborative studies on viruses.

Former Sen. Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos is the frontrunner in the presidential race with 31,025,008 votes from 98.06% of election returns, based on partial and unofficial results.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/05/10/2180167/next-admin-should-focus-implementation-universal-health-care-doh>



# New COVID-19 cases 37% lower: health exec

May 10, 2022



As Metro Manila shifted to the more relaxed Alert Level 2, families gather to have picnics at the Quezon Memorial Circle grounds in Quezon City on Friday (Nov. 5, 2021). The city government is allowing minors to enter the park as long as they are accompanied by parents or guardians. (PNA photo by Rico H. Borja)/ File

**By Ma. Teresa Montemayor | Philippine News Agency**

MANILA – New cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) are 37% lower as compared to the period before the onset of Omicron subvariant, a health official said Tuesday, May 10.

In an online media forum, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said COVID-19 cases are continuously declining with an average daily case of 159 for the week of May 3 to 9 which is 19% lower than last week's 196.

National Admission by Health Status data showed that cases are mostly asymptomatic at 18.55% and mild at 37.19% as of May 8.

The severe and critical cases comprise 11.86% only of the total admissions and they have remained relatively low since November 2021.

The country's healthcare utilization rate remains low risk at 16% while the total intensive care unit bed utilization rate is at 17%

*"Nananatili rin pong nasa minimal risk classification ang ating bansa kahit nagkaroon ng bahagyang pagtaas ng kaso. Limang rehiyon (Our country remains under minimal risk classification despite a slight increase in cases. Five regions), Regions 2, 4-B, 5, 7 and 8 are under low risk case classification with positive growth rate in the recent two weeks while Regions 1, 3 and BARMM are at minimal risk case classification with positive growth rate in the recent one week,"* Vergeire said.

"The slight increase in cases still does not translate to higher average daily attack rates and hospital admissions," she added. ([PNA](#))

– ag

Source: <https://ptvnews.ph/new-covid-19-cases-37-lower-health-exec/>



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
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
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
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