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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR order sets biodiversity protection measures in mining operations

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com May 17, 2022 | 4:13pm



A huge lagoon of copper mine tailings are impounded in containment area that used to be an open pit mine of the Marcopper Mining Corporation in this town in central Marinduque island 30 March 1996. The waste pit said to contain about 30 million tons of copper mine waste spilled through a sealed underground tunnel into Boac river 24 March killing all aquatic life.

AFP/Romeo Gacad

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued an order providing measures to protect and conserve terrestrial and marine biodiversity in all stages of mining operations.

In a release Tuesday, the DENR said acting environment chief Jim Sampulna signed [Administrative Order 2022-04](#) or the “Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation in Mining Operations.”

The order, which covers all stages of on-shore and off-shore mining operations, aims to minimize the negative impacts of extraction of mineral resources on biodiversity and ensure its conservation.

“With this new order, we believe that mining companies will be more mindful of their practices in utilizing the country’s natural and mineral resources,” he said.

The order requires mining contractors, permit holders, and permittees to include biodiversity measures in their respective environmental work program, environmental protection and enhancement program, and final mine rehabilitation and/or decommissioning plan.

Such measures include conducting biodiversity assessment, monitoring water quality parameters, conducting economic valuation of ecosystem services, using indigenous or native species as nurse trees and for the re-establishment of vegetation, and integrating biodiversity conservation measures in the environment awareness plan.

The order also mandates that progressive rehabilitation be undertaken at every stage of mining operations to restore mined-out areas and allow the regeneration of biodiversity to sustain ecosystem goods and services.

Mining companies are also ordered to integrate biodiversity-friendly enterprises, propagation of native plants, development of green parks, and promotion of agroforestry in their social development and management program.



“We have repeatedly mentioned in the past that mineral extracting operations can be done responsibly, that the rich biodiversity within the mine can be protected,” Sampulna said.

Alyansa Tigil Mina previously said that “responsible” mining has no legal definition so “there are no policies or parameters to measure.”

In December 2021, the Duterte administration lifted the nationwide ban on open-pit mining in a bid to bring more money into the Philippines after the economic slowdown brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. He also lifted a nine-year-old ban on new mining agreements in April of the same year.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of South Cotabato recently voted to amend the province’s environmental code to allow open-pit mining, which is feared to endanger the environment and the residents.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2022/05/17/2181739/denr-order-sets-biodiversity-protection-measures-mining-operations>



DENR seeks biodiversity protection in mining sites

By [Eireene Jairee Gomez](#) May 18, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has ordered the strengthening of measures to preserve terrestrial and marine biodiversity in mining operations in the country.

In signing DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 2022-04 or the Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Protection in Mining Operations, DENR Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna said the order intends to provide guidelines on responsible mining to ensure the protection and mitigation of the negative effects of the activities to biodiversity.

Sampulna also said that the directive, which covers all stages of onshore and offshore mining operations, will intensify strict implementation of responsible mining practices.

"With this new order, we believe that mining companies will be more mindful of their practices in utilizing the country's natural and mineral resources," he stressed.

"We have repeatedly mentioned in the past that mineral extracting operations can be done responsibly, that the rich biodiversity within the mine site can be protected. Thus, this order is expected to support our responsible mining initiative," Sampulna added.

DAO 2022-04 requires mining contractors, permit holders and permittees to include biodiversity measures in their respective environmental work program, environmental protection and enhancement program, and final mine rehabilitation and/or decommissioning plan.

These biodiversity measures will be integrated in all stages of mining operations, including exploration, development and utilization, closure, decommissioning and rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, the order also mandates the progressive rehabilitation, or temporary revegetation of disturbed areas, to be undertaken at every stage of mining operation to restore mined-out areas and allow regeneration of the biodiversity to preserve "ecosystem goods and services."

The order, published last April 21, also prompts mining companies to integrate biodiversity conservation and protection in their social development and management program (SDMP).

SDMP is the five-year plan of mining contractors and permit holders, which contains plans to support the development and empowerment of host and neighboring communities.

DAO 2022-04 identified various SDMP measures such as "inclusion of biodiversity-friendly enterprises, propagation of native plants, development of green parks, promotion of agroforestry and other wealth creation projects that would create green jobs to augment livelihood during and after mining."



DENR order prompts biodiversity protection in mineral extraction

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MAY 17, 2022

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampilna has recently issued an order seeking to strengthen biodiversity protection and conservation against mining operations.

Sampilna handed down DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2022-04, or the “Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Protection in Mining Operations,” which intends to provide guidelines on responsible mining to ensure the protection and mitigation of the negative effects of the activities on biodiversity.

The directive, which covers all stages of on-shore and off shore mining operations, will intensify the strict implementation of responsible mining practices.

“With this new order, we believe that mining companies will be more mindful of their practices in utilizing the country’s natural and mineral resources,” Sampilna said in a news statement.

“We have repeatedly mentioned in the past that mineral extracting operations can be done responsibly, that the rich biodiversity within the mine site can be protected. Thus, this order is expected to support our responsible mining initiative,” he said.

The new DENR order requires mining contractors; permit holders, and permittees to include biodiversity measures in their respective Environmental Work Program, Environmental Protection, and Enhancement Program, and Final Mine Rehabilitation and/or Decommissioning Plan.

These biodiversity measures will be integrated into all stages of mining operations, including exploration, development and utilization, closure, decommissioning and rehabilitation.

The order also mandates the progressive rehabilitation, or temporary re-vegetation of disturbed areas, to be undertaken at every stage of a mining operation to restore mined-out areas and allow regeneration of the biodiversity to preserve “ecosystem goods and services.”

The order also prompts mining companies to integrate biodiversity conservation and protection in their Social Development and Management Program (SDMP), a five-year plan for mining contractors and permit holders, which contains plans to support the development and empowerment of host and neighboring communities.

DAO 2022-04 identified various SDMP measures such as “inclusion of biodiversity-friendly enterprises, propagation of native plants, development of green parks, promotion of agroforestry, and other wealth creation projects that would create green jobs to augment livelihood during and after mining.”

The Biodiversity Management Bureau, Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau, and its regional counterparts, are also mandated to take part in relevant committees such as the contingent liability and rehabilitation fund steering committee, mine rehabilitation fund committee, and multipartite monitoring team.



DENR-MGB Showcases Livelihood Products of Mining Companies

Tuesday, May 17, 2022 Journal Online



Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) Director Atty. Wilfredo R. Moncano (middle) with Assistant Secretary for Field Operations – Western Mindanao Arleigh J. Adorable (2nd from right) open the exhibit featuring the livelihood products of Helix Resources and Development Corporation, [TVI Resources Development \(Phils.\) Inc.](#), and Republic Cement Mindanao, Inc. from their Social Development and Management Programs. The exhibit featured bamboo handicrafts, woven mats, bags and wallets, eco-bricks and food items produced in collaboration with the host and neighboring communities of the mining companies. Joining Moncano and Adorable are (left to right): MGB Region 9 Director Hernani G. Abdon, [DENR](#) Region 10 Assistant Director for Management Services Ma. Theresa J. Allen, and MGB Region 10 Director Felizardo A. Gacad, Jr. The exhibit was held on May 5 in Cagayan de Oro City.



Dolomite beach reopening moved to June 3

By Stephanie Sevillano May 17, 2022, 6:54 pm



DOLOMITE BEACH. A woman takes a selfie at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach along Roxas Boulevard in Manila City on October 25, 2021. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources moved its reopening to June 3, 2022 to give way to infrastructure completion and cleanup. *(PNA file photo)*

MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Tuesday said it has moved the reopening of Manila Bay’s dolomite white beach to June 3.

According to PTV’s Balita Ngayon, the Dolomite beach’s reopening, which was originally scheduled for Friday, May 20, was pushed back for another two weeks.

DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones noted the adjustment was made to give way to the completion of other infrastructures in the area.

The DENR said it will also conduct a cleanup activity near the US embassy.

Leones earlier said Manila Bay’s rehabilitation is now at around 80-percent complete, as the DENR ramps up efforts to achieve a water quality fit for recreational activities, such as swimming.

However, he said the dolomite beach is not yet fit for such activity, although the DENR has recorded a significant decline in its average coliform level dropping to 21,100 mpn per 100 ml during 2021’s third quarter, from its pre-pandemic level of over five million mpn per 100 ml.

Once reopened to the public, only 500 persons will be allowed at the beach at a given time. **(PNA)**



Muling pagbubukas ng Dolomite Beach kasado sa Hunyo 3

[Mer Layson](#) - Pang-masa May 18, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Inilipat ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang muling pagbubukas ng Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach mula Mayo 20 sa Hunyo 3, 2022.

Paliwanag ng DENR, may ilang imprastraktura sa lugar na kailangan pa nilang tapusin.

Kinakailangan pa rin umanong magsagawa ng paglilinis sa lugar, partikular na sa bahaging malapit sa US Embassy.

Nais din umanong matiyak ng DENR ang kalinisan at kaligtasan ng tubig ng Manila Bay bago ito muling buksan sa publiko.

Matatandaang ang naturang Dolomite Beach ay unang binuksan sa publiko noong Setyembre 2020.



DENR: Muling pagbubukas ng Manila Dolomite Beach sa Hunyo 3 na

ni [Lolet Abania](#) | May 17, 2022



Dolomite Beach

Iniurong ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang muling pagbubukas ng Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach mula sa dating Mayo 20 ay ginawang Hunyo 3, 2022.

Batay sa ulat, ipinagpaliban ng DENR ang reopening nito ng dalawang linggo dahil sa ilang imprastruktura ang hindi pa natatapos sa lugar.

Gayundin ayon sa report, kailangan pa ring linisin ang lugar na malapit sa US Embassy sa Manila. Bukod dito, sinabi ng DENR na nais tiyakin ng ahensiya ang kalinisan at kaligtasan ng tubig sa Manila Bay bago ang muling pagbubukas nito.

Matatandaang unang binuksan ang dolomite beach sa publiko noong Setyembre 2022. Maraming mga environmental groups ang bumatikos sa naturang proyekto dahil anila, sa epektong idudulot sa kalusugan ng crushed dolomite na ginamit bilang “white sands.”

Subalit, dinepensahan ng DENR ang kanilang Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach, paliwanag ng ahensiya kinonsulta nila ang mga concerned agencies at mga eksperto kaugnay sa naturang proyekto.



Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach muling bubuksan sa June 3

On May 17, 2022



INILIPAT ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang petsa ng muling pagbubukas ng Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach. Nakatakda sanang buksan ito sa Mayo 20 ngunit inilipat ito sa Hunyo 3.

Pahayag ng DENR, ilang imprastruktura sa lugar ay hindi pa natatapos at kinakailangan ding maglinis malapit sa US Embassy.

Bukod dito, sinabi ng ahensya na dapat matiyak ang kalinisan at kaligtasan ng tubig sa Manila Bay.

Noong September 2020 nang unang buksan sa publiko ang Dolomite Beach.



MANILA BAYWALK DOLOMITE BEACH MULING BUBUKSAN SA JUNE 3, 2022

by [Hya Ludivico](#) May 17, 2022



Iniurong ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang petsa ng muling pagbubukas ng Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach.

Nakatakda sanang buksan ito sa Mayo a-20 ngunit inilipat ito sa Hunyo a-3.

Ayon sa DENR, ilang imprastraktura sa lugar ay hindi pa natatapos at kinakailangan ring maglinis malapit sa US Embassy.

Maliban dito, sinabi ng ahensya na dapat matiyak ang kalinisan at kaligtasan ng tubig sa Manila Bay.

Noong September 2020 nang unang buksan sa publiko ang Dolomite Beach.



DENR: Reclamation project will not affect mangrove area



MANGROVE ‘THREAT.’ The Global City Mandaue project that will involve the reclamation of an area near Cansaga Bay will be built on 101 hectares of land along the Mactan Channel near Marcelo Fernan Bridge. Environmental officials in Central Visayas assure that Cebu’s first-ever “waterfront city” will comply with all environmental requirements. (SunStar file)

HONEY I. COTEJO May 17, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Environmental Management Bureau (EMB Region 7) assures the Cansaga Bay mangrove farm will not be affected by the construction of Global City Mandaue when the reclamation project begins in September 2022.

Cindylyn Pepito, Engineer IV Chief of the Environmental Education and Information Unit of the DENR EMB 7, said on Monday, May 16, 2022, the local government unit (LGU) of Mandaue City has coordinated with them regarding the P20 billion Global City project.

Pepito said the Mandaue LGU has been compliant and cooperative so far with the DENR in making sure that the mangrove area near the site will not be affected.

The LGU, she said, had submitted the supplemental requirements needed by the DENR and was granted an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) at the DENR 7 regional office in Sudlon, Lahug, Cebu City.

The ECC is an essential requirement issued by the DENR that allows a proposed project to proceed to the next stage of planning and acquire approvals from other government agencies and LGUs so the project can start implementation.

Along with the approval of the ECC is the submission of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) screening checklist to assure that the project has undergone enough studies and has passed the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS).

“So far, all the infrastructure projects these days are very conscious of the environmental impact. The LGUs already know their responsibility, which is to make sure to have sustainable environmental management, and that’s the same thing for Mandaue,” Pepito said in a talk with SunStar Cebu.

When asked if the project might cause the rise of the sea level in Cansaga, Pepito said they had not conducted a study for this yet but assured they would further examine the situation in the area and coordinate with the Mandaue LGU whenever possible.



Pepito also assured the agency will regularly monitor the project from the start of its land reclamation in September and throughout the construction process to ensure environmental compliance.

The Global City Mandaue project will be established on a 101-hectare reclamation area near Cansaga Bay along the Mactan Channel near Marcelo Fernan Bridge. It is said to be the first waterfront city in Cebu province.

