

20 NOVEMBER 2021, Saturday



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Ramon S. Ang ✓

12 hrs · 🌐

MALASAKIT is helping others without being asked, and without expecting anything in return. Today, one of Japan's major shipping companies showed their malasakit not just for their predominantly Filipino sea farers, but also to our country. Together with DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu, I thank NYK Line and its president, Mr. Hitoshi Nagasawa, as well as their local partner, Transnational Diversified Group, for their donation of US\$ 1.5 million to support our clean-up and rehabilitation efforts for the Pasig and Tullahan rivers. I'm glad that our initiative to help address urban flooding and protect our marine resources, is inspiring and moving others to take action.





Domestic ore processing seen boosting mining share of GDP

November 19, 2021 | 12:07 am



A BILL seeking to require the domestic processing of some ore mined in the Philippines holds the potential to “double or triple” the mining industry’s contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), the Mines and Geosciences Bu-reau (MGB) said.

Juancho Pablo S. Calvez, MGB Metallurgical Technology Division chief, said during on the first day of the MGB virtual stakeholder forum Thursday that the bill, which would limit the export of some ore in order to jump-start a domestic-processing industry, would lead to the capture of more value-added than exporting ore 100%.

“How much can it contribute to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP)? Maybe it will double or triple the (mining contribution to) GDP if we push for (the) processing of our own raw ores,” Mr. Calvez said.

On July 5, South Cotabato 1st District Rep. Shirlyn L. Bañas-Nogralles filed House Bill No. 9775, or the proposed Promotion of Mineral Processing and Value-Adding Act, which reduces exports of nickel ore and other raw metallic ores and encourages mineral processing within the country.

“This bill proposes gradual/partial restriction of export of these direct shipping ores as its mechanism to start and drive the mining industry to compel into mineral processing, value-adding, and establishing downstream industries...,” Ms. Bañas-Nogralles said in the bill’s explanatory note.



Domestic ore processing seen boosting mining share of GDP

The bill is currently pending at the House Committee on Natural Resources.

“This (bill) encourages the processing of raw ores into value-added products rather than exporting them as unprocessed raw direct shipping ores,” Mr. Calvez said, noting that there are currently two domestic mineral processing plants capable to handling low-grade nickel.

The plants are operated by Coral Bay Nickel Corp. in Palawan and Taganito HPAL Nickel Corp. in Surigao del Sur.

He said that under the bill, mining firms that do not have processing plants can enter into contracts with processors or form consortiums to establish joint processing facilities.

The bill will allow miners five years to establish their processing plants.

Mr. Calvez said he does not expect the bill to pass during the current Congress, but might do so in the next Congress.

“We proposed the bill on partial restriction just a few months ago. I think the bill will not be passed during this Congress,” Mr. Calvez said.

According to the MGB, the value of Philippine metallic mineral output rose 25% year on year to P68.63 billion during the first half.

Nickel and its products accounted for 53.44% or P36.68 billion, followed by gold with 34.84% or P23.91 billion, and copper 10.87% or P7.46 billion. The remainder consisted of silver, iron ore, and chromite, worth a combined P584.75 million.

In June, the MGB said the mining sector accounted for 0.6% or P102.3 billion of GDP in 2020.

— **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**



PAGSASAGAWA NG 'PLASTIC DRIVE' KAUGNAY SA FACE SHIELDS, IMINUNGKAHI NG ISANG KONGRESISTA

written by [DWIZ 882](#) November 19, 2021



Iminungkahi ni Assistant Majority Leader Fidel Nograles na magsagawa ng 'plastic drive' ang mga lokal na pamahalaan kasunod nang ibinabang kautusan na alisin ang mandatoryong pagsusuot ng face shield.

Ayon sa kongresista, dapat na makipag-ugnayan ang mga LGU sa mga kumpanya o grupo na nagsasagawa ng plastic recycling tulad ng paggawa ng Christmas decor at construction materials.

Aniya, layunin nito na matiyak ang tamang pagtatapon ng plastic upang hindi makadagdag sa problema ng basura.

Batay sa pagtataya ng department of environment and Natural Resources (DENR) umaabot sa 60 milyong face shields kada araw ang ginagamit ng higit dalawamput isang milyong pamilya sa buong bansa. —sa panulat ni Airiam Sancho



DOST-FPRDI to launch bamboo musical instruments website, handbook on tree plantation species on Nov. 25

Published November 18, 2021, 10:14 PM

by [Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

The Department of Science and Technology-Forest Products Research and Development Institute (DOST-FPRDI) will launch next week the Bamboo Musical Instruments (BMI) website, and the “Tree Plantation Species (TPS) Handbook” as part of the agency’s celebration of the National Science and Technology Week (NSTW).



(DOST-FPRDI)

The virtual launch is set on Nov. 25.

The DOST-FPRDI said the BMI website will serve as a repository of BMI photos and videos; documented indigenous groups and commercial makers; bamboo species used; BMI processing technologies and value chain, among others.

“The website hopes to promote BMI use and production in the country, as well as aid in teaching the instruments to K-12 students,” it said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the TPS Handbook “details the properties and utilization of select species, which can benefit businesses venturing into furniture production, housing and construction, and other industrial uses.” These include pulp and paper, veneer and plywood, composite boards, and utility poles.

The Institute will also hold a virtual presser anchored on the theme “Gubat Talks”.



DOST-FPRDI to launch bamboo musical instruments website, handbook on tree plantation species on Nov. 25

“The event offers information on raw materials that can substitute for traditionally used wood such as TPS and bamboo.”

It noted that in 2011, Executive Order No. 23 was issued declaring a moratorium on the cutting and harvesting of timbre in the natural and residual forests. The EO created the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force, chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).



BMI website, handbook sa tree plantation species ilulunsad ng DOST-FPRDI



November 19, 2021 @ 12:06 PM 18 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Ilulunsad ng Department of Science and Technology-Forest Products Research and Development Institute (DOST-FPRDI) sa susunod na linggo ang Bamboo Musical Instruments (BMI) website at “Tree Plantation Species (TPS) Handbook” bilang bahagi ng kanilang pagdiriwang ng National Science and Technology Week (NSTW).

Nakatakda naman ang virtual launch sa darating na Nobyembre 25.

Base sa DOST-FPRDI, ang BMI website ay magsisilbing ‘repository’ ng BMI photos at videos; documented indigenous groups at commercial makers; bamboo species na ginamit; BMI processing technologies at value chain, at iba pa.

“The website hopes to promote BMI use and production in the country, as well as aid in teaching the instruments to K-12 students,” saad pa sa pahayag.

Samantala, nakadetalye naman sa TPS Handbook ang properties at utilization ng piling species.

Makatutulong naman ito sa mga negosyong nasa sektor ng furniture production, housing and construction, at iba pang industrial uses.