The project is a partnership between the Mandaue City Government, private firm Global City Mandaue Corp. and the Philippine Reclamation Authority. It is supported by the Cebu provincial government.



With great power comes great responsibility

[SHAREPHIL INVESTORS VIEWPOINT](#) - [Eduardo Francisco](#) - The Philippine Star May 18, 2022 | 12:00am

Prior to the elections, many business organizations, as well as foreign chambers, provided their views and suggestions on the priorities the new administration should have. I think the negative outlook that international banks currently have are valid concerns as there are significant headwinds we are facing that may continue to affect us in the near term, and may have more economic implications rather than political. Weeks leading to the election and up to today, the Philippine capital markets have been moving sideways showing limited trading volume as investors, as seen also in past elections, remained on the sidelines. These concerns seem to have been amplified as details on the incoming administration's economic team and other key appointees, as well as their economic plans, have yet to be disclosed.

My hope is that in the next few days, the Cabinet will be announced, and the new heads be given a chance to present their general plans to the public without waiting for the formal proclamation. I am sure the new administration has plans already, as both the current and incoming administration work towards a successful transition. As lawmakers, practitioners, and academicians continue to offer suggestions and voice concerns, the incoming administration should welcome them. In this regard, I would like to share my wishlist for the incoming administration.

First, the DOF Secretary choice should be a priority as the appointee will have to balance out the needs to raise revenues in order for us to continue our spending on infrastructure, health, education, agriculture and support for MSMEs. I believe we should continue with the Build Build Build program, and be open to undertaking more projects with the private sector under PPP. This is one way to raise revenues quickly and finance the necessary infrastructures while at the same time managing government debt. We just hope that the risks will be shared equitably between the private and public sectors.

The mining sector is also a possible way to raise government coffers. We hope the new DENR Secretary is open to mining as long as it is done responsibly with all the proper safeguards. I believe this industry can raise our GDP easily by an additional one percent and the revenues earned can, in turn, be put to good use.

DOF Secretary Sonny Dominguez has suggested that the incoming administration capitalize on what has been achieved. New laws have been passed with the aim of improving the business environment, encouraging more investments, lowering taxes, and leveling the playing field. Thus, the new administration will also have to create new revenue streams if it wants to provide fiscal support and to manage our debts. I believe the country's current debt level is still manageable and these loans were obtained to support the economy during this pandemic.

Second, as of this writing, the presumptive vice president is poised to head the DepEd. We hope bold innovations can be done to make up for the lost years to make our youth competitive and ready for the real world.

Lastly, I hope that the new Energy Secretary finds ways to fastrack new power plants. Brownouts were averted during elections, but in the long-run we need new supply to ensure businesses and industries can grow. Our energy mix will also need to be revisited. While we should prioritize renewable energy and even revisit nuclear energy, there should also be plans on how we can transition from use of fossil fuels.

We pray that the new Cabinet embraces the challenges and ultimately do good for the country and our people. I have heard from friends weeks ago that the Marcos and Duterte camps have agreed to distribute the agencies where their respective appointees will best be



able to serve. We hope that these men and women will have the necessary capabilities and will serve and place the interest of the country at the forefront. We also hope the incoming administration will also bridge the income divide and help the MSMEs, farmers, fishermen, and laborers.

The outside world may have preferred a different election outcome, but we must accept the will of the people. The local conglomerates are the best examples of how to survive as they have learned to live and generally prosper whoever the new president is. Even the US government has already signaled willingness to work with the incoming government.

During the campaign period, we witnessed the fervor and passion from our countrymen, with the hope that our country can prosper and I hope that such eagerness will continue. This can still be used to ensure we watch and comment on how the new government will work. I hope we can look instead at current events with optimism, and give positive and constructive criticism and praise as and when needed. While a lot of people still need to heal, I hope we can use this time as we await the formal proclamation for relationships among relatives, classmates, officemates and even neighbors to be mended so as to allow us to laugh and smile together once more, and stand in unity as one country.

While foreign media and investors may be more wary, we Filipinos have more at stake. Some may be considering migrating, but let us still help this country. We have many of our countrymen hoping for a better society and economy. Let us all help to get there.

As Peter Parker said, "With great power comes great responsibility." The incoming administration is poised to have majority control of both Congress and the Senate, so it is really a great opportunity for them to make significant changes. As the BBM camp has announced, let us judge them for their actions.

I enjoin everyone to support them and help our new leaders succeed.

The author, Eduardo V. Francisco, is the president of BDO Capital & Investment Corp. and serves on the Board of Trustees of SharePHIL.

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Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2022/05/18/2181774/great-power-comes-great-responsibility>



MGB confirms resumption of Tampakan gold, copper mining project in South Cotabato

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA MAY 17, 2022

Described by the late former Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez as an environmentally destructive project, the multibillion-dollar Tampakan Copper-Gold Project has finally seen the light of day after the biggest and final hurdle to starting the project has been removed.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has confirmed that the provincial government of South Cotabato has voted to lift the ban on the open-pit mining method that for years has stalled the \$5.9-billion copper-gold mining project in the Philippines.

In the absence of anti-mining officials, 11 Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members, led by Glycel Mariano-Trabado, unanimously voted for the amendment of the provincial Environmental Code, which included lifting the ban on open-pit mining. The passing of the amendments was done despite Governor Reynaldo S. Tamayo Jr.'s recommendation to sustain the ban.

The SP members' move came just months after the open-pit mining ban was put in place by Lopez but was reversed by her predecessor, then-Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, who signed Department Administrative Order No. 2021-40 on December 23, in effect lifting the four-year-old ban on open-pit method of mining for copper, gold, silver, and complex ores in the country.

The Tampakan Copper-Gold Project is expected to generate hundreds of jobs and livelihood in South Cotabato but Lopez had once said that a 700-football field of open-pit mine would be catastrophic and the damage to the environment will be irreversible.

The Tampakan deposit in South Cotabato represents one of the largest copper resources in the country and in the world. It has an estimated resource of 2.94 billion tons of ore grading 0.6 percent copper and 18 million ounces of gold.

Anti-mining groups, meanwhile, hit the move of the SP of South Cotabato and urged Tamayo to veto the proposed amendments to the province's Environmental Code.

"Lifting the open-pit mine ban will allow mining projects to destroy life-giving watershed ecosystems within South Cotabato. The Tampakan mining project will destroy the Altayan-Taplan River ecosystems in the Quezon Mountain Range, while various coal mining projects are poised to ravage the Daguma Mountain Range," Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE said.

Dulce said the Tampakan project is among the largest untapped copper-gold deposits in Asia, estimated to bring about P295 billion to the coffers of the incoming Marcos-Duterte administration. Senatorial candidate Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro chairs the developer of the Tampakan project, Sagittarius Mines Inc.

"We will be left with Marcos-legacy areas like the Marcopper open-pit mines, forever scarred and polluted, unfit for the flourishing of life," Dulce lamented.

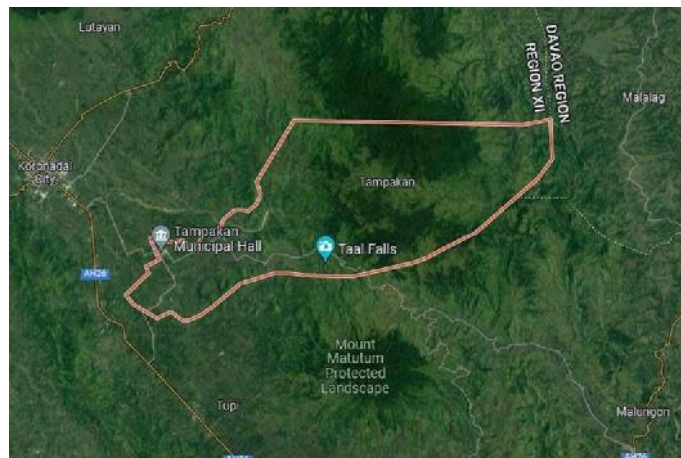
The anti-mining group Alyansa Tigil Mina, for its part, also condemned SP members of South Cotabato and accused the officials of hastily approving the proposed amendments without any discussion or votation.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/05/17/mgb-confirms-resumption-of-tampakan-gold-copper-mining-project-in-south-cotabato/>



South Cotabato lifts open-pit mining ban, paves way for Tampakan project — official

Agence France-Presse May 17, 2022 | 8:42am



Satellite image shows Tampakan town in South Cotabato.
Google Maps

COTABATO, Philippines — A Philippine provincial government has lifted a ban on open-pit mining, removing the final regulatory obstacle for a long-delayed copper and gold project in the country's restive south, a senior official said Monday.

The Tampakan project on Mindanao island has been described by its developer Sagittarius Mines as "one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world."

It was previously estimated to cost \$5.9 billion and was due to start operation in 2016.

But the project has faced numerous problems, including the local government's 2010 ban on open-cast mining and opposition from church, community and environmental groups.

On Monday, the South Cotabato provincial government agreed to amend its environment law to allow open-cut mining, paving the way for the controversial project to start.

"The baranggay (village) wanted the project, the municipality wanted the project, only the provincial level of the council had the problem," said Wilfredo Moncano, director of industry regulator Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

"With this lifting of the ban, there's no more problem."

The move was immediately condemned by a local Catholic church group, which described it as a "tragedy" and called on the provincial governor to veto the changes to the law.

"The amendment allows all forms of mining, including open-pit, in the province. And the future of the province was decided in less than 15 minutes," said Father Jerome Millan of the Diocese of Marbel.

Rene Pamplona of the Alliance to Stop Mining accused the South Cotabato government of ignoring warnings about the negative effects of the mine on the local community, particularly farmers who rely on irrigation for their crops.

"They railroaded the whole process. They made themselves technical experts," Pamplona said.

Moncano said Sagittarius, which is headquartered in South Cotabato and is a government contractor, had already obtained the necessary certification from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and agreement from the indigenous community.



He added Sagittarius hoped to "mobilize within the year" to get the mine started.

Open-pit mining directly extracts minerals on the ground and differs from other methods that require tunneling or underground mining.

The Philippines is one of the world's biggest suppliers of nickel ore and is also rich in copper and gold, but the government estimates 95% of its mineral resources remain untapped.

Mining revenues contribute less than one percent of GDP to the economy, according to the latest available government data.

A nationwide ban on open-pit mines was lifted last year in a bid to revitalise the country's coronavirus-battered economy.

It was imposed in 2017 when the then-environment minister blamed the sector for widespread ecological damage.

Manila has since reversed course, encouraging mining investments to shore up government revenues as lockdowns and quarantine restrictions ravaged the economy.

In April 2021, President Rodrigo Duterte—who had previously threatened to shut down the sector completely—lifted a nine-year ban on new mining deals set by his predecessor following public backlash over a series of devastating accidents.



South Cotabato lifts ban on open-pit mining

By [Franz R. Sumangil](#) May 18, 2022

THE Provincial Council approved on Monday the amendments to the environment code of South Cotabato province, including the provision on the lifting of the ban on open-pit mining in Tampakan town.

Council members who favored the amendment were Vicente de Jesus, Larry de Pedro 4th, environment committee chairman; Dardanilo Dar, Noel Escobillo, Antonio Fungan, Eamon Gabriel Mati, Henry Ladot, and Glezel Trabado, acting presiding officer.

Edgar Sambong, indigenous peoples' (IPs) mandatory representative, and Alaisa Marie Fale, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation president, also voted in favor of the amendment as well as Rolando Mabuyoc, president of Association of Barangay Captains, and Grace Achura, president of Philippine Councilors League.

Board Member Ester Marin Catorce, designated by the Department of the Interior and Local Government as acting governor, openly opposed the amendment but was not present during Monday's regular session.

"None of them objected, as acting governor by the rule of succession, I cannot attend the session. Governor Tamayo is out of the country while Vice Governor Vicente de Jesus, who underwent an operation, was not present," Catorce said.

Catorce appealed to the council to defer the deliberation of the amendment because of the many issues that still need discussion but her request was not granted.

Sangguniang Panlalawigan members Ellen Grace Subere-Albios and Jinky Avance-Samodal, who both opposed the open-pit mining operation, were also absent during the session.

Marbel Bishop Cerilo Casicas, who staunchly opposed the mining project in Tampakan, considered the decision a "betrayal," noting that results of the public consultation in February was not tackled by the plenary.

Casicas appealed to South Cotabato Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. to veto the decision of the provincial board to lift the ban on open-pit mining in Tampakan.

The Provincial Council of South Cotabato filed a resolution that banned open-pit mining in the province in 2015.



Mining projects' benefits cited

By ... -May 18, 2022

The decision of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) of South Cotabato to lift the ban on open pit mining in the region will pave the way for the development of the Tampakan prospect, which along with two similar mining projects, will give the country with additional sources of income, according to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP).

The SP of South Cotabato on Monday approved an amendment to the province's Environment Code, removing the prohibition on open-pit mining.

Michael Toledo, COMP chairman, said the lifting of the ban on open pit mining in South Cotabato aligns the local government unit's Environment Code with national laws on mining especially that the method is an accepted practice worldwide.

Toledo said open pit mining can be operated safely and can be rehabilitated for the land to remain productive after the life of the mine.

"This decision by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of South Cotabato ... paves the way for the development of the Tampakan copper gold project. Together with Silangan and Kingking – two other copper-gold projects in Mindanao – Tampakan would be a powerful vehicle to achieve a vibrant, multi-faceted local and regional economy that provides sustainable employment, business opportunities, and access to education, health, infrastructure and other social development programs that will improve and enhance the quality of life of those living in these projects' host and neighboring communities, including their children," said Toledo, in a statement.

The COMP said once the three projects are in full swing, they can increase yearly national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion and social expenditures by close to P800 million per year.

Toledo added for the first 10 years of the Tampakan operations alone, national taxes are estimated to reach P68 billion; local taxes, P4 billion; royalty for indigenous peoples, P4.8 billion; Social Development and Management Program, P2.6 billion.

"The Tampakan project will be an essential post-pandemic economic recovery tool whose actual and potential benefits far outweigh the potential negative impacts. We believe no other sector is likely to provide a more responsible and sustainable alternative," the COMP added.

South Cotabato's Environment Code issued in 2010 stopped any open pit mining projects in the area which stalled the Tampakan prospect, one of the largest undeveloped mineral deposits in Southeast Asia with estimated reserves of 15 million tons of contained copper and nearly 18 million ounces of gold or 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate annually, over the proposed 17-year mine life.

In a separate statement, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources committed to improve the efficiency of the application process for priority mining projects, particularly in two areas in Mindanao.

Jim Sampulna, DENR acting secretary, said in a consultative meeting earlier this month expediting mining approval process in Northern Mindanao and Zamboanga Peninsula are important amid the country's continuing economic recovery from the pandemic.

Sampulna said fast-tracking of issuance of environmental compliance certificates through simplified geological study by the Environmental Management Bureau and the creation of a one-stop shop to streamline mining applications by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau are being pursued.



He added the agency has asked faster issuances of area and dredging clearances by the Department of Public Works and Highways as well as the issuance of the certificate of non-overlap and clarificatory meetings with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.



Green groups condemn lifting of ban on open-pit mining in South Cotabato

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com May 17, 2022 | 2:45pm



Undated photo shows a Blaan village in mineral-rich Tampakan town in South Cotabato.

Philstar.com/John Unson

MANILA, Philippines — Environmental groups condemned the move of the South Cotabato provincial government to lift a ban on open-pit mining in the province, saying the policy reversal will put the environment and the lives of residents at risk.

On Monday, South Cotabato's Sangguniang Panlalawigan voted to amend its environmental code to allow open-pit mining.

The development removed the final regulatory obstacle for the stalled Tampakan copper-gold project, Wilfredo Moncano, director of the environment department's Mines and Geosciences Bureau, told Agence France-Presse.

The Tampakan project has been described as "one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world."

"Lifting the open-pit mine ban will allow mining projects to destroy life-giving watershed ecosystems within South Cotabato," said Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment.

"The Tampakan mining project will destroy the Altayan-Taplan River ecosystems in the Quezon mountain range, while various coal mining projects are poised to ravage the Daguma mountain range," he added.

'Railroaded'

Alyansa Tigil Mina accused the members of Sangguniang Panlalawigan of railroading the process of amending the environmental code of the province.

"They hastily approved in a regular session a motion to adopt proposed amendments, without any discussion or votation," the group said, adding the proposed amendments were not originally part of the proposal presented to the public.

It added that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan "cheated" those who attended public hearings and submitted position papers, and the residents of the province.

"The SP cheated the future generation of their right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. By allowing open-pit mining, considered to be the most dangerous mining method, the SP members put at risk the lives of the next generations," Alyansa Tigil Mina said.



Kalikasan-PNE called on South Cotabato Governor Reynaldo Tamayo to veto the proposed amendments. In March, Tamayo [endorsed a proposal to keep the ban](#) on open-pit mining, the Philippine Daily Inquirer reported.

In December 2021, the Duterte administration lifted the nationwide ban on open-pit mining in a bid to bring more money into the Philippines after the economic slowdown brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Duterte's successor, Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr., earlier said "sustainable" mining could be done in the country, but he was wary of the open-pit mining method because of its environmental impacts.



Church, environmental groups decry lifting of open-pit mining ban in South Cotabato

Published May 17, 2022, 2:15 PM

by [Keith Bacongco](#)

DAVAO CITY – The Catholic Church and environment groups have decried the approval of the ordinance in South Cotabato lifting the controversial ban on open pit mining method in the province.



Residents protest against the proposed open-pit mining in South Cotabato. (File photo courtesy of SAC Marbel)

The move has sparked public outcry on social media following the adoption of the amendment by Sangguniang Panlalawigan without objections on May 16 to amend the 12-year old Environment Code, which had been considered a roadblock to develop the Tampakan gold and copper mining project.

The groups cited the mining's adverse impact to the environment, agriculture and to the lives of the indigenous peoples.

"It's a sad and tragic day for South Cotabato," said Bishop Cerilo Allan Casicas of the Diocese of Marbel in a press conference streamed online hours after the passing of the ordinance.

"The amendment allows all forms of mining, including open-pit, in the province. And the future of the province was decided in less than 15 minutes," he added.

"Who will benefit from this decision?" What happened to the voice of the people in South Cotabato who had been adamant in their opposition to the proposed open-pit mining?" the bishop asked.

Along with environmental groups, the Diocese of Marbel has been leading the campaign to keep the ban on open pit mining methods in the province since it was enacted.

Last year, the diocese submitted at least 93,000 signatures before the provincial board in an effort to keep the ban on open pit mining.

During the plenary session, board member Hilario De Pedro VI, principal author of the proposal to lift the ban on open-pit mining, moved to amend the environment code and it was seconded by Edgar Sambog, the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative.



Also present were board members Dardanilo Dar, Noel Escobillo, Antonio Fungan, Eamon Gabriel Mati, Henry Ladot, Rolando Malabuyoc, Alyssa Marie Fale, and Rose Grace Achurra.

A video clip is now making rounds in social media showing de Pedro during a campaign sortie at a remote village of Topland in Koronadal City assuring the crowd that he will say “no to open-pit mining.” “Si board member de Pedro, isa lang nga tingog ang akon pamatian, kag ang tingog nga dal-on dira sa Sangguniang Panlalawigan, ang akon nga isinggitan, no to open pit mining kita! (I will listen to the call of the people and it is the call of the people that I will carry to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan and I will say no to open pit mining!)” the board member told the crowd.

The video was posted by a citizen on Facebook a few hours after the amendment of the environment code.

De Pedro, who is also the chair of the committee on environment and natural resources, had sought reelection on May 9 polls but lost.

The amendment would benefit the Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI) that holds the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) covering at least 23,000 hectares across the provinces of South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and Davao del Sur. But much of the mining tenement is in Tampakan, South Cotabato.

The 25-year contract to mine the area was granted to Australian firm Western Mining Corporation (WMC) in 1995. But the rights had been transferred to SMI in 2001, before it expired in in 2020.

However, reports showed that the mining contract had been extended in 2016 for 12 years. We are doomed “We are doomed,” said Chinkie Golle, a resident of South Cotabato and a volunteer campaigner of the Diocese of Marbel.

Golled urged her fellow residents not to stop the fight for their home province as well as for the future generations.

“For years, the province of South Cotabato had served as a model for other local government units that conserve the environment as integral to development. It is tragic that today the provision banning open-pit mining in their landmark ordinance has been lifted,” said Maya Quirino, Advocacy Coordinator of the Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center.

The LRC, Quirino added, is worried about the negative impacts of this project in the decades to come. Scientists project droughts in Mindanao because of climate change and this mining project puts local water supply to communities and for agricultural livelihoods in grave danger.

Amid this development, environment group Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability executive director Atty. Mark Peñalver has vowed that they will continue to rally behind the people of South Cotabato to uphold the ban on open pit mining.

“As a representative of the people, they shouldn’t have railroaded the approval of the proposed amendments. At best, they should have explained their stand. They owe it to the



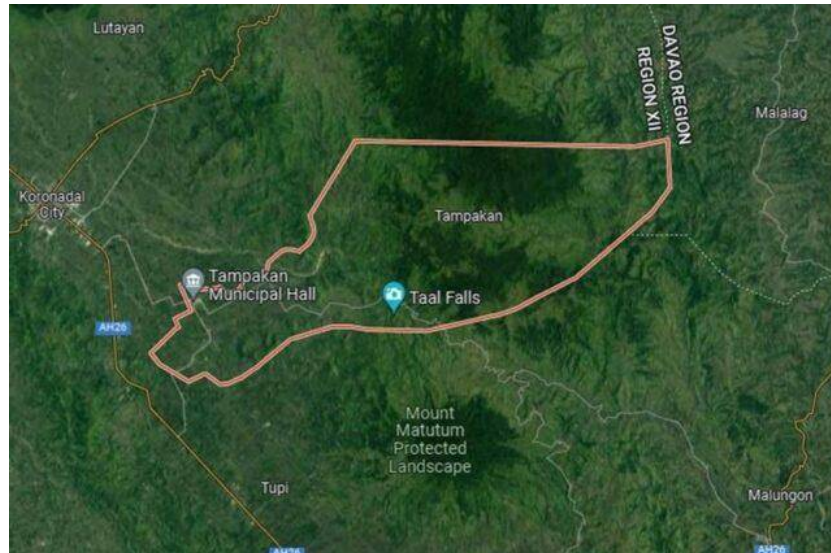
people who elected them to represent their interest in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan,” said Peñalver.

Casicas said that the Diocese of Marbel has appealed to Governor Reynaldo Tamayo to listen to the voice of the people by vetoing the amendments to the Environment Code.



End to open-pit ban triggers showdown over Tampakan

May 17, 2022 | 10:03 pm



Philstar

The return of open-pit mining is expected to cause “grave environmental destruction,” a think tank said, though analysts believe it will result in more investment that will boost the economy.

The Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED) said in a statement that resuming open-pit mining projects will ruin forest cover in mining areas, damage natural watersheds, and expose residents to pollution.

“It will cost the local government greatly in the long run when it comes to addressing the health and livelihood impacts the projects will bring to their constituents,” it added.

On Monday, the South Cotabato provincial government reversed its 12-year-old ban on open-pit mining, paving the way for the continuation of the contested Tampakan copper-gold project.

Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) is the developer of Tampakan, being in possession of a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement.

According to SMI, the mine is one of the “largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world.”

In 2021, the government lifted the four-year ban on open-pit mining as well as the nine-year moratorium on granting mining permits.

“Tampakan has been the subject of opposition from locals and other concerned groups for over a decade for good reason. It makes no sense that the (provincial council) now brings all that to nought at a time when climate change impacts are also intensifying. Open-pit mining and large-scale extractive industries in general exacerbate climate vulnerabilities of host communities, and we have long seen proof that Mindanao is not exempt from catastrophic disasters,” CEED added.

Environmental group Alyansa Tigil Mina said the South Cotabato process for lifting the ban was flawed.

“The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members railroaded the process of amending the Environmental Code of the province as they hastily approved in regular session a motion to adopt proposed amendments, without any discussion or vote,” the group said in a statement.



“It is worth noting that the proposed amendments carried changes that were not originally part of the proposal presented to the public. These additional amendments were also fast-tracked (with) no benefit of any discussion whatsoever,” it added.

Advocates of Science and Technology for the People (AGHAM), a nongovernmental organization, added that the amendment of the environmental code was hasty and timed to coincide with the national elections.

“The lifting... took place immediately after the national and local elections. It was contrived such a manner obviously to prevent public reproach, outrage and condemnation,” the group said.

AGHAM said that if the Tampakan project goes head, thousands of residents could be displaced, five major rivers or tributaries face contamination, and at least 33,000 hectares planted to rice in the Koronadal Valley will be affected.

An economist said that the return of open-pit mining in the region will attract more investment and generate more jobs and other business opportunities for the area.

“For as long as global best practices are observed in the mining activities, as well as effectively managing the impact on the environment, to make economic gains sustainable over the long-term and for the coming generations,” RCBC Head Economist Michael L. Ricafort said in a text message.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) also expressed its support for the recent decision, noting that open-pit mining could be performed safely and sustainably.

“Open-pit mines can be operated safely, according to globally accepted standards, and can be rehabilitated properly in a manner that provides alternative and productive land use after the life of mine,” COMP said in an e-mail.

The chamber said that the reopening of the Tampakan mine would achieve a “vibrant, multi-faceted local and regional economy that provides sustainable employment, business opportunities, and access to education, health, and other social development programs that will improve and enhance the quality of life of those living in these projects’ host communities, including their children.”

“The Tampakan project will be an essential post-pandemic economic recovery tool whose actual and potential benefits far outweigh the potential negative impacts. We believe no other sector is likely to provide a more responsible and sustainable alternative,” it added. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**



Temporary ban sa boracay inalis, paglutangan ng mga dikya nalutas

By Abante News Last updated May 17, 2022



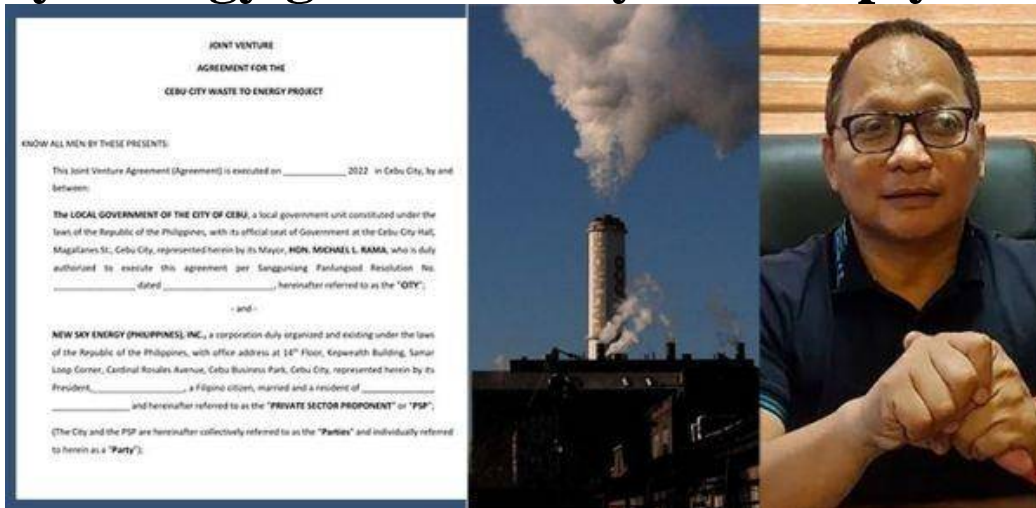
Kinumpirma ng Malay Tourism Office sa Aklan na maaari na uli maligo at magsagawa ng iba pang aktibidad sa isla ng Boracay matapos na alisin ang temporary ban na ipinatupad dito dahil sa paglutang ng libo-libong dikya noong Sabado.