Kasama na rito ang ‘pulp and paper’, ‘veneer and plywood’, composite boards, at utility poles.

Magsasagawa rin ang pamunuan ng virtual presser na may temang “Gubat Talks”.

“The event offers information on raw materials that can substitute for traditionally used wood such as TPS and bamboo.” RNT/FGDC

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/bmi-website-handbook-sa-tree-plantation-species-ilulunsad-ng-dost-fprdi/>



Sato seeks passage of ecological protection bills: 'No price tag on environmental sustainability'

Published November 19, 2021, 2:52 PM

by [Ben Rosario](#)

Stressing that there is “no price tag on environmental sustainability”, Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine “Nene” Sato batted for the prioritization of bills ensuring environmental protection and biodiversity pending in Congress.



Forest

Sato said provinces such as Occidental Mindoro should continue to enjoy protection in law to ensure their ecological integrity.

Sato, who is now serving as a United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) Global Legislative Champion for Biodiversity and Environment, has pledged to continue to ensure the protection of the province’s ecology as she vowed solid support for programs and advocacies that would protect and conserve the environmental jewels of the island district.

To better guarantee this the senior administration lawmaker stressed the significance of the swift passage of bills on environment and biodiversity, among them legislative proposals she has filed in the House of Representatives.

Among these measures are those seeking to revise and strengthen the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act and prosecute illegal wildlife trade as an organized transnational crime; strengthen and institutionalize the national policy on access and benefit-sharing from the utilization of the Philippine Genetic Resources (or the “PGRABs” bill); institutionalize the Tamaraw Conservation Program that will scale-up tamaraw conservation efforts similar to that of the Philippine eagle; and declare the entire island of Mindoro as a mining-free zone to institutionalize the 25-year mining moratorium.

“There is no price tag on environment sustainability. No promise of economic benefit can outweigh the importance of environment sustainability and biodiversity conservation. Let us all



Sato seeks passage of ecological protection bills: 'No price tag on environmental sustainability'

work together in taking care of Mother Nature and of making sure that no one, nothing hurts her,” the veteran lawmaker said.

The lawmaker, who is now seeking to go back to the capitol and serve as the province’s governor, is likewise the brains and efforts behind the enactment of the landmark Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018 (or Republic Act 11038), which increased to 107 the country’s total protected areas spanning 15 regions, across 53 provinces covering over three million hectares or roughly 10% of the Philippines’ land area.

“There is no planet B, we do not have a spare planet. Compromising the environment and our biodiversity will have far reaching adverse impact and will put the next generation in dire condition. So, if there’s a plan, program, project or any activity that may potentially harm the environment, don’t do it,” Sato said.



Itinanim na puno sa P2B reforestation fund, hinahanap ni Lacson



November 19, 2021 @ 2:16 PM 16 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Kinuwestyon ni Senador Panfilo Lacson ang reforestation program ng pamahalaan matapos matuklasan na palaging naglalaan ang Kongreso ng bilyong piso upang magtanim ng puno, pero walang nakikitang resulta.

Sinabi ni Lacson sa panayam nang tanungin hinggil sa kanyang plano sa pagbaka ng climate change, na palaging naglalaan ang Kongreso ang bilyong pondo ngunit walang nakikitang nakatanim na puno.

“Mind you, we are appropriating at least P2 billion a year for the National Greening Program. Nasaan ang puno na dapat itinamin? If we appropriate billions upon billion of pesos every year, dapat punong-puno tayo ng puno pero wala,” saad ni Lacson sa Rotary Club of Manila 21st Membership Meeting.

Sa kanyang pagbisita sa Bicol nitong nakaraang, sinabi ng ilang miyembro ng Rotary na nagtatag ng puno ang gobyerno bilang bahagi ng reforestation program kahit sila ang nagtanim nito.

“What we found out pati ang mga tinatanim ng Rotarians inaako ng ng gobyerno china-charge doon sa pondo ng NGP. This is a fact,” ayon kay Lacson



Itinanim na puno sa P2B reforestation fund, hinahanap ni Lacson

“Kung di pa sa private sector like civic-minded groups and individuals like the Rotary, wala tayong makikita masyadong greens in our country,” giit pa niya.

- Naunang humingi si Senador Cynthia Villar ng karagdagang pondo sa panukalang P3.6 bilyong 2022 budget ng National Greening Program para sa pamamahala ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa protected areas sa buong bansa.

Noong nakaraang taon, kinuwestiyon din ni Lacson ang implementasyon ng naturang programa matapos bahain ng bagyong Ulysses ang mababang lugar sa buong bansa. **Ernie Reyes**



Story of Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Ka Dodoy will remind you: If you take care of nature, nature will take care of you

Published November 19, 2021 2:23pm

It's something we already know but might have forgotten, what with our busy calendar, the continuing influence and infiltration of technology into our lives, and the quiet generosity of Planet Earth.

But the first episode of Stand for Truth's Generation Restoration aims to remind viewers that if you take care of Mother Nature, she will take care of you — sometimes a tenfold.

It features [Ramon Magsaysay awardee](#) Robert Ballon aka Ka Dodoy, a fisherman who experienced being out on sea for days on end just to be able to catch fish.

"Minsan napabayan ko mga anak ko. Minsan, isang linggo, dalawang linggo, hindi ko [sila] mauiwang sa bahay" he told Generation Restoration.

It was this experience that propelled him to relocate their lives to Mindanao to be able to continue fishing. But it wasn't as he expected.

"Namimingwit ako duon, naglalambat. Bigla-bigla hinagisan kami ng dinamita. Eh di walang huli. Uuwi kaming luhaan," Ka Godoy narrated.

[I was fishing, casting my net when suddenly, a dynamite was thrown our way. We went home empty handed. We weren't able to catch any fish.]

"Pag hindi natin hintuan ang ganitong gawaain, pati mga anak natin, gutom talaga," he realized.

[If we don't stop these practices, even our children will starve.]

It wasn't just these harmful and violent ways that made fishing harder than it already is. Ka Dodoy noticed the dwindling mangroves of Kabasalan, where is his from, in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay. The gorgeous 3,000 hectares of mangroves was quickly depleting to just 1,000 hectares, as more people transformed them into fish ponds.

"Halos maubos itong mangroves," he said. And in turn, "nawala ang mga malalapit na pangisadan namin."

[We were losing our mangrove forests. We had to venture farther out to sea just to be able to fish.]

Ka Dodoy began educating himself, reading books about aqua culture and attending seminars. He learned mangroves could yield for him and his community, a consistent supply of oysters but it wasn't easy. "Diyan ako nagsimula sa talaba farming [pero] pinagtatawanan pa nga ako dati dahil hindi daw pwede dito ang talaba," he says laughing.

[I started with oyster farming but they would laugh at me because oysters don't grow there.]