Naispatan ang paglutang ng libo-libong dikya o jelly fish sa tatlong istasyon ng isla noong Sabado.

Sinabi ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) na kalimitang lumulutang ang mga dikya mula Mayo hanggang Setyembre dahil itinataboy ito ng hangin sa dalampasigan.

Bagama't hindi nakamamatay, maaari namang magdulot ng pangangati o allergy kapag nadikit ito sa katawan ng tao. Dahil dito kung kaya't pinagbawalan ang paglublob sa tubig habang nagkukumpulan ang mga dikya.

EXPLAINER: Cebu City Council resolution on WTE incinerator deemed approved by the mayor. But JVA still to be signed, can't be signed until conditions are met. Sky Energy given 365 days to comply.



Contributed photos

PACHICO A. SEARES

March 29, 2022

THE SITUATION. The resolution authorizing Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama to sign a joint venture agreement (JVA) with Sky Energy Philippines Inc. to build and operate an incinerator, which will be used to converts the city's garbage into energy, is already considered approved.

The resolution was passed in the Sanggunian's March 2 session and was received by the office of the mayor last March 16. The mayor didn't return the resolution, approved or vetoed, in 10 days. Monday, March 28, Atty. Charisse Piramide, City Council secretariat chief, told Explainer her office still hasn't received the resolution. Under the law, it is deemed approved by inaction.

OPTIONS FOR THE MAYOR. Mayor Rama may sign the JVA or wait for the next term -- under his administration or his rival Margot Osmeña's -- to implement the P4.8-billion project.

He may have at least two reasons to put it off. One, Senate Bill #1789 that proposes to allow WTE process was still "pending second reading." Until the bill is passed and then signed into law by the president, building and operating an incinerator is considered illegal or legally dubious. Those who say there's no ban on WTEs focus on exceptions to fit their plans into. Given the opposition to WTE, the mayor may not want to add that as an issue against him during the campaign period.

The other reason is that the mayor may have no choice but to wait. There are conditions in the Sanggunian resolution (#15-1842-2022) to be met, before he can sign the JVA, and there are prerequisites for starting construction of the facility and its commercial operation.

BEYOND JUNE 30. Some conditions may not be fulfilled beyond June 30, when officials who win the May election will begin a fresh term as reelectionists or replacements.

The project proponent is given 365 days to complete papers and other requirements, most notably securing a six-hectare site within the City and environmental compliance and required permits from the national government and the LGU.



CONDITIONS GALORE. There are "conditions precedent" (a) to the effectivity of the contract, (b) to the start of construction, and (c) to the beginning of commercial transaction.

Most crucial, because they tend to address the core objection to the WTE process as allegedly harmful to the environment and public health, are the requirements that:

[] The City secure a resolution from NWMC or National Waste Management Commission approving its solid waste management (SWM) plan;

[] Sky Energy secure water permit, ECC or environmental compliance certificate and REOC or renewable energy operating contract.

Opposers may do more than protest; they may also watch that every condition is complied with by the City and Sky Energy before City Hall issues the notice to proceed.

WHAT RESOLUTION SKIPS is the issue raised by Councilor Alvin Dizon before the vote on it last March 9: namely, incineration is prohibited by the Clean Air Act or Republic Act #8749. But the resolution requires approval of agencies regulating waste management and other environment concerns although it does not mention the ban under existing law.

A red flag that Councilor Joel Garganera, main proponent of the WTE process, must have seen is that there would've been no need for the counterpart of the House measure, the pending Senate Bill #i879 if WTE were not banned by the Clean Air Act. The amendment seeks to lift the ban on incineration.

Can the Cebu City Government go around the ban with the approval of the JVA on WTE facility? Would agencies whose clearances are required under the resolution grant the go-ahead to Sky Energy and the City?

WHAT'S THE MONEY? The City seeks to solve its long-running garbage disposal problem, which was compounded by the closure of its own landfill transfer station and increasing reliance on private contractor Docast Construction. That firm's performance, one recalls, was questioned by then vice mayor/acting mayor Rama last June 2021. No answers until now.

Solid waste under the JVA, which may total below but not exceed 800 tons a day, will be delivered by the City to the WTE facility. Sky Energy shall collect P1,000 per ton tipping fee in the first three years, P1,100 in the fourth to sixth year, P1,300 in the seventh to ninth year, to be adjusted every three years thereafter. That, on top of the amount the City pays per ton to another contractor that hauls the garbage to Sky Energy's site. It will be more expensive, said Councilor Eugenio Gabuya Jr. Of course, retorted a proponent, "This is waste to energy."

Sky Energy shall sell and collect the revenues from the sale of electricity (3 percent city share) and its by-products (5 percent city share). The City also shares (5 percent) with income paid by other LGUs and other institutions, as tipping fees for their own business. Sky Energy does business not just with the City but also others who want their garbage disposed at the WTE facility. No math has been done yet to see if the expected revenues from the venture will cover the increase in hauling cost for the City.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1924989/cebu/local-news/explainer-cebu-city-council-resolution-on-wte-incinerator-deemed-approved-by-the-mayor-but-jva-still-to-be-signed-cant-be-signed-until-conditions-are-met-sky-energy-given-365-days-to-comply>



School principal teaches students to recycle trash for bottle bricks

MAY 17, 2022, 2:21 PM

Rose De La Cruz
Columnist

A public school principal in Cavite is starting the students young teaching them how to gather and reuse the wrappers of junk foods and candies by cutting them into strips that can be stuffed inside recyclable bottles that can in turn be used for fences or as bottle bricks.

For six years now, Rhodora Sacramento, school principal from Cavite, has been training students to collect as many empty wrappers of candy or junk food to be cut into small strips and stuffed tightly inside the used plastic bottles. When full, the bottle bricks can be arranged as fences and pathway guides in the schools and homes.

This is her way of battling plastic waste since 2016, leading the War on Waste program to minimize garbage by convincing her students to make stuffed bottle bricks, giving them their own personal eco-bags and persuading them to throw used bottles and cans in convenient wireframe baskets. Collected bottles and cans are then sold to recyclers. Sales proceeds reached P2,500 in the first three months of the program, enough to fund one of her school organization's Christmas parties.

Bottle bricks were traded to Robinsons Hypermart Bacoar for canvas eco-bags. The bottle bricks were used to build homes for the Yangil tribe in Zambales, while the eco-bags were distributed to Cavite students for their personal use. To further motivate students to maintain the school's cleanliness, certificates and prizes were awarded to the cleanest rooms at the end of the school year.

"Our War on Waste has drastically reduced the garbage we generate. From around 20 garbage bags a week, we were down to five," reveals Rhodora, who is currently principal of the Mabolo Elementary School in Bacoar.

Champions against plastic waste

The plucky principal is just one of many champions promoting viable ways to reduce plastic waste, preventing them from entering Philippine waterways. She says there are more solutions that can be developed and shared by other schools across the country.



According to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), Cavite generated an average of 1514 tons of waste daily in 2018, 22 percent or 333 tons of which could still be recycled. The Imus River traverses the highest waste-generating cities in Cavite – Bacoor, Dasmariñas and Imus – making it a conveyor belt for leaked plastic waste flowing out to Manila Bay.

“The Philippines has good solid waste management laws, like Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act,” explains Norlan Talay, a barangay secretary in the municipality of Silang. “The problem is effective implementation because there are too many residents and too few enforcers. Aside from ramping up enforcement efforts, we need residents to be more cooperative in managing waste. We should do all we can to take care of the world our past generations left us.”

Project ASEANO

Funded by the Government of Norway, Project ASEANO is led by the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) Indonesia in close collaboration with the PEMSEA Resource Facility and ASEAN Secretariat under the purview of the endorsing ASEAN sectoral body, the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME).

Project ASEANO promotes the development of sound and sustainable measures to reduce the impacts of plastic pollution and their implications on socioeconomic development and the environment. The project focuses on the local level, with Cavite’s Imus River as one of two project sites in Southeast Asia.

The results of the project will be synthesized into knowledge products (LGU toolkit and best practices policy handbook, monitoring tools and technologies for plastics management and so forth) that can be used as a reference by local governments across the ASEAN region with similar priority management concerns.

Residents can reduce their garbage

“Residents can do a lot to minimize the trash they generate. On the household level, they should start with proper segregation, separating waste from items that can still be reused, salvaged or recycled,” says Dr. Ed Lineses of De La Salle University Dasmariñas, who led a part of Project ASEANO’s series of studies

. “Households can also choose not to use plastic. There are many things we can buy without using plastic packaging. Policymakers should also be more creative in finding ways to incentivize the refusal of plastics by collaborating with sellers, giving them sensible incentives to minimize their reliance on single-use plastics.”

Through the efforts of local champions like principal Rhodora, Asian waterways might soon become a bit cleaner and clearer.

“If a war on waste is what it takes to clean our rivers, then so be it. Schools are one avenue, apart from households to educate young people on the 3Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle. The youth are destined to inherit the future, but how it looks shall depend on what they choose to do today,” concludes PEMSEA executive director Aimee Gonzales.

Source: https://opinyon.net/national/school-principal-teaches-students-to-recycle-trash-for-bottle-bricks?fbclid=IwAR1c5OC0K9bf_BCZeXxQYmCye7fZbC9BxFAbA5Cru79wblMw-oXHNhNo0zw



Climate crisis left on sidelines of election campaign

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com May 17, 2022 | 12:46pm



An aerial view shows residents walking past destroyed houses in the village of Pilar, Abuyog town, Leyte province on April 14, 2022 day after a landslide struck the village due to heavy rains at the height of tropical Storm Megi.

AFP/Bobbie Alota

MANILA, Philippines — Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr., the likely winner in the presidential elections, will have the task of leading Philippines during a crucial period that will determine the future of humanity on an overheated planet.

Science has made it clear: time is running out to ensure a liveable future for the planet, and nations must implement deep and immediate greenhouse gas emissions reductions to cap global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Any rise above this threshold will trigger the worst effects of the climate crisis.

In a nation battered by an average of 20 tropical cyclones each year and threatened by rise in sea levels, climate change did not feature as a major issue on the 90-day campaign trail.

Ruth Lusterio-Rico, a political scientist who specializes in environmental policy, explained that voters' awareness of the impacts of climate change is quite low despite it being a cross-cutting issue.

"They still cannot connect the climate crisis with their experiences, even with poverty. Thus, those who run for political positions do not pick up the issue," the professor from University of the Philippines Diliman told **Philstar.com**.

A [Harvard Humanitarian research published in 2020](#) found that 60% of the respondents said they had not heard of and did not feel well informed about climate change. But the study also found that 71% of Filipinos expressed concern that they will be affected by its impacts.

Lusterio-Rico added that election campaigns in the country focus on personalities, not issues.

"In fact, very few candidates run under an environmental-climate agenda."

Unclear adaptation, mitigation plans

The Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of human-induced climate change, which disproportionately affect the poor.

Candidates vowed to fight poverty and corruption, provide jobs and livelihoods, improve the country's healthcare system, and even unify the nation. But their plans to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change were largely missing from the election campaign.



In a report released days before the May 9 polls, the [Commission on Human Rights](#) stressed that individual efforts to tackle climate change will be for naught if those in power are blind to the plight of the planet.

Greenpeace campaigner Virginia Benosa-Llorin observed that the usual answers of candidates in debates and interviews were focused on energy development and disaster response.

"Generally speaking, there have been no clear and definite plans to address climate change mitigation and adaptation concerns among the candidates," she said.

Nearly all candidates mentioned the need to pursue clean and cheap renewable energy sources.

Marcos and his closest rival Vice President Leni Robredo said they planned to harness geothermal, hydropower, wind and solar energy sources. Robredo also emphasized the need to have a clear roadmap to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Throughout the campaign period, labor leader Leody de Guzman was consistent in his stances: pushing for clean energy technologies and rejecting the use of planet-warming fossil fuels. He placed eighth in the presidential race.

"The interest in mitigation is there. In a lot of ways, this reflects the policies of the current administration which also seem to focus more on mitigation," said Jon Bonifacio, national coordinator of Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines.

To bring the climate agenda to the fore, Lusterio-Rico said that environmental groups should "make both voters and candidates aware that environment and climate issues are critical at this time" by having champions among government officials in the national and local levels, and strengthening environmental education through informal channels.

Climate change plan

Several climate campaigners and environment advocates backed the tandem of Robredo and his running mate Sen. Francis 'Kiko' Pangilinan, saying they offered a "competent, responsive and firm leadership" to combat climate change and address the country's environmental problems.

The administration tandem of Marcos and Duterte-Carpio clinched the top two jobs in the country by wide margins.

As the likely next president, Marcos will steer the direction of the country's policy to address climate change.

But for Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment national coordinator Leon Dulce, another Marcos presidency "bodes a return to the dark ages."

"[Marcos] has no plans whatsoever, and that includes climate action and environmental protection. It will be blind leading the blind under a Marcos presidency," Dulce said.

Greenpeace's Benosa-Llorin said the next administration should stop the expansion of fossil gas projects, drop plans for nuclear energy development, and ensure that renewable energy will account for half of the nation's energy mix.

The presumptive president-elect is backing the inclusion of nuclear energy in the power mix. Marcos also intends to revive the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant—his dictator father's project that has been mothballed since the 1980s because of safety concerns. Environmentalists call nuclear energy a "false climate solution" that is expensive and dangerous.



Benosa-Llorin also urged the incoming leadership to hold the world's biggest polluters accountable for human rights violations related to climate change and act on the recommendations of the Commission of Human Rights' National Inquiry on Climate Change report.

Its recommendations include declaring a climate and environment alert, revisiting the country's climate commitments, and amending the Climate Change Act and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act.

In an interview with CNN Philippines last week, sociologist Nicole Curato said that whoever wins in the elections is "the person who will decide who lives and who dies in this country."

"This president will decide our climate policy. This person will decide how we respond to disasters and how we respond to COVID-19."



Research to develop climate-resilient potato varieties

By Liza Agoot May 17, 2022, 4:12 pm



POTATO VARIETIES. New varieties of potatoes are distributed by the La Trinidad local government to farmers in Benguet in this photo from 2021. Dr. Cynthia Kiswa, chief of the Research and Development laboratory of the Benguet State University, on Monday (May 16, 2021) said they continue to produce not just clean planting materials but also disease-tolerant potato varieties for farmers in Cordillera. (PNA file photo)

BAGUIO CITY – Researchers in Benguet said climate change is posing a challenge to their efforts to come up with disease-resistant varieties of vegetables like potatoes.

Cynthia Kiswa, director at the Benguet State University (BSU) Research and Development laboratory, said on Monday afternoon that as an effect of climate change, insects and pests have now found it easier to multiply.

“[Kaya] nagde-develop tayo ng climate-resilient varieties kasi marami ng nag-e-emerge na sakit kaya gusto natin maka develop ng patatas na tolerant sa mga sakit (We are developing climate-resilient varieties because more diseases emerge and we want to develop disease-tolerant potatoes),” she said.

“Dumami ang insekto dahil sa effect ng changes na mas conducive na sila na mag multiply dahil sa klima (there are more insects because they have become more conducive to multiply due to the climate),” the doctor said.

She added that they are perfecting the aeroponics system technology and drip irrigation, which they hope to address diseases and pests.

She said that the most common potato diseases include the systematodes and leaf light diseases that cause early decay and a drop in production.

She said that the presence of “scabbing” or “chickenpox appearance” in potatoes' skin results in the produce being classified as of lower quality and sold cheaper.

Bacterial mill disease among potatoes is also being addressed.

“Dati na ang mga sakit pero mas lumala (The diseases have been there all along but are more difficult to control now),” Kiswa said.

At least 75 percent of the 120,000 metric tons of potatoes in the country are produced in the following municipalities in Benguet, namely Buguis, Bakun, Kibungan, and Atok.



The commodity is also produced in Bauko, Mountain Province, and in Tinoc, Ifugao.

Kiswa said one of the functions of the research and development laboratory of the university is to produce not just “clean” planting materials but also climate-resilient varieties that will allow the production of the farmers to continue producing the commercial and household requirements for the commodity.

She said the Department of Science and Technology funds the research they are doing and has also provided funds for the improvement of the tissue-culture laboratory of the university that allows it to produce “clean” and disease-free planting materials for the farmers. **(PNA)**

GMA News Online managing editor joins Oxford Climate Journalism Network's second cohort

By HERMES JOY TUNAC, GMA News

Published May 17, 2022 8:18pm



GMA News Online managing editor Jhoanna Lou Albano has been named among the journalists chosen to be members of the second cohort of [Oxford Climate Journalism Network \(OCJN\)](#).

According to Reuters Institute, OCJN's mission is "to help journalists and editors develop their coverage of climate change and support newsroom leaders in identifying the issues involved in reporting on the climate crisis."

The network, however, doesn't merely focus on "individual pieces of reporting" but instead on working with hundreds of journalists to help them "develop how journalism and the news media approach one of the defining issues of our time" which is climate change.

Albano, the only member chosen from the Philippines, will join journalists from BBC, Wall Street Journal, and NBC News, among others, during the run of the OJCN, which is from July to December 2022.

Previously, Albano was also named among journalists in [AAJA's 2022 executive leadership program](#). – RC, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/content/832012/gma-news-online-managing-editor-joins-oxford-climate-journalism-network-s-second-cohort/story/?fbclid=IwAR3kxkMMPKrMBFsX0XHj5jeZ0QT96WmQyhPCLtHoS-XsU0gA00DOz11DZoE>



Satellite images reveal global losses of tidal wetlands over past two decades

The Earth has lost 4,000 square kilometres of its tidal wetlands over the past 20 years, a new study finds. This is equal to an area roughly the size of the Spanish island Mallorca or the Indian state of Goa.



Some 69 per cent of recent global wetland loss was concentrated in just three countries: Indonesia, China, and Myanmar. Image: [Gihan Dias, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Anastasiia Zagoruichyk, [Carbon Brief](#) May 17, 2022

The research uses satellite data to monitor three types of tidal ecosystems – tidal flats, tidal marshes and [mangroves](#) – from 1999 to 2019.

It finds that a total of 13,700km² of tidal wetlands were lost from 1999 to 2019, largely as a result of human activities, including aquaculture, agriculture and urban expansion. Indirect factors also played a role, the study says, including [sea-level rise](#) and coastal processes such as erosion.

However, during the same time period, both human-led and natural restoration led to the creation of 9,700km² of new tidal wetlands – offsetting 71 per cent of the loss.

The study's findings could “allow us to finally scale up local measurements of carbon accumulation to estimate the size of the coastal carbon sink”, a scientist not involved in the study tells Carbon Brief.

Wetlands are among the only ecosystems on the planet that are effectively going to sequester carbon in perpetuity. They also protect us from storms, can grow vertically to track rising seas and generate vast volumes of fish.

[Dr. Mark Spalding](#), marine scientist, University of Cambridge

Tidal wetlands

The new study, published in [Science](#), takes a look at how the global area of tidal wetlands has changed over the past two decades and what reasons led to these changes.

According to the research, “tidal wetlands” consist of Earth’s three intertidal ecosystems: tidal flats, tidal marshes and mangroves.

Tidal flats are shallow, muddy areas that are covered and uncovered by the rise and fall of the tide. Tidal marshes are wet, vegetated areas found along coasts and rivers that are regularly flooded. Mangroves are densely covered, swampy forests surrounded by saltwater in a coastal area.

These ecosystems “are of immense importance to humanity”, the scientists say, providing benefits such as carbon storage, flood protection and habitat for commercial fish stocks.

[Dr Mark Spalding](#) – a marine scientist at the [University of Cambridge](#) and co-author of the study – explains to Carbon Brief:

“Wetlands are among the only ecosystems on the planet that are effectively going to sequester carbon in perpetuity – and, unlike freshwater wetlands, they don’t emit [methane](#). They also protect us from storms, can grow vertically to track rising seas and generate vast volumes of fish.”

The study is the first to monitor all three tidal ecosystems simultaneously, adds [Dr Nicholas Murray, study lead author and](#) a research scientist focused on environmental management and conservation from [James Cook University](#) in Queensland. He tells Carbon Brief:

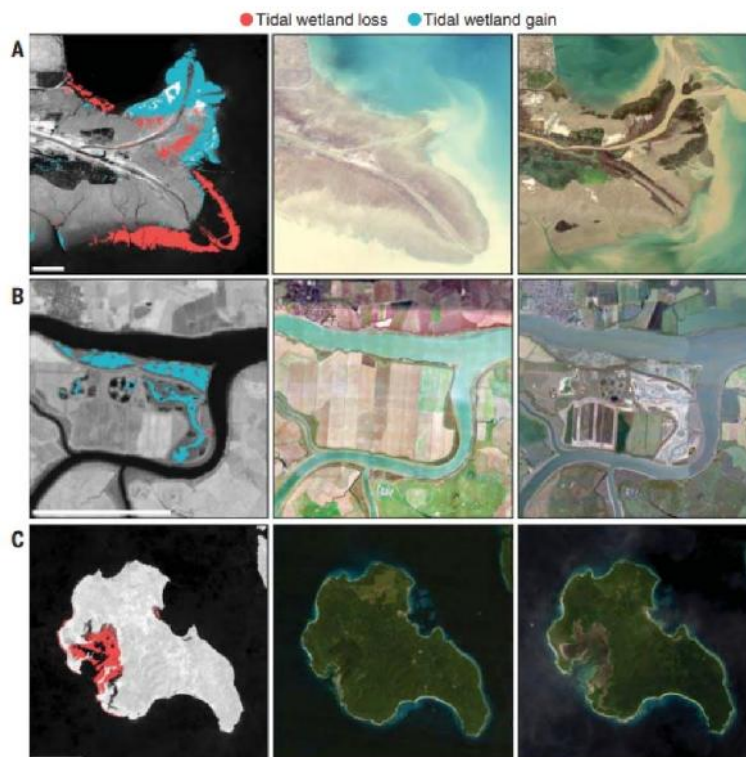
“Our results indicate that over the last two decades around 13,600km² of tidal wetlands were lost due to a range of different drivers, including rapid coastal development. However, we also found that about 9,600km² of new tidal wetlands were detected in places where they did not occur in 1999. The ‘net change’ of tidal wetlands (-4,000km²) is overwhelmingly still in the negative.”

Satellite observations

For the research, the scientists used observations from more than a million satellite images of tidal wetlands from around the world taken between 1999 to 2019.

To analyse and attribute changes to tidal wetlands over time, the researchers used [machine learning](#) – a form of artificial intelligence in which computer algorithms can be trained to uncover patterns and complex relationships in data.

The images below show examples of where the scientists identified tidal wetlands loss and formation through the years in different parts of the world using satellite images. In the images, red indicates tidal wetland loss, while blue colour indicates their gains.



Satellite images showing losses (red) and gains (blue) in tidal ecosystems across the world. The images show A) Losses and gains of tidal flats and tidal marshes after diversion of the main channel in 1996 in the Yellow River delta in China (left) and then in 1998 (middle) and 2020 (right). B) Tidal marsh gain due to Europe’s largest coastal wetland restoration project, UK (left) and then in 1999 (middle) and 2018 (right). C) Mangrove loss due to tectonic subsidence after the Aceh-Andaman earthquake of 2004, Katchal Island, Nicobar Islands (left) and then in 1992 (middle) and 2019 (right). All scale bars are 5km. Credit: Murray et al. ([2022](#)).

Using the satellite images, the study estimates that the total area of tidal wetlands in 2019 was at least 354,600km² – larger than previous estimates had suggested.

It adds that the largest remaining single tidal wetlands are located in the Amazon delta, the northern Bay of Bengal, New Guinea, and the Niger delta.

The researchers also used the images to produce the first estimate for the size of tidal marshes globally, which they say covers 90,800km².

This estimate could aid efforts to quantify global “[blue carbon](#)” stocks – the carbon stored in coastal or marine ecosystems – the scientists say in their research paper.

“It’s wonderful to finally know how many marshes there are in the world,” [Dr Matthew Kirwan](#) – professor at [Virginia institute of marine science](#) who was not involved in the study – tells Carbon Brief. He adds:

“This work could allow us to finally scale up local measurements of carbon accumulation to estimate the size of the coastal carbon sink.”

Losses and gains

The research also finds that, from all three studied ecosystems, tidal flats experienced both the greatest loss (7,000km²) and gain (6,700km²), accounting for almost two-thirds of the total area of tidal-wetland change.

The world’s mangroves, by contrast, experienced twice as much loss as they did gains over the study period, according to the research.

Tidal marshes have the lowest total-area change and are the only ecosystem where gain marginally exceeds their loss, the study adds.

The study also finds that changes in tidal wetlands area are largely dependent on region.

For example, the researchers find that about three-quarters of the 4,000km² that were lost globally from 1999 to 2019 occurred in Asia.

In addition, 69 per cent of the loss was concentrated in just three countries: Indonesia, China and Myanmar – 36 per cent, 21 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively.

Outside of Asia, tidal wetlands in Africa also recorded strong losses, with severe mangrove degradation in Nigeria, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.

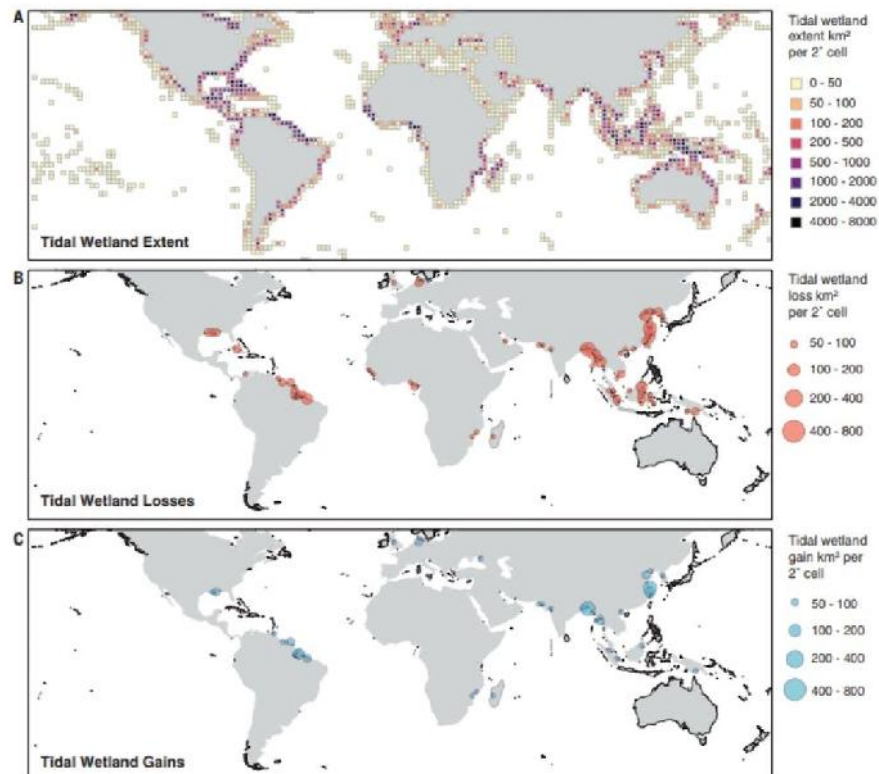
The maps below show the global distribution of tidal wetlands in 2019 (top), global losses from 1999 to 2019 (middle) and global gains (bottom). On the top map, darker colours indicate larger areas of tidal wetlands. On the other two maps, circle size indicates the extent of tidal wetland loss and gain.