He took it upon himself to take care of the mangroves, risking his life to protect them. He shared having experienced being shot at and being chased in the water, because far too many people wanted to cut down the mangroves.

But Ka Dodoy persisted. And he managed to bring more people to join him in his mangrove reforestation project, and soon, nature rewarded them back.



Story of Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Ka Dodoy will remind you: If you take care of nature, nature will take care of you

The mangroves gave them an oyster farm, yielding the community food on the table and a steady source of livelihood, even during the pandemic.

"Yung tinanim naming mangroves, isang paraan upang maiahon kami sa kahirapan," Ka Dodoy said.

[The mangroves we planted was a way for us to lift ourselves up from poverty.]

"Naantig sila na dapat tulungan kami na maging malakas na organization kasi ito rin pala 'yung hanap nila. 'Yung may panananaw sa pag-alaga or pag-protekta sa ating mga forests — mangrove man or bundok."

[That's when it hit them. They needed to help us make our organization stronger because we had the same objectives. We both believed in protecting our forests, be them mangroves or up in the mountains.]

According to Ka Dodoy, even those involved in illegal activities, like "akyat-fish pond," have stopped in their ways. "Kaya na nilang mabuhay nang patas, kasi may resources na," he says.

And the people who used to cut mangroves down have joined Ka Dodoy in protecting them. "Alam na nila na ito pala ang makakatulong sa kanila. Kasi maliban sa pagdami ng isda, pinoprotektahan [yung mga bahay nila] mula sa hangin."

[The realized mangroves will be able to help them. Because apart from providing livelihood, it also protects their homes from storms.]

They don't need to endure long unproductive hours in the ocean just to be able to catch fish, too. Because the fish have also started to return.

Returning to nature, protecting Planet Earth may seem like a too simplistic of an answer to a complex problem like poverty, but as Ka Dodoy's story proves, there is no harm in protecting Mother Nature. In fact, it really might just to be the solution to a host of our problems. — **LA, GMA News**

Making green investments happen in the Philippines: BOI nods P531M waste heat recovery power generating plant in Cebu

Published on: November 19, 2021
By BOI

MANILA -- The Philippine Board of Investments (BOI) has recently approved the application for registration of Sinoma Energy Conservation (Cebu) Waste Heat Recovery Co. Inc. as a new operator of a 4.5 megawatt (MW) power generating plant in Naga City, Cebu Province. Its parent company, duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of China, is engaged in investing in waste heat power generation projects and related engineering technology development, consultancy and design.

A domestic market enterprise, Sinoma complied with the qualification requirements under “Energy” of the 2020 Investment Priorities Plan (IPP) as the transitional Strategic Investment Priority Plan (SIPP) of the recently-enacted Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act (CREATE).

Despite the delayed construction caused by the pandemic, the WHR plant costing around P531.2 million is projected to commence its commercial operations during the first quarter of 2022. There will be about 17 employees, mostly from the city of Naga and nearby areas.



Under a Power Supply Agreement (PSA), the WHR Power Generating Plant will provide significant support to a specific cement company in Cebu by capturing and using the waste heat of the cement plant to generate steady and cost-effective supply of electricity at about 23,130,000 KWH per year. The project will thus, result in an indirect impact of increasing the power supply available for use by other consumers. Without the project, the heat content of the gases generated by the cement plant will simply go to waste.



Making green investments happen in the Philippines: BOI nods P531M waste heat recovery power generating plant in Cebu

According to the Philippines' Technology Needs Assessment for Climate Change Mitigation report dated June 2018, the cement industry has already installed three (3) waste heat recovery power generation systems with a total capacity of 17.5 MW in the following: 1) Cemex Antipolo Plant (6 MW); 2) Lafarge Teresa Plant (4.5 MW); and Eagle Cement Corporation (7 MW). The same report indicates that WHR system lowers plant specific energy consumption, reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and air pollutants emissions. It was estimated that carbon dioxide emission reduction is 11,800 tons/year for Lafarge Teresa Plant that has a similar capacity with the Project at 4.5 MW.

In 2020, coal relentlessly dominated the installed capacity mix in the Philippines with a share of 42 percent followed by Renewable Energy (RE) at 29 percent, Oil-Based at 16 percent, and Natural Gas sits at 13 percent. Globally, climate change has been a hot topic for several years, and in a bid to phase down coal eventually, the Glasgow Climate Pact was struck recently at the COP26 to reduce coal use and to ultimately cut carbon emission. In a press conference, Trade Undersecretary and BOI Managing Head Ceferino Rodolfo shared that the country would shift to greener and sustainable initiatives.

Energy demand will rise again as the economy recovers from the pandemic. Building up of capacity and employment of energy-efficient technologies are necessary in order to ensure a stable/unhampered and hopefully, cleaner supply of electricity. (BOI)



BGC's Bins & Buckets is an awesome way you can help the environment one recyclable at a time

Published November 19, 2021, 10:30 AM
by [MB Technews](#)



Bins and Buckets

Coming up with green initiatives at the local level that can help save the earth has always been part of Bonifacio Global City's commitment for the past years. As a community that prioritizes sustainability, BGC continues to come up with opportunities that will make it easier for citizens to take a step forward and do their share towards sustainability, not just for the present, but for the future generations as well. For those who haven't taken the environmentally-friendly plunge yet, BGC's recycling project, Bins & Buckets, is just right around the corner.

Bins & Buckets is BGC's banner program on solid waste segregation and diversion that consists of sustainable grassroot initiatives – things that can be started at home and the workplace.

Bins: A Waste Segregation Program

Doing good begins at home. As the word "bins" mean – this encourages solid waste segregation through different bins at source – be it plastics, paper and metal. Project Bins encourages BGCitizens to drop off their recyclables and earn environmental points (trash-to-cash program) using the BXtra app. The environmental points (EPs) may then be used to purchase goods from BGC's weekend Mobile Market – Luntian express or to purchase food, groceries, and services from BStr's partner merchants.

For dropoff points on Saturdays, head over to De Jesus Oval (8 AM to 12 NN), Essensa (1 PM to 4 PM), and Maredien (4 PM to 5 PM). On Sundays, catch the Bins Truck at 10th corner 25th (8 AM to 12 NN) and Burgos Circle (1 PM to 5 PM).



BGC's Bins & Buckets is an awesome way you can help the environment one recyclable at a time

Buckets: Household Food Waste Composting

Taking on the word "buckets," this program encourages households to segregate their food waste to buckets and mix it with Bokashi bran to convert them into compost. In partnership with Green Antz' Bokashi Composting Program (Soilmate), residents can now easily make healthy soil out of leftover food and kitchen scraps. Using the Soilmate app (soilmate.app), subscribers may book their bucket pickup once it's full so Green Antz can process the compost mixture further.

Unlike traditional backyard composting, bokashi composting can be done right in your kitchen. It only needs Bokashi bran and in about 2-3 weeks, food waste can be converted into productive compost at home that can be used for planting or as a humus-rich organic fertilizer. With a shared goal to roll out new and convenient ways to recycle and minimize waste, BGC and Green Antz continue to work together to make the community greener than ever.

The Bins & Buckets project of BGC not only aims to encourage its community members to practice sustainability, but it also serves as an opportunity for its neighboring cities to follow through so that everyone can do their part in keeping the environment clean and green.



Nature-pact goal to protect 30% of land and ocean hangs in balance

November 19, 2021 | 4:58 pm



Apo Myna – Neon Rosell

KUALA LUMPUR — The central pledge of a planned new global nature pact — to protect 30% of the planet’s land and seas — is in doubt, with some biodiversity-rich nations refusing to commit because of jitters over funding and implementation, officials have warned.

A coalition of about 70 countries — including G7 wealthy governments — have already promised to conserve at least 30% of their land and oceans by 2030, a pledge known as 30x30, to help curb climate change and the loss of plant and animal species.

The 30x30 goal is part of a draft global treaty to safeguard plants, animals and ecosystems, due to be finalized next May at the COP15 nature summit in the Chinese city of Kunming, according to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

“Many countries are supporting it — but also many countries are not supporting it,” said Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, the CBD’s executive secretary.

“It is still very much for debate,” she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, adding that effective management of a 30x30 goal would be key.

Improving protection of natural areas, such as parks, oceans, forests and wildernesses, is seen as vital to maintaining the ecosystems on which humans depend, and to limiting global warming to internationally agreed targets.



Nature-pact goal to protect 30% of land and ocean hangs in balance

Dozens of nations pledged to do more to conserve nature and make farming greener at the COP26 UN climate talks this month.

Brian O'Donnell, director of the US-based Campaign for Nature, which is urging leaders to back the 30x30 pledge, said it was "perhaps the most supported target in the negotiations."

There is broad scientific consensus that protecting or conserving at least 30% of land and oceans is the minimum needed to curb biodiversity loss and to reach climate goals, he added.

But the inclusion of the pledge in the final COP15 accord is far from certain, with improvements needed, said green groups.

"Like it or not, 30x30 will be one of the defining issues for COP15," said Li Shuo, a policy advisor at Greenpeace China.

"The Kunming biodiversity summit will not be a success only with this target — but it will certainly not be seen as a triumph if without [it]," he added.

WAIT AND SEE

Southeast Asia covers just 3% of the Earth's surface but is home to three of the world's 17 "mega-diverse" countries — Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

It is also the only region where a significant number of countries have yet to back the 30x30 goal, with only Cambodia signing up so far, said Mr. O'Donnell.

South Africa, meanwhile, has called for a much lower target of 20%, he added, while others like Argentina have questioned the science behind the flagship pledge.

On a more positive note, India is the latest country to commit to 30x30.

And at the first part of the COP15 talks, held online last month, host nation China announced a new national parks project that would bring 230,000 square km (88,800 square miles) of land under stronger state protection.

While China has yet to endorse the 30x30 pledge, the signs are that it may be getting ready to do so at the Kunming summit, said Linda Krueger, director of biodiversity at The Nature Conservancy.

Opposition to the 30x30 goal is largely linked to the challenges of putting it into practice, such as financing for developing nations, high population density, low levels of biodiversity and lack of domestic laws, environmentalists said.

But Ms. Krueger said she had only heard Brazil speak out against it clearly. "Many countries seem to be on the fence, and the support of others is conditioned on adequate financing being made available," she added.

Some political leaders have yet to grasp the economic benefits of conservation, with many still relying on exploitation of natural resources to lift people out of poverty, green groups said.



Nature-pact goal to protect 30% of land and ocean hangs in balance

Others are home to a large proportion of the planet's biodiversity and want a protection target higher than 30%.

Despite these hurdles, there is significant momentum to land the 30x30 goal in the deal, said Susan Lieberman, vice president of international policy at the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Some countries are still studying how it would play out in their own contexts, she added.

"Many governments do not realize this is a global target and each country will contribute to achievement of the targets in different ways," Ms. Lieberman said.

"Governments need to look not only at area-based conservation within their own territories, but at what their 'footprint' is globally," she said, pointing to procurement of commodities like timber and fish.

NO PANACEA

There are also concerns the 30x30 target will threaten the rights of indigenous and local communities — and that new protected areas could dispossess those groups, said Guido Broekhoven, head of policy research and development at WWF International.

These are the very people who for generations have done the most to sustain, defend and restore biodiversity, he said.

The 30x30 pledge will be far more effective in halting and reversing biodiversity loss if protected areas are sited in the most important parts of the planet for biodiversity and ecosystem services, he noted.

That means achieving the target should be "a collective, global effort," he added, calling for more financing.

Countries with relatively few suitable areas should contribute as far as they can to conservation efforts in other biodiversity-rich nations, Mr. Broekhoven said.

But 30x30 is not "a panacea," he emphasized, adding that the goal will need to be complemented by reforms to ecologically harmful investment, agriculture and consumption.

"On its own, it will be insufficient to reverse the loss of nature," he said. — **Michael Taylor/Thomson Reuters Foundation**



Growing forests can help heal tropical aquatic ecosystems: study

In less than a decade, researchers say, reforested land allows bacterial communities to recover, highlighting the importance of reforestation for overall ecosystem recovery.



Aerial views of Buluq Sen village, Kutai Kertanegara District in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Image: [Nanang Sujana/CIFOR, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).

By Aimee Gabay, Mongabay
Nov. 19, 2021

Scientists have long identified a link between livestock production and deforestation, with reams of research showing the [detrimental effect of agricultural activities on natural resources](#). Little is known, however, about how much these practices impact water microbial communities — the tiny organisms that maintain water quality by cycling nutrients and energy.

A new study [published in *Scientific Reports*](#) by researchers from the [Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute](#) (STRI) focused on just that: the specific impact of different land uses, such as cattle pastures and secondary forests, on bacterial communities in the water column of four streams in central Panama.

The findings reveal key insights into nature's ability to recover from harsh environmental changes, such as land degradation and deforestation, which are largely a consequence of human-related agricultural practices. Reforesting the land, the researchers say, can restore many aspects of water quality, allowing bacterial communities to thrive again, which directly benefits both human health and the environment.

Growing forests can help heal tropical aquatic ecosystems: study

“Microbes are the biological engines that transform the world,” Bob Hilderbrand, associate professor at the University of Maryland Centre for Environmental Science, who was not involved in the study, told Mongabay. “They can be particularly important for removing excess nutrients, such as pollutants, and even for breaking down toxic pollutants.”

Assessing the ecological conditions of freshwater streams, specifically by identifying microbe distribution and diversity, helps researchers identify the impact of human-related activities on the environment, and can therefore aid governments and policymakers by informing policy and practice.