Drivers of change

The researchers found that changes to tidal wetlands areas are being caused by a variety of direct or indirect drivers.

Direct factors include human activities, such as aquaculture, agriculture, plantations, coastal development, and the construction of physical structures, such as seawalls and dikes. These factors accounted for 39 per cent of total tidal wetland losses over the past two decades, the research finds.

Indirect factors, meanwhile, include human-caused sea-level rise, which can cause wetland ecosystems to “drown”. Other indirect factors include storms and coastal processes, such as erosion. These factors accounted for 86 per cent of tidal wetland gains, according to the research.



The global distribution of tidal wetlands in 2019 (top), as well as global losses from 1999 to 2019 (middle) and global gains (bottom). Credit: Murray et al. (2022).

The study finds that, globally, indirect drivers accounted for most losses of tidal marshes (78 per cent) and tidal flats (66 per cent), whereas mangrove losses were equally a result of direct and indirect drivers (50 per cent).

The researchers also find that, over the course of the study period, around 2 per cent of the world's tidal wetlands transitioned from one type of ecosystem to another. In 27 per cent of cases, mangroves transitioned to tidal marshes – or vice versa.

Overall, the findings could help scientists advance their understanding of how tidal wetlands are changing in response to global warming and other factors, Murray says:

“Understanding where and when losses and gains of tidal wetlands occur allows us to improve our knowledge of coastal ecosystem ecology, better understand the effects of climate change on coastal ecosystems, support the development of coastal ecosystem management strategies and identify where ecosystem restoration could be implemented to recover lost ecosystem services.”

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

What the next Australian government must do to save the Great Barrier Reef

We're barreling towards catastrophic levels of global warming, and there's not enough action. We need leaders who are serious about climate action and are willing to acknowledge that the problem is real.



Graveyard of Staghorn coral, Yonge reef, Northern Great Barrier Reef. Rising global temperatures could have disastrous impacts on ocean circulation. Image: [ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, CC BY-ND 2.0.](#)

By Jodie L. Rummer and Scott F. Heron
May 17, 2022

Widespread coral bleaching has [now occurred](#) on the Great Barrier Reef for the fourth time in seven years. As the world has heated up more and more, there's less and less chance for corals to recover.

This year, the Morrison government announced a [A\\$1 billion \(US\\$0.7 billion\) plan](#) to help the reef. This plan tackles some of the problems the reef faces – like poor water quality from floods as well as agricultural and industrial runoff. But it makes no mention of the elephant in the room. The world's largest living assemblage of organisms is facing collapse because of one major threat: climate change.

Our window of opportunity to act is narrowing. We and other scientists have warned about this for decades. Australia has doubled down on coal and gas exports with [subsidies of \\$20 billion](#) in the past two years. When these fossil fuels are burned, they produce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that trap more heat in the atmosphere that also warms the ocean.

If our next federal government wants to save the reef, it must tackle the main reason it is in trouble by phasing out fossil fuel use and exports as quickly as possible. Otherwise it's like putting Band-Aids on an arterial wound. But to help the reef get through the next decades of warming we've already locked in, we will still need that \$1 billion to help reduce other stressors.

Why is this new bleaching event such bad news?

Past bleaching events have been linked to El Niño events. Stable atmospheric conditions can bring calm, cloud-free periods that heat up the water around the reef. That can bring extreme summer temperatures – and that is when corals bleach.

This year is a La Niña, which can bring warmer-than-usual temperatures but also tends to bring more clouds, rain, and storms that mix up the waters. These usually spread the heat to the deeper parts of the ocean and mean lower temperature for corals. Not this time.

Global warming means corals are already close to their bleaching threshold, and it doesn't take much heat to tip the balance. Water temperatures across the reef have been several degrees hotter than the long-term average. And the corals are feeling the heat.

Four times in seven years means that bleaching events are accelerating. Predictions have suggested that bleaching will become an annual event in a little over two decades. It may not be that long.

You always remember the first time you see bleaching in real life. For co-author Jodie, that was in 2016, off Lizard Island, a previously pristine part of the reef far from human impacts or water quality issues. The water was shockingly warm. Looking at our dive computers, we saw that the temperatures we had been simulating in our laboratories for 2050 were already here.

For a week, the marine heatwave pushed the corals to their limits. When corals experience heat stress, some initially turn fluorescent while others go stark white. Then the water goes murky – that's death in the water. It's heart-breaking to see. Grief is common among marine scientists right now.

Corals can recover from bleaching if they get a recovery period. But annual bleaching means there is not enough time for proper recovery. Even the most robust corals can't survive this year after year.

Some people hope the reef can adapt to hotter conditions – but there is little evidence it can happen fast enough to outpace warming. While some fish can move to cooler waters further south, corals face ocean acidification, yet another problem caused by carbon dioxide emissions. As CO₂ is absorbed by the ocean, the changed chemistry makes it harder for corals to build their skeleton (and for other marine organisms to form a shell). There's no safe place for corals to go.

What does the next government need to do?

The evidence is clear. We see it with our own eyes. We're barreling towards catastrophic levels of warming, and there's not enough action.

As it stands, policies on offer by our two major parties will not save the reef, according to [new research](#) by Climate Analytics. Current Coalition emissions reduction targets of 26 to 28 per cent by 2030 would lead to a 3 degrees Celsius warmer world, which would be devastating for the Great Barrier Reef.

Labour's policies of a 43 per cent reduction by 2030 still lead to 2 of warming. The teal independents and the Greens have policies compatible with keeping warming to 1.5, though how to achieve those goals is unclear. What is clear is that every tenth of a degree matters.

We need leaders who are serious about climate action, who can acknowledge the truth that the problem is real, that we're causing it, and that it's hurting us right now.

There are still a few people sceptical that humans can change the climate. But today the changes are apparent.

The words "unprecedented" and "record-breaking" are starting to lose relevance for natural disasters because they are used more and more. Australians faced the 2019/20 Black Summer of megafires. This year we've had major flooding. Marine heatwaves have killed off almost all of Tasmania's giant kelp.

But climate impacts are also being seen around the world – extraordinary drought gripping California, fires in melting Siberia and events [scientists consider](#) to be "virtually impossible without the influence of human-caused climate change". That includes the accelerating impacts on coral reefs worldwide.



We need government policies matching the scale and urgency of the threat. That means getting to net zero as soon as possible. It isn't only about the reef – it's about all land and sea natural systems vulnerable to climate change, and the people who rely on them.

No developed country has more to lose from inaction on climate than Australia. But no country has more to gain by shifting to clean energy, through new economic opportunities, new jobs, and better protection for our natural treasures.

Dr. Jodie Rummer is an Associate Professor at the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University. Scott F. Heron, Ph. D., is Associate Professor in Physics at James Cook University and affiliated with NOAA Coral Reef Watch.

This piece was originally published at [The Conversation](#).

18 MAY 2022, WEDNESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



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DENR to expedite approval of mining applications

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has committed to improve efficiency of the mining application process for priority projects in two areas in Mindanao, in a bid to boost the industry's contribution to the economy.

In a statement Monday, the DENR said Environment Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna stressed the importance of expediting the mining approval process in the regions of Northern Mindanao and Zamboanga Peninsula amid the country's continuing economic recovery from the pandemic.

"In our country's quest for economic recovery from the long recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the mining industry may well play a significant role. Our country has around nine million hectares of land with high mineral potential, out of its total land area of 30 million hectares," Sampulna said in his speech read by Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs Ernesto Adobo Jr. during a recent consultative meeting on mining concerns in Northern Mindanao and Zamboanga Peninsula.

Latest data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) showed that the mining industry only had a 0.62 percent contribution to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2021.

The meeting led by the MGB

resulted in the identification of policy gaps and immediate actions from the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) on several concerns of mining applicants and permit holders in the two regions.

The fast-tracking of issuance of environmental compliance certificates through simplified geological study by the EMB and the creation of a one-stop shop to streamline mining applications by the MGB were among the topics discussed during the meeting.

It said the faster process on issuance of area and dredging clearances by the DPWH and issuance of the Certificate of Non-Overlap and clarificatory meetings with the NCIP were also discussed.

MGB director Wilfredo Moncano said the aim of the meeting was to address the challenges in filing applications, securing certifications, acquiring permits, and operations of mining projects.

"There were some issues that cannot be addressed because these were not under the jurisdiction of the MGB and the other national government agencies that were present. We can bring these issues to the proper agencies. But, for the other issues, I believe we were able to come up with solutions on most of the

problems raised in the consultative meeting," Moncano said.

The consultative meeting was also attended by Earth Tools and Development Corp. identified by the MGB-Northern Mindanao as a mining priority project under Phase 1, which covers companies in the development and construction stage whose commercial operations are expected to become viable within six months.

Holcim Resources and Development Corp. and CEKAS Development Corp., which are both mining priority projects under Phase 2, also took part in the meeting.

Companies under phase 2 are those in the process of filing for declaration of mining projects' feasibility, including those in the advanced exploration stage.

Moreover, other issues and concerns surrounding TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc.'s Balabag gold and silver project and Canatuan project and the Industrial Sand and Gravel permit holders in the Zamboanga Peninsula were also discussed during the meeting.

Apart from the prompt approval of permits, Moncano said the meeting also aimed for the compliance of the Ease of Doing Business Law, improvement in the mines permitting system, faster development of the mineral sector, and increased production capacities of mines.

- Catherine Talavera



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Outrage as S. Cotabato lifts ban on open-pit mining

But Chamber of Mines exec says move of provincial board seen to revitalize industry, help country's economic recovery

By Bong Sarmiento
and Jordeene B. Lagare
@Team_Inquirer

KORONADAL CITY—The lifting of the open-pit mining ban in South Cotabato sparked outrage here, with environment and religious groups calling those who opposed it to join a solidarity march on Thursday.

Different groups in Mindanao on Tuesday voiced their grief over the decision of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) of South Cotabato on Monday to lift the 12-year-old ban on open-pit mining, which effectively removed the obstacle that stalled the \$5.9-billion (about P295 billion) Tampakan project, Southeast Asia's largest untapped copper and gold minefield pursued by Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI).

Bishop Cerilo Casicas of the Diocese of Marbel lamented that the lifting of the prohibition on open-pit mining, the method SMI would employ to extract the deposits, was a sad and tragic day for South Cotabato.

"The future of the province was decided in less than 15 minutes," Casicas said in a statement on Monday.

Recovery

But the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) lauded the decision of the South Cotabato provincial board, saying the move would help revitalize the mining industry and aid in the country's economic recovery more than two years after the coronavirus pandemic stalled economic activities worldwide.

"Together with Silangan and Kingking—two other copper-gold projects in Mindanao—Tampakan would be a powerful vehicle to achieve a vibrant, multifaceted local and regional economy that provides sustainable employment, business opportuni-

ties, and access to education, health, infrastructure, and other social development programs that will improve and enhance the quality of life of those living in these projects' host and neighboring communities, including their children," said COMP chair Michael Toledo.

Tampakan, Silangan and Kingking projects are seen to increase the national government revenues by P12 billion a year, local government revenues by P1.5 billion, exports by almost \$2 billion, and social expenditures by close to P800 million per year.

"The Tampakan Project will be an essential postpandemic economic recovery tool whose actual and potential benefits far outweigh the potential negative impacts," Toledo said. "We believe no other sector is likely to provide a more responsible and sustainable alternative."

No objection

SMI has repeatedly asked the provincial government to lift the ban on open-pit mining, and has yet to comment on this development.

During the South Cotabato provincial board session on Monday, the plenary approved on second reading the proposed amendments to the Environment Code, including the lifting of the ban on open-pit mining.



The future of the province was decided in less than 15 minutes

Cerilo Casicas

Diocese of Marbel Bishop

ed," he added.

The Diocese of Marbel, which is staunchly opposing the Tampakan project on concerns over the environment, food security and human rights, vowed to mobilize protest action against the development favorable to the Tampakan project.

Consultation

Casicas said it seemed like there was "betrayal" in the decision of the provincial board, noting, among others, that results of the public consultation in February was not tackled by the plenary.

"We will not take this sitting down. We will not take this silently," he said.

The Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center (LRC), which campaigned for the repeal of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, described the decadelong ban on open-pit mining in South Cotabato as a model for other local governments in integrating environmental conservation to development.

"It is tragic that the provision banning open-pit mining in their landmark ordinance has been lifted. The province changed its stance from protecting the environment and ensuring sustainability for generations of its constituents to supporting the profit-driven exploitation of the environment," LRC said in a statement.

The Tampakan project is touted as the largest undeveloped copper-gold minefield in Southeast Asia and among the biggest of its kind in the world. It has the potential to yield an average of 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate per annum in the expected 17-year life of the mine.

SMI has repeatedly vowed to employ "responsible mining" in the Tampakan project. **INQ**

No one from among the 11 members of the provincial board present during the session objected and explained their stance in approving the removal of the prohibition on open-pit mining.