“Since water column microbes tend to reflect the surrounding uplands, the results suggest the land is recovering in more ways than just vegetatively, and this is encouraging from the standpoint of ecosystem recovery and restoration,” Hilderbrand said.

The project was a collaboration with [Agua Salud](#), an initiative that aims to understand the drivers and consequences of environmental change. Data was collected at the Agua Salud project site, an area managed by the STRI.

Researchers studied streams surrounded by four types of land use: mature forest, secondary forest, silvopasture, and traditional cattle pasture. A mature forest, also referred to as primary or old-growth forest, is an untouched forest, containing little or no evidence of human activity, whereas a secondary forest is a forest that has been disturbed in some way, but has been allowed to recover and regrow.

Silvopasture, on the other hand, is a practice that integrates trees into pastures that are used for agricultural production, often in a mutually beneficial manner. This differs from cattle pasture, which is land used exclusively for domesticated livestock to graze.

From the streams that run through each land type, the researchers collected weekly water samples for more than two years to measure different aspects of water quality, as well as extract and sequence bacterial DNA.

According to Kristin Saltonstall, study co-author and researcher at the STRI, the main objective was “to understand how different land uses and reforestation treatments impact the hydrological environment and enhance ecosystem services.”

Saltonstall and her colleagues discovered high bacterial diversity in streams surrounded by both mature and secondary forests. Streams surrounded by traditional cattle pasture, on the other hand, had much lower diversity, highlighting the negative influence that raising cattle has on water quality and bacterial communities.

“When streams become polluted or surrounding landscapes are degraded, microbial communities shift, risking their ability to help maintain natural processes and often allowing harmful bacteria to flourish,” Saltonstall said.

The study reveals huge benefits in allowing forests to regrow on abandoned agricultural land, finding that bacterial communities in streams can recover and flourish in as little as a decade when cattle are removed from the area.

Growing forests can help heal tropical aquatic ecosystems: study

“Our results indicate that the presence of cattle in the watershed can decrease bacterial diversity,” said Megan Lindmark, a researcher at the STRI and co-author of the study. However, “our results also indicate that streams in secondary, restored forests have similar bacterial communities and diversity to mature forests, indicating the importance of reforestation,” she said.

Putting the brakes on livestock production would be a huge feat requiring major international effort — an extremely complex process, as demonstrated in the negotiations by IUCN members and leaders at the [UN COP26 climate summit](#) in Glasgow.

Instead, the researchers argue a case for alternative solutions that allow for both the restoration and maintenance of ecosystems, while still leaving room for land to be used for food production.

“The study illustrates direct benefits for stream water quality of transitioning from conventional cattle pastures to silvopastoral systems, particularly if cattle are prevented from aggregating in the streams during the dry season,” said Robin Chazdon, a professor at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, who was not affiliated with the study.

Streams surrounded by silvopasture, which consists of trees deliberately planted on traditional cattle pastures, showed significant variation depending on the season. During wet months, bacterial diversity was similar to those found in forested streams, exhibiting higher diversity than dry months in which bacterial communities closely resembled those of cattle pastures.

The STRI study’s findings further highlight the importance of natural forest regrowth and targeted management, such as maintaining and restoring riparian corridors, on aquatic microbiomes and water quality in tropical landscapes. In other words, riparian corridors, which are the tree and plant communities that grow near flows of water, are critical to stream ecology.

“The results of this research emphasise the importance of the conservation and restoration of riparian forest buffers to efficiently balance agriculture and ecosystem services,” Hilary Brumberg, an environmental scientist from the University of Colorado Boulder who was not involved in the study, told Mongabay.

“All of the streams have robust communities of bacteria in them, which are likely doing many things, such as decomposing organic matter and cycling nutrients,” Saltonstall said. “The streams bordered by mature and young secondary forests showed few changes over time and change of season, suggesting that these communities are stable and resilient to environmental change.”

In agricultural settings, however, protecting streams with forest corridors and fencing can help enhance ecosystem services and improve water quality and overall bacterial diversity, particularly in the rainy season.

“Nature’s capacity for recovery is remarkable, in that a stream community can return to something resembling the natural community in a matter of years, even after decades of impact from cattle farming,” Saltonstall said.

“This provides hope and helps show a path forward in addressing some of our man-made environmental challenges.”

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/growing-forests-can-help-heal-tropical-aquatic-ecosystems-study/>



Brazil: Amazon sees worst deforestation levels in 15 years

Published
11 hours ago



IMAGE SOURCE,AFP

Image caption,

Deforestation increased in the Amazon by 22% during the 2020-21 period

Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest has hit its highest level in over 15 years, official data shows.

A report by Brazil's space research agency (Inpe) found that deforestation increased by 22% in a year.

Brazil was among a number of nations who [promised to end and reverse deforestation](#) by 2030 during the COP26 climate summit.

The Amazon is home to about three million species of plants and animals, and one million indigenous people.

It is a vital carbon store that slows down the pace of global warming.

According to the latest data, some 13,235 sq km (5110 sq miles) was lost during the 2020-21 period, the highest amount since 2006.

Environment Minister Joaquim Leite said the data represents a "challenge" and said: "We have to be more forceful in relation to these crimes."

He added that the data "does not exactly reflect the situation in the last few months".

- [How many trees has the world been cutting down?](#)
- [How your chicken burger is linked to deforestation](#)
- [Illegal miners fire on indigenous group in Amazon](#)

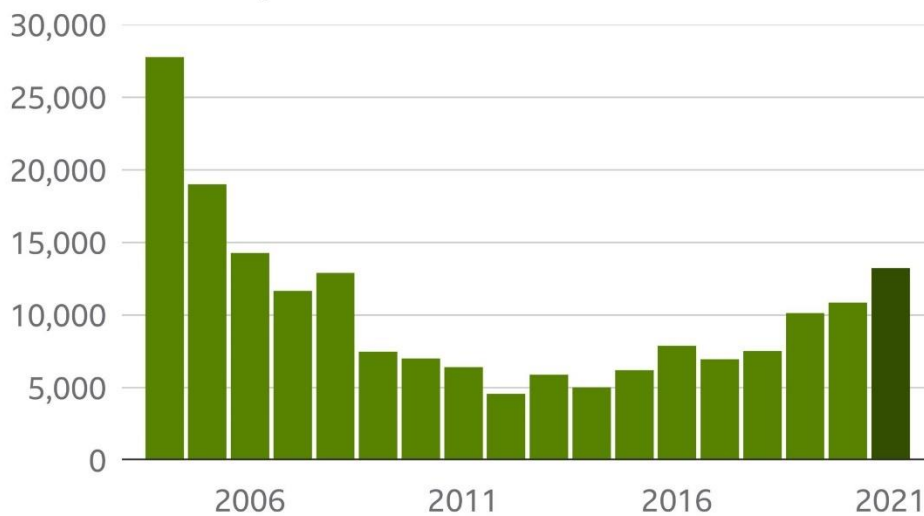


Brazil: Amazon sees worst deforestation levels in 15 years

Deforestation of the Amazon has increased under President Jair Bolsonaro, who has encouraged agriculture and mining activities in the rainforest.

Amazon deforestation highest since 2006

Annual rate in square kilometres



Annual figures August to July

Source: PRODES, Inpe



He has also clashed with Inpe in the past over its deforestation, accusing the agency in 2019 of smearing Brazil's reputation.

But at November's climate conference in Glasgow, Brazil was among a number of nations who signed a major deal to end and reverse the practice.

The pledge included almost £14bn (\$19.2bn) of public and private funds. Some of that will go to developing countries to restore damaged land, tackle wildfires and support indigenous communities.

Close links have previously been uncovered between the deforestation of the Amazon and international supply chains.

Last year, a [Greenpeace investigation discovered links](#) between the mass deforestation of the region and food sold in British supermarkets and restaurants.

The investigation found that Tesco, Asda, Lidl, Nando's and McDonalds were selling meat, sourced from a UK supplier, which had been fed on soy grown on farms built in deforested areas.



Brazil: Amazon sees worst deforestation levels in 15 years



Analysis

By Katy Watson

South America correspondent

Just this week, Jair Bolsonaro, on tour in Dubai, told investors that attacks towards Brazil on deforestation were "unfair".

"We want people to know the real Brazil," he said, adding that 90% of the forest is still preserved.

Well, these latest figures reveal the real Brazil - a country whose government has from the very beginning talked up the opportunities in developing the Amazon and at the same time, belittled environmental concerns.

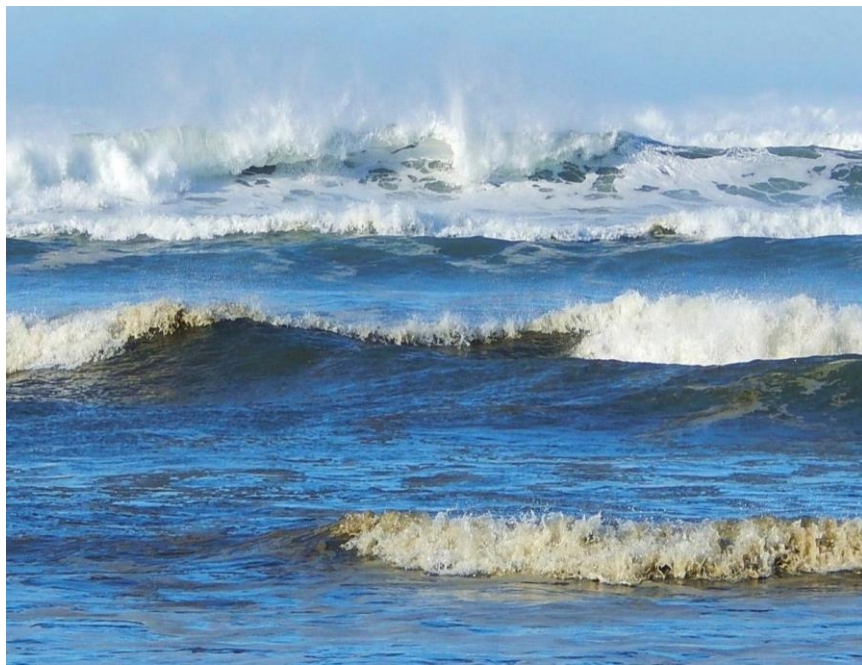
Not only that, these figures were actually dated 27 October - it appears they were held until after COP26.

Jair Bolsonaro didn't turn up to COP26, but his delegation wanted to go to Glasgow and convince the world that people were wrong about Brazil - it even said it would move forward its commitment to ending deforestation by 2028.

But with numbers like these, who can believe Jair Bolsonaro now?

The ocean is essential to tackling climate change. So why has it been neglected in global climate talks?

Climate change is commonly discussed as though it's a uniquely atmospheric phenomena. But the crisis is deeply entwined with the ocean, and this has largely been neglected in international climate talks.



Waves in Washington, America. Image: [Ron Clausen](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

By **Dr Sali Bache**, *The Conversation*

Nov. 19, 2021

Climate change is commonly discussed as though it's a uniquely atmospheric phenomena. But the crisis is deeply entwined with the ocean, and this has largely been neglected in international climate talks.

The latest international climate negotiations made some progress by, for the first time, [anchoring oceans](#) permanently into the multilateral climate change regime. But the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#) is still leagues from where it needs to be to adequately reflect the importance of oceans to our climate system.

Most countries have targets for land-based emissions — but there are no such targets for oceans. Yet the ocean plays a vital role in helping balance the conditions humans and most other species need to survive, while also offering a substantial part of the solution to stop the planet warming over the crucial limit of 1.5°C this century.

So how can oceans help us tackle the climate crisis? And what progress has been made in international negotiations?



The ocean is essential to tackling climate change. So why has it been neglected in global climate talks?

The ocean's incredible potential

Since industrialisation, the ocean has absorbed [93 per cent of human-generated heat](#) and [one-third of anthropogenic carbon dioxide](#) (CO₂). The consequences of this are profound, including the thermal expansion of water (the key cause of sea level rise), ocean acidification, [deoxygenation](#) (oxygen loss), and forcing marine life to redistribute to other places.

Alarming, this may one day lead the ocean to reverse its role as a carbon sink and release CO₂ [back into the atmosphere](#), as its absorption ability declines.

Equally important is ocean-based climate mitigation, which could provide [more than 20 per cent of the emissions reductions](#) needed for the 1.5°C goal.

Crucially, we must see changes to maritime industries. The shipping industry alone has a similar carbon footprint to Germany — if shipping were a country it would be the world's sixth-largest emitter. Although high on the [International Maritime Organisation's agenda](#), the [decarbonisation of shipping](#) still lacks [adequate targets or processes](#).

Oceans can also provide climate-safe, sustainable food choices. Current food systems, such as emissions-intensive agriculture, fishing, and processed foods are responsible for [one-third of global emissions](#). Considerable environmental (and health) benefits can be gained by shifting our diets to sustainable "[blue foods](#)".

These include seafoods sourced from fisheries with sustainable management practices, such as avoiding overfishing and reducing carbon emissions. Markets and technologies should also be geared towards the large-scale production and consumption of aquatic plants such as seagrasses.

There's also a wealth of opportunity in "blue carbon" — capturing CO₂ in the atmosphere by conserving and restoring marine ecosystems such as mangroves, seagrasses and salt marshes. However, the success of nature-based solutions depends on a healthy ocean ecosystem. For example, there are emerging concerns around the impact of [plastic pollution](#) on plankton's ability to absorb CO₂.