The session was presided over by Board Member Glycel Mariano-Trabado, in place of Vice Gov. Vicente de Jesus, who was on leave.

Present during the plenary session were Board Members Hilario de Pedro VI, principal author of the proposal to remove the ban, Edgar Sambog, Dardanilo Dar, Noel Escobillo, Antonio Fungan, Eamon Gabriel Mati, Henry Ladot, Rolando Malabuyoc, Alyssa Marie Fale and Rose Grace Achurra.

Board Member Ester Marin Catorce, who openly stood against the lifting of the ban, was not present during the session. She was designated as acting governor, since Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo was on leave.

Board Members Ellen Grace Subere Albios and Jinky Avance-Samodal were also on leave.

Casicas said the saddest tragedy that struck South Cotabato on Monday was that "only 10 persons, SP members all, decided ... the fate of almost a million people of the province, not counting the future generation."

"Clearly, the SP members listened, [but] not to the voice of the people that they represent-



IN BRIEF

✓ South Cotabato lifts open-pit mining ban

THE provincial government of South Cotabato lifted a ban on open-pit mining, removing the final regulatory obstacle for a long-delayed copper and gold project in the country's restive south, a senior official said Monday.

The Tampakan project on Mindanao island has been described by its developer Sagittarius Mines as "one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the world." It was previously estimated to cost \$5.9 billion and was due to start operation in 2016.

But the project faced numerous problems, including the local government's 2010 ban on open-pit mining and opposition from church, community and environmental groups. On Monday, the South Cotabato provincial government agreed to amend its environment law to allow open-pit mining, paving the way for the controversial project to start.

"The baranggay [village] wanted the project, the municipality wanted the project, only the provincial level of the council had the problem," said Wilfredo Moncano, director of industry regulator Mines and Geosciences Bureau. "With this lifting of the ban, there's no more problem." **AFP**



SMC vows to complete Bulacan airport project

By RICHMOND MERCURIO

San Miguel Corp. (SMC) is committed to complete its massive aerocity development in Bulacan province, as well as the P740-billion New Manila International Airport (NMIA) project to help boost the country's economic recovery from the pandemic.

SMC president and chief executive officer Ramon Ang said the projects, which will be fully-funded by the company with no guarantees or subsidies from the government, would

improve the lives of more Filipinos by boosting various industries and creating millions of quality jobs nationwide.

SMC's 2,500-hectare NMIA project will initially feature four parallel runways, a world class terminal, and a modern and interlinked infrastructure network that includes expressways and railways.

"While we need to fast-track the completion of this airport and aerocity to help ease travel congestion and aid in the country's recovery, with more jobs and opportunities for more

Filipinos, we are mindful that we need to do this the right way and with a vision for a sustainable future. That is why we tapped Architect Felino Palafox Jr. for this project," Ang said.

SMC has bared a conceptual master plan for its massive aerocity development in Bulacan province, which is designed by architecture firm Palafox Associates.

The project, which is designed and will be built with sustainability in mind, is seen complementing the NMIA project, according to SMC.

Ang said the project's designs

reflect the vision of a modern Philippine city that provides built-in solutions to various socio-economic, environmental, and climate issues while also correcting the mistakes seen in many urban developments of Metro Manila.

"These designs presented to us by Arch. Palafox and his team will be close to actual. There will probably be some adjustments by the time we implement, and we will still continue to improve as needed, but in terms of the overall concept, design, and the features, this is it," Ang said.

"We had the same vision that the airport and aerocity projects should be sustainably built, geared toward the future, and address social and environmental concerns that have beset our existing cities, including the country's major financial districts. With Architect Palafox's help, all of this can be done," he said.

As an urban planner, Palafox has advocated and implemented some 1,700 projects that integrate the best practices in green, sustainable, and disaster-resilient architecture in about 45 countries worldwide.



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SMC bares master plan for airport city

SAN Miguel Corporation (SMC) has released a conceptual master plan for its massive, green-designed, and future-ready aerocity development in Bulacan province, envisioned as the "pace-setter" and model for green urbanism in the country.

The project is seen as a major boost to both national and local economies as it will complement SMC's P740-billion New Manila International Airport (NMIA) project.

SMC President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Ang said that the designs, prepared by top architecture firm Palafox Associates, reflect the vision of a modern Philippine city that provides built-in solutions to various socio-economic, environmental, and climate issues, and correct the mistakes seen in many urban developments of Metro Manila.

SMC tapped the firm, headed by the country's top urban planner and green architect, Felino "Jun" Palafox Jr., to masterplan the airport-driven city concept.

"These designs presented to us by Arch. Palafox and his team will be close to actual. There will probably be some adjustments by the time we implement, and we will still continue to improve as needed, but in terms of the overall con-

cept, design, and the features, this is it," SMC president and chief executive officer Ramon S. Ang said.

"It's very fortunate that when we sat down with Architect Jun Palafox for this project, we had the same vision that the airport and aerocity projects should be sustainably built, geared towards the future, and address social and environmental concerns that have beset our existing cities, including the country's major financial districts. With Architect Palafox's help, all of this can be done," he added.

Ang underscored that the Aerocity development addresses many of the problems experienced in Metro Manila today. It is designed, and will be built, with sustainability in mind. It will be properly zoned, with areas dedicated to agriculture and food production, logistics, health and wellness, aeronautics, finance, science and technology, commerce, residences, education, tourism, entertainment, recreation, and government among others.

It will utilize renewable energy, and will accommodate both traditional and alternative modes of transportation, as well as promote active and healthier lifestyles, he added.

The airport city design will adopt green architectural and green urbanism

guidelines over and above the country's building and zoning codes, and follow structural codes of other countries similarly situated in earthquake zones like the Philippines.

The Aerocity project will have ample open spaces and utilize the latest in digital infrastructure.

It will also feature easily accessible public transport systems, including mass transit systems, bicycle highways, as well as a waterfront area with landscaped walkways and promenades.

Ang said SMC is fully committed to completing the massive projects, which it will fully-fund with no guarantees or subsidies from government, to help boost the country's post-pandemic economy and improve the lives of more Filipinos by boosting various industries and creating millions of quality jobs nationwide.

SMC's 2,500-hectare NMIA project will initially feature four parallel runways, a world class terminal, and a modern and interlinked infrastructure network that includes expressways and railways.

"While we need to fast-track the completion of this airport and aerocity to help ease travel congestion and aid in the country's recovery with more jobs and opportunities for more Filipinos, we are mindful that we need



This is what SMC's sustainable airport city in Bulacan could look like

to do this the right way and with a vision for a sustainable future. That is why we tapped Architect Palafox for this project," he added.

In his decades of experience as an urban planner, Palafox has advocated and implemented some 1,700 projects that integrate the best practices in green, sustainable, and disaster-resilient architecture in about 45 countries worldwide.

Palafox earlier pointed out that that country needs 100 new cities by the year 2050 and he agreed to take on the Bulacan Aerocity development to present it as a model and pacesetter for future green and sustainable cities.

Prior to actual development, the company has committed to restore and rehabilitate the existing mangrove forest cover at the Bulacan coastal areas by planting some 190,000 mangroves, develop and enhance natural habitats of marine and bird species, and clean the rivers surrounding the airport project to help mitigate perennial flooding in the province.



Global drought, Stage 3



STARGAZER
BERNIE V. LOPEZ

Right now, there is an intense heat wave in the entire Southeast Asian region and in California, from south to north. A major bridge in Pakistan was destroyed by raging glacial-melt waters due to intense heat. We are at Stage 3 of an ongoing global drought that refuses to dissipate. In fact, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, reported on 16 July 2021 that there were ongoing droughts in all continents, except Antarctica.

“It is at the household level where dramatic effective conservation is achieved, because it is cumulatively population-related.”

Drought refers to a slow prolonged weather situation with little or no rain. The Palmer Drought Index suggests that our planet had an index of 82 percent of “moderate to extreme drought” beginning 2021. This dipped a bit to 79 percent in February 2021. Then it soared alarmingly to 99 percent in June 2021. The global drought situation that started in 2021 is here with us in 2022, and if it extends into 2023, which is a great possibility, we will feel the massive effect of a deadly planet-wide drought. This is not to scare readers, but to persuade them to get ready and cooperate in community responses.

Common drought-prone areas include Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Iran, Morocco and Uganda. The worst ever drought in human history was in China in 1876 to 1879 where by broad estimates about nine to 13 million people died. With a denser population everywhere today, a repeat of the China mega-drought is possible. The length of time of the drought determines the intensity of the impact. For China then, it was a devastating four-year period.

Extended periods of little or no rain are mainly caused ultimately by climate change, aberration in ocean water temperature, changes in the local landscape, and erratic changes in the jet stream. Indirect causes include rampant unchecked deforestation causing flood-prone soil erosions and excessive burning of fossil fuels.

“Jet streams are relatively narrow bands of strong wind in the upper levels of the atmosphere. The winds blow from west to east in jet streams, but the flow often shifts to the north and south. Jet streams follow the boundaries between hot and cold air.” (www.weather.gov)

In the US, there is an unprecedented drought level in half of the mountain regions. In the West Coast, particularly California, the worsening drought extends from the Southwest to Pacific Northwest, increasing to a Palmer Drought Index of 85 percent by July 2021. Drought emergencies have been declared by many states, and water conservation campaigns are now being conducted.

In Brazil, the largest contiguous rainforest is slowly shrinking due to man’s effort to survive. Also, Brazil’s coffee production is down, and 23 percent of hydroelectric dams are not operating, inducing higher electricity prices.

In the last two decades, the United Nations reports that 1.5 billion people are affected by drought, with economic losses estimated at \$124 billion.

(*LA Times*)

Water conservation and optimum usage are crucial to responding to drought. If a town theoretically consumes 100,000 cubic meters a day, reducing it by half translates to a staggering 1.5 million cubic meters of water saved every month.

It is at the household level where dramatic effective conservation is achieved, because it is cumulatively population-related. Simple things matter, like watering the lawn in the early morning instead of at noon, showering habits, refraining use of bath tub and jacuzzi, modern devices to reduce water pressure from the kitchen, the shower room and the garden.

The problem is how to convince indifferent people at the home level that their small contributions to water conservation, if put together, are crucial. The water conservation campaign for homes has to be planned very well, with communications consultant designing persuasive articles and spreading them around through the Internet.

“Extended periods of little or no rain are mainly caused ultimately by climate change, aberration in ocean water temperature, changes in the local landscape, and erratic changes in the jet stream.”

There are other preparations that governments need to design and implement toward responding to the ongoing global drought.



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WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT THE CLIMATE CRISIS?

THE world faces an urgent battle against climate change that ultimately reveals the foolish desire of humanity to call for accountability instead of action. It's not a question of "who did what?" or "who should do what?" but more of "what should we do?"

This global issue is of the essence, and a call for action should be expedient as the damage to the atmospheric spheres of the earth is seemingly irreversible.

Since 2007, human activities have elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations by 50 percent due to coal, oil, and gas production, emitting billions of tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere every year. Its impact means a startling decline in our environment and many other sectors of our society. Thus, with our so-called leaders choosing resiliency as a response, more

climate change-related implications will continue to intensify in the following decades.

The climate crisis has not been our utmost priority. In the Philippines, for example, platforms of aspiring presidential candidates in the recently concluded elections were more focused on the economic and agricultural sectors, unemployment, housing, and trade, to name a few. Although these concerns are highly relevant, we cannot deny that most of these are also highly dependent on the country's environmental state.

On the other hand, while government responsiveness and support are crucial factors in a climate movement, it is still highly expected from the public sector to initiate practical actions. After all, our choice to help aid our environment does not lie within the approval of anyone. We can do this by

simply switching to renewable energy sources, planting more trees, and reducing energy use in our homes.

Being informed of the potential impacts alone and not creating feasible and relevant solutions is not far different from holding a loaded gun but not using it to fight in the battle. Awareness, resiliency, and accountability are not enough. It's high time that we promote a sense of urgency among others and join forces in taking immediate measures to make the world a safe place to live in. By the end of the day, our actions toward this matter say a lot about how we envision the future we want to have.

Let us save the earth not because we want to—but because we need to.

ANNE NORMANE PIA G.
REVITA,
ap.revita23@gmail.com



Go green beyond compliance

A CONSIDERABLE number of newsworthy climate stories came out in the last two months. This year's Earth Hour and Earth Day celebrations are still fresh in mind, especially as the latter urged society to "invest in our planet" and act now. April notably saw a worldwide scientist-led protest following the release of the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. More recently, the BBC reported on "phantom forests" resulting from organizations that overpromised and failed to implement reforestation programs.

Two sentiments serve as a common connecting thread across these events. First, being that they are the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, corporations are under intense scrutiny to adopt more environmentally sustainable operations and be at the forefront of climate action. Second, if we have any hope of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 and



FROM WHERE WE SIT

CHRIS FERAREZZA

avoiding the darkest timeline for the planet, companies must work to reduce their carbon footprints with utmost urgency. Currently, it seems their efforts have been inadequate.

Sustainability reporting is primarily used to track a company's progress toward environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals. However, there have been concerns as to the accuracy of these reports because studies have shown that many of the world's biggest companies tend to overstate or exaggerate their ESG progress. With a Google Cloud survey showing that even C-suite members and executives find their companies guilty of "green hypocrisy" or using sustainability as a buzzword, genuine

► From Where B2



TITLE: **Go green beyond compliance**

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FROM WHERE FROM B1

Go green

climate leadership is more than ever needed among organizations. In the Philippines, the Securities and Exchange Commission is set to make sustainability reporting mandatory for publicly listed companies (PLCs) by 2023. It would be interesting to see whether many PLCs will rise above the challenge and bring about genuine climate leadership.

On our part, we have expounded on the benefits and importance of tackling real sustainability in order to maximize the value of a business. The question on the table is, however, is how can companies enact actual change for the good of the environment?

Pioneer relevant sustainable practices

As illustrated in a Natural Resources Defense Council Inc. report, corporate greenhouse gas reduction goals, no matter

how generous, will only apply to emissions from the corporation's own facilities and direct energy suppliers. There remains a significant number of downstream emissions, or greenhouse gases released when consumers use and dispose of products, that are unaccounted for.

As such, companies must first display a full understanding of their environmental impact before they can begin to adopt sustainability strategies tailored to their business and industry. Put another way, they must have a grasp of the damage they inflict so they can find the most efficient solution. For example, supermarkets and companies in the fast-moving consumer goods industry, with products in single-use plastics contributing to the Philippines' "sachet economy," could reasonably start a plastic collection program to reduce their overall waste.

Well-planned strategies, backed by an understanding of the effects and connections to climate issues, show a company's dedication to the cause, especially if the green initiative is adopted holistically

and embodied by the company culture. Corporate leadership advocating for the environment can inspire employees, stakeholders and consumers to participate in these initiatives and adopt more sustainable practices in their day-to-day, too.

Consider sustainable architecture and energy

According to the World Economic Forum, buildings make up 39 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. This value accounts for their daily activities and the materials used in their construction. In addition, concrete is also a significant source of carbon emissions. By revolutionizing infrastructure and operations, companies can stand to make a substantial impact on their ESG promises.

There are more eco-friendly alternatives to concrete — in 2019, local engineering students found that an alternative mixture of concrete with locally sourced and recycled materials could greatly improve the environmental impact. However, unless companies

have a need to relocate or rebuild their offices, a better way to compensate for carbon emissions would be to focus attention on energy efficiency.

Cooling is one of the most demanding uses of electricity for any building. Companies could consult experts on how to utilize architecture to naturally cool rooms. Smart and automated controls throughout buildings, such as sensors to detect when a room is empty, are also expected to save 10 to 15 percent of energy. Alternatively, companies could invest in the biofuels industry, the maturity of which could create a circular economy that benefits related sectors.

Utilize new funding opportunities

In a recent webinar that I had the honor of moderating, a participant asked if the resulting economic returns were equal to or greater than a company's initial investment in sustainability. The answer is yes, according to one of the speakers, especially as the world

places more emphasis on resolving climate change. Most companies adopt sustainability initiatives to increase business resilience, improve relations with stakeholders and employees, strengthen talent acquisition and retention, improve efficiency and reduce costs, etc. These, however, are considered long-term returns. At this point, companies investing in sustainability initiatives will mostly be faced with costs.

In light of this, business leaders might consider applying for green bonds and sustainability-linked loans to increase their investment capital. These are loans used exclusively for environmental projects. Borrowers are given key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure compliance with the bond, and they are incentivized with a lower interest rate if they meet KPIs. As the Philippines steadily increases its offerings of sustainability bonds, more companies should consider using this opportunity to kick-start plans to be more climate resilient in the long run.

Whichever methods companies choose to apply, it is vital they

face sustainability issues with compassion, commitment and action. The writing on the wall has never been clearer: we need to address climate change now. There may be plenty of benefits for organizations to adopt a full-fledged sustainability model but by far, the greatest advantage of our actions is ensuring that the world our children inherits is one they can thrive in. Embarking on a sustainability journey should not just be for economic wins or for compliance. It should go beyond. It should be purposeful.

Chris is the partner for advisory services of P&A Grant Thornton. P&A Grant Thornton is one of the leading audit, tax, advisory and outsourcing firms in the Philippines, with 24 partners and more than 1,000 staff members. We'd like to hear from you! Tweet us at @GrantThorntonPH, like us on Facebook at P&A Grant Thornton, and email your comments to pagrantthornton@ph.gt.com. For more information, visit our website at www.grantthornton.com.ph.



Gov't OKs land use plan for Iloilo City

The government has approved the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) of Iloilo City aimed at improving economic development and safeguarding the environment.

The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) recently gave the greenlight to Iloilo's CLUP that is expected to transform the city into a more livable, innovative and well-governed locality with a resilient economy and better environment.

Housing chief Eduardo del Rosario said the CLUP would be crucial in helping Iloilo City set the direction in achieving its vision.

The city aims to become a "model of a livable, well-governed city of empowered and innovative Ilonggos that safeguard the environment, and preserve the culture while sustaining a robust and resilient economy by 2029."

The land use plan is expected to benefit the local government unit and its constituents in recovering from the impacts of the pandemic and help them in disaster mitigation.

"This offers a unique opportunity to rebuild for a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable environment," Del Rosario said.

The CLUP is expected to pave the way for the implementation of development programs aimed at boosting Iloilo City's overall progress.

Iloilo City secured the fourth CLUP ratified by DHSUD.

Last year, the department approved the CLUPs of the cities of Ormoc, Mandaue and Zamboanga - all with a common goal of achieving economic progress through effective land utilization without causing harm to the environment. - **Louise Maureen Simeon**



FILE:

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LEBEL NG TUBIG SA ANGAT DAM BUMABA SA 191.10 METERS

BASE sa ulat ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) noong May 16, 2022 ang dam elevation, bumaba ang lebel ng tubig ng Angat dam sa 191.10 meters, 99.68 meters sa Ipo Dam at 78.71 meters sa La Mesa Dam.

Sa pamumuno ni Dr. Sevilla "Bill" David, Executive Director ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB), patuloy ang pamamahala at pagbabantay ng NWRB sa lahat ng water sources sa buong bansa.

Layunin nito ang pagbibigay ng maayos na serbisyo ng patubig tungo sa mas magandang kalidad ng buhay para sa bawat Pilipino.

Hinihikayat niya na makisisa ang lahat sa paggamit nang tama ng tubig. "Napakahalaga ng tubig sa ating buhay. Huwag nating sayangin ang bawat patak para maseguro na may tubig pang magagamit ang mga susunod na henerasyon."

Nagpapaalala muli ang pamunuan ng National Water Resources Board sa publiko na mag-umpisa nang magtipid sa paggamit ng tubig, ka-



hit araw-araw nang umuulan. Maging alisto tayong lahat, huwag mag-aksaya, dapat ituro ng mga magulang at guro sa mga bata ang kahalaganhan ng pagtitipid at sa paggamit ng tubig sa bahay at sa opisina.

Ipinapaalala ni Dr. David Jr. ng NWRB, ang tamang pagtitipid ng tubig at hindi tamang pag-imbak ng tubig ay maaaring magdulot ng peligro at sakit, siguraduhing na sapat at ligtas ang pag-imbak ng tubig:

- Magtipid sa tubig at siguraduhin ligtas ang na-imbak na tubig.

- Huwag iwanang nakabukas ang gripo habang nag-

sisipilyo.

- Huwag hayaan umaagos ang tubig kapag naghuhugas ng mga prutas, o gulay sa halip ay gumamit ng palanggana sa paghuhugas ng mga ito. Pagtapos ay itabi ang tubig na nagamit at ilaan sa iba pang paglilinis sa bahay gaya ng pagdidilig ng halaman.

- Gumamit ng mga malinis na baunan at lalagyan ng pagkain para maka-imbak ng tubig pangluto at pang-inom. Bago inumin, pakuluan muna ang tubig.

- Huwag mag-imbak ng tubig sa mga lalagyan na dating pinag-imbakan ng mga nakalalasang kemikal.



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GOV'T AGENCIES REMINDED ON POST-ELECTION HIRING RULES

By Joel
dela Torre

THE Civil Service Commission (CSC) reminded government agencies of a general rule that appointments issued after the May 9 elections up to June 30, 2022 shall be disapproved or invalidated if it does not comply with special rules.

According to the CSC, outgoing elective and appointive (co-terminous with the President) officials can issue appointments during the said period only to those who meet the approved minimum qualification standards required under special laws.

This is with regards to the position he/she was appointed.

Appointee should have also undergone the Human Resource Merit Promotion and Selection Board (HRMPSB) screening prior to the election ban.

In this case, the appointing officer/ authority or agency shall submit the minutes of the HRMPSB meetings and the evaluation report of the applicants.

The CSC said that there is an urgent need for the issuance of the appointment/ s so as not to prejudice public service or endanger public safety to which rules and regulations, or even special laws, if any, on the issuance of appointments are followed.

This is pursuant to Sections 112 and 113 of the 2017 Omnibus Rules on Appointments and Other Human Resource Actions (ORAOHRA) as revised by CSC Resolution No. 1800692.

The CSC stressed that appointments issued after the elections up to 30 June that do not meet the said requisites shall be disapproved or invalidated upon their submission for attestation.



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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

**THE LERATO CONDOMINIUM
CORPORATION,**

Applicant

Case No. 22-3298

x-----x

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within The Lerato Condominium, Barangay Bel Air, Makati City, Metro Manila, 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"	P 204.00	51.00	61.20	71.40	81.60	122.30

This application will be initially heard by the Board on 6 June 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 Metro Manila 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 11th 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
Makati City, Metro Manila

The Barangay Chairman
Barangay Bel Air
Makati City, Metro Manila

The Homeowners Assn. President
The Lerato Condominium
Barangay Bel Air
Makati City, Metro Manila

The Administrator
Metropolitan Waterworks & Sewerage System
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road
Balara, Quezon City

(PDI - May 18, 2022)

18 MAY 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Philippines logs 110 new COVID-19 cases; active cases lowest since April 2, 2020

ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 17 2022 10:40 PM | Updated as of May 17 2022 11:46 PM



A woman walks her dog near the aisle where test booths used to operate at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila on March 15, 2022. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News/File*

MANILA - The Philippines recorded 110 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, data from the Department of Health showed.

The number of active cases is 2,487, which is the lowest in more than two years, or since April 2, 2020, according to ABS-CBN Data Analytics Team head Edson Guido.

Of the fresh infections, 59 are from Metro Manila.

The country's total cases has climbed to 3,688,001.

The first confirmed coronavirus infection in the Philippines was reported on January 30, 2020, involving a Chinese woman who arrived from Wuhan City, China where the disease is believed to have first emerged.

Data from the Department of Health showed the number of deaths reaching 60,452. The total recoveries also reached 3,625,062.

Edson C. Guido @EdsonCGuido

LOOK: DOH reports 110 new cases today.

The number of active cases (2,487) is the lowest since April 2, 2020.

NCR with 59 new cases today.

Total deaths decreased from 60,458 yesterday to 60,452 today. Total recoveries also decreased from 3,625,146 yesterday to 3,625,062 today.

Nationwide Cases Data

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recoveries	Deaths
3,688,001	2,487	3,625,062	60,452

Confirmed cases are those that tested RT-PCR positive by a DOH-BTV certified lab.

Weekly Cases by Date of Onset of Illness

6:41 PM · May 17, 2022

94 Reply Share

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The DOH said Monday that the country recorded 1,118 new COVID-19 infections from May 9 to 15, or around 160 average daily cases.

This is 0.3 percent lower compared to the previous week.

Some 68 million or 76.14 percent of the target 90 million people in the country have been fully vaccinated against the respiratory disease. Of those who received their primary series, 13.2 million have received their booster shots.

The Philippines will likely keep Alert Level 1 as the lowest step in COVID-19 restrictions until President Rodrigo Duterte's term ends on June 30, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III had said.

Authorities continue to remind the public to follow minimum health protocols, especially wearing of face masks.



DOH confirms local transmission of Omicron BA.2.12.1 subvariant

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor May 17, 2022, 2:31 pm



MANILA – The Department of Health on Tuesday confirmed the local transmission of the Omicron BA.2.12.1 subvariant.

In an online media forum, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the new subvariant cases detected are no longer related to the cases from other countries.

“Ngunit makikita pa rin ang linkages ng mga detected cases. Hindi pa po ito community transmission kung saan hindi na po ma-te-trace ang mga linkages ng bawat kaso (But the linkages of the detected cases can still be seen. This is not yet a community transmission where the linkages of each case can’t be traced anymore),” she said.

There are three new cases of Omicron BA.2.12.1 subvariant detected in the Western Visayas Region.

One of the cases is a returning overseas Filipino (ROF) from the United States and the other two are local cases.

The ROF and one of the local cases are fully vaccinated. The vaccination status of the other local case is still being verified.

“Patuloy pong nagsasagawa ng imbestigasyon ang ating RESUs [Regional Epidemiology Surveillance Unit] upang alamin ang kanilang health status, ang mga close contacts, at kung ang mga kasong ito ay may relasyon sa isa’t isa (The RESUs continues investigation to know their health status, close contacts, and if the cases are related to each other),” Vergeire said.

To date, the country has a total of 17 Omicron BA.2.12.1 cases.

Of the tally, 16 are local cases – two from the National Capital Region, 12 from Puerto Princesa City, two from Western Visayas. Meanwhile, one is an ROF residing in Western Visayas.

The local government units are now intensifying the 4-Door Strategy to prevent further transmission of the virus.

“Particularly, the third door, immediate detection and isolation of cases and the fourth door, strengthening of healthcare systems in preparation for an increase in cases,” Vergeire said. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1174632>

18 MAY 2022, WEDNESDAY



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**NEWS
ALERTS**

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



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#ManilaBayUpdate #DolomiteBeach #BattleForManilaBay

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MANILA

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Miz July

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maraming salamat po, keep safe everyone
[#SaveManilaBay](#)

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Miz July was live — at Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach. ...

21h · Manila · 🌐

Manila Bay Dolomite Sand beach, Tumingindi Ang pag ganda

See Translation



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Miz July

Yesterday at 6:52 AM · 🌐



Dolomite Sand Beach handa na sa pag bubukas

See Translation



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