But perhaps the greatest impact would come from adopting offshore renewable energy. This has the potential to offer [one-tenth of the emissions reductions we need to reach the 1.5°C goal](#). The International Energy Agency has estimated offshore wind could [power the world 18 times over its current consumption rate](#).

Climate talks are making slow progress

For more than a decade, the inclusion of oceans in climate talks has been piecemeal and inconsistent. Where they have been part of negotiations, including at COP26, talk has focused on the potential for coastal areas to adapt to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, as first raised in international fora [in 1989](#) by small island states.

The ocean is essential to tackling climate change. So why has it been neglected in global climate talks?

The final COP26 agreement, known as the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), made slight progress.

The pact recognised the importance of ensuring the [ocean ecosystem's integrity](#). It established the “the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue” as an annual process to strengthen ocean-based action. And [it invited](#) UNFCCC bodies to consider how to “integrate and strengthen ocean-based action into existing mandates and workplans” and report back.

While these are positive measures, at this stage they don't require action by parties. Therefore, they're only a theoretical inclusion, not action-oriented.

We still lack national targets and clear, mandatory international requirements for countries to consider sinks, sources and activities beyond the shoreline in their climate planning and reporting.

Where COP26 did progress was its focus on whether ocean impacts and mitigation will finally be brought into the mainstream climate agenda. For the first time in five years, a new [“Because the Ocean” declaration](#) was released, which calls for the systematic inclusion of the oceans in the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement process.

What do we do now?

What's now needed is a list of mandated requirements that ensure countries report on and take responsibility for climate impacts within their maritime territories.

But as COP26 president Alok Sharma said of the summit as a whole, it was a “fragile win”. We still lack any reference to consistency with existing mechanisms, such as the [law of the sea convention](#) or how funding will be allocated specifically to oceans.

As such, the actual impact of COP26 on the inclusion of oceans in climate action remains uncertain. It will depend on how the UNFCCC bodies respond to these directives, and their success in extending obligations to state parties.

Responding to the climate crisis means we need to stop pretending the ocean and atmosphere are separate. We must start including ocean action as a routine part of climate action.



Five sustainable solutions to help tackle extreme heat in South Asia

From painting roofs to geothermal air conditioning systems, accessible and sustainable cooling tools exist to help address the growing problem of heat stress, which is worsening due to climate change.



Umaben Metkal paints the roof of her home in Saraspur, Ahmedabad, with solar-reflective white paint. Mahila Housing Trust has helped more than 2,500 households paint their roofs, which can reduce indoor temperatures by 4-5C. Image: [Ashden](#)

By Natalie Taylor, *The Third Pole*

Nov. 19, 2021

As the world warms, there is an urgent need to find ways to keep people cool. This year, several deadly records have been set in South Asia: in New Delhi, the highest July temperature in 90 years was [recorded](#), at 43.6 degrees Celsius. In April in Karachi, mercury levels [hit](#) 44C — the highest in 74 years.

Last week, the climate analysis coalition Climate Action Tracker [published research](#) showing that even if the new pledges made by the world's governments in the first week of COP26 are achieved, global temperatures would rise by more than 2.4C this century. This coincided with [the publication of research](#) showing that with just a 2C global temperature rise, a billion people will be affected by extreme heat stress.

Even at 1.5C of global warming (the aspirational target set by the Paris Agreement), [studies](#) have found that deadly heat stress could become common across South Asia. Despite pledges to control greenhouse gas emissions, scientists say the world could reach the 1.5C threshold in a matter of years.



Five sustainable solutions to help tackle extreme heat in South Asia

There is therefore a pressing need for sustainable cooling technologies and practices that are both low-carbon and accessible to the poorest people — who are also [most at risk of heatwaves](#). And, crucially, there needs to be grassroots support for the proposed solutions.

“We cannot agree on global multilateral solutions if we don’t have local, appropriate implementation,” said Carlos Alvarado Quesada, president of Costa Rica, speaking in Glasgow on 4 November at an awards ceremony held by Ashden, a UK charity that supports solutions to the problems caused by climate change. “Implementation has to be done locally, respecting women, respecting indigenous communities [and] working together with them.”

This year’s [Ashden Awards](#), attended by [The Third Pole](#), recognised the importance of sustainable cooling. Many of the projects highlighted below are recipients of finance via its Fair Cooling Fund, which aims to scale up “frontline fair cooling solutions”.

1. Empowering women through low-cost solutions

Houses in poor neighbourhoods are usually built from cement, often with plastic covers or tin sheets to keep the rain out. These materials absorb heat, and create hot and stuffy living conditions. As urban populations increase and the impacts of global warming become more apparent, the problems will worsen — with knock-on impacts for sanitation and health. Women are particularly exposed, as their work often takes place within the home.

[Mahila Housing Trust](#) (MHT) is a not-for-profit organisation based in Ahmedabad. It works in 10 cities across India to boost communities’ resilience to heat stress. It provides women with advice on how to cool their homes in ways that are easily implemented and affordable: to date, more than 1,600 women have been educated about climate change and how to deal with some of its effects.

The techniques focus on passive cooling methods — preventing heat from building up within people’s homes. One of the quickest and easiest to implement is painting roofs and sun-facing walls with solar-reflective paint, which can reduce indoor temperatures by 4-5C. According to the [Global Cool Cities Alliance](#), when sunlight hits a light-coloured roof, 80 per cent of its energy is reflected, compared with 5 per cent for a dark-coloured roof.

A second easy step MHT advises is to grow potted plants and creepers on roofs, which the charity says can reduce indoor temperatures by 2.5C. Vegetation has been proven to have [a cooling effect](#) through shading and evapotranspiration. MHT has helped about 200 houses in Bhopal and Ranchi to do this.

MHT also advises on and helps with renovating roofs. The replacement structures have vents and are made from recycled materials that let more light in without trapping heat. According to MHT, these can reduce temperatures by 6-7C. Finally, the charity trains women on principles for reducing heat stress. For example, said Aneri Nihalani, MHT’s communications officer, considering the orientation of a building during construction can help reduce overheating. Taking these steps can help with the family’s finances as well as their comfort, as they need less electricity to cool their homes.

Five sustainable solutions to help tackle extreme heat in South Asia

Since 2014, the Mahila Housing Trust has helped more than 2,000 families to adopt heat-resilient measures. In recognition of its work, MHT won the 2021 Ashden Award for Cooling in Informal Settlements, which was presented at COP26.

2. Geothermal air-conditioning

The temperature on the surface of the Earth fluctuates constantly. But below the Earth's surface there is little change in temperature. The founders of [GeoAirCon](#), a company in Pakistan, have harnessed this stability to cool homes down.

In a GeoAirCon system, a 'loop' of underground pipes filled with fluid is installed. Geothermal heat pumps move heat around the system. During the summer, these pipes draw heated water from the building and move it underground. (In winter, the opposite principle applies to warm the house.)

According to the company, the temperature of the earth about 8-12 feet below the surface in Pakistan ranges from 21-25C. GeoAirCon systems can therefore cool buildings to this range — a comfortable temperature for the human body.

GeoAirCon says geothermal systems are twice as efficient in cooling as the most efficient conventional air-conditioning system. Cooling capacity is influenced heavily by the insulation of a building, M Hassamuddin, chief executive of GeoAirCon, told The Third Pole, so use of passive cooling best practices is also advised.

A system costs US\$260-460 to install, and costs significantly less to run than a conventional air-conditioning unit, according to the company. Hassamuddin said that though more suited to houses with outdoor spaces, the technology can be installed in densely populated areas, with an area less than a metre wide required to make the hole for the underground pipes.

So far, GeoAirCon systems have been installed in 12 buildings in Pakistan. GeoAirCon was runner up for the 2021 Ashden Award for Cooling in Informal Settlements.

3. Low-impact cooling systems

In 2015, eight million air conditioners were installed in India. That number is [expected to grow](#) by 200-300 million in the next 20 years. But traditional air conditioning is expensive, electricity-intensive and often uses greenhouse gases like HFCs, exacerbating the climate crisis.

[CBalance](#), an Indian consultancy that has also received [financial support](#) from Ashden, is working to reduce the reliance on conventional air-conditioning. It promotes passive cooling design and ventilation, fostering cooperation between architects and urban communities through its [Fairconditioning](#) programme. Hasan ul Banna Khan, an engineer working on Fairconditioning, told The Third Pole that in most cases a building can maintain a comfortable temperature using just passive design techniques coupled with sustainable cooling systems.

Having reduced the requirement for artificial cooling as much as possible, it also promotes technologies that reduce the energy and greenhouse gas intensity of cooling.

Five sustainable solutions to help tackle extreme heat in South Asia

These [include](#):

- Evaporative cooling, which uses evaporated water to cool air. Unlike conventional air conditioning, this does not use refrigeration, and therefore requires a lot less energy. In [one building in Pune](#), this system reduces the need for conventional AC by 40 per cent.
- Radiant or structure cooling, where cool water is circulated through a building. The technology has been used in [73 large buildings](#) in India, including the [Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology](#) in Pune.
- Use of solar power to chill water.
- Air-conditioning [units](#) that are more energy-efficient and emit fewer HFCs.

4. Cool roofs programmes

Under the [Ahmedabad Heat Action Plan](#) (HAP) in India, a partnership between the municipal corporation, Indian Institute of Public Health and the Natural Resource Defence Council, more than 7,000 low-income households' roofs have been painted white. It is [estimated](#) that such initiatives save an estimated 1,100 lives every year.

On a bigger scale, the Million Cool Roofs Challenge is a US\$2 million philanthropic initiative to rapidly scale up the use of solar-reflective roofs as a form of sustainable cooling in developing countries suffering heat stress. Ten teams are awarded grants of US\$100,000.

In 2019, [one of the finalists](#) was the team from Bangladesh, a country with high humidity levels and where ambient temperatures are [already reaching](#) 40C. The Bangladesh team painted the roofs of two factories and 105 other buildings in Dhaka, including a nursery and a school, with average indoor air temperatures falling by more than 7C.

5. Vernacular architecture providing sustainable cooling

Architects and builders can also look to traditional materials, techniques and designs, which have kept occupants cool for centuries. In one [project](#) in Rudrapur, north Bangladesh, students and architects worked with local architects and craftsmen to create houses for low-income families. Using mud and bamboo alongside manmade materials, they installed openings for cross-ventilation, insulation made from coconut fibre and glass windows.

Traditional stilt houses, such as those found in Assam, also use passive cooling. The structures enable cross-ventilation and shading. The walls, which are left unplastered, promote natural ventilation. Recently, [projects have started](#) to combine traditional models with materials to enhance their resilience to extreme weather.

The importance of policymakers and urban planning for sustainable cooling

As global emissions drive temperatures to new highs, there is an urgent need to roll out these methods and technologies more widely, at the same time as taking urgent action to limit global warming. Both Aneri Nihalani from MHT and GeoAirCon's M Hassamuddin told The Third Pole that finance is the main obstacle to wider adoption of the solutions their organisations offer.



Five sustainable solutions to help tackle extreme heat in South Asia

Hasan ul Banna Khan from the Fairconditioning programme said there is still a lack of awareness of the impacts of conventional air-conditioning, as well as “a dearth of motivated and skilled architects and engineers in the sustainable building design sector”.

Beyond that, urban planners and policymakers need to step in. In Vietnam, the Hanoi City Master Plan 2030 builds the growing need for sustainable urban cooling into the country’s commitment to be net zero by 2050. It [aims to prevent heat](#) build-up throughout the city, using ventilation corridors of green and blue space.

As South Asia warms and urbanises, cities will need to put similar heat adaptation and mitigation measures at the heart of their development plans.



[Pasig River Expressway: A brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save us](#)

Exclusive Special Report!
NOV 19, 2021, 3:49 PM



Alfredo P. Hernandez
Writer

Touted to be the country's first green hybrid expressway, the Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) places the environment and the river's eco-system at the front and center of this ambitious initiative.

IN the mid-80s, Colonel Mariano Santiago, then the boss of the Land Transportation Commission (LTC) told me during one of my occasional chats with him: "We now have about a million vehicles all over the country. That includes those still unregistered... and the National Capital Region (NCR) accounts for at least 30 percent of the national total."

33 years hence, in 2018, the number of registered vehicles nationwide rocketed to 11.6 million, an increase of over 1,000 percent from the estimated 1985 figure of one million.

The NCR accounted for at least 24 percent at 2.8 million units.

It was one statistic that had never drifted into Director Santiago's imagination.

And maybe, even the government traffic planners in those days had never imagined that the vehicle inventory in the metropolis could balloon to this level.

The number of new cars being launched yearly into the roads and avenues of Metro Manila had increased with the improved incomes from the employment of many Metro Manilans.

Already, as early as 1980, the Marcos government was witnessing the growing traffic problems triggered by the soaring number of vehicles.

Mass rail transit system

Along with plans to open up improved roads and bridges to ease daily traffic congestions, President Marcos paved the way for the setting up of a light rail system.

On July 12, 1980, the President created the Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) under Executive Order No. 603 giving birth to the "Metrorail".

Its mission was to create a fully integrated mass rail transit system network to ease Metro Manila's serious traffic congestion.

Still, the LRT solution to the traffic congestions fell short of expectation as the soaring number of people in the metropolis needed more and more public transport to shuttle them to work in the morning and bring them home at night.



[Pasig River Expressway: A brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save us](#)

Traffic woes

From the 5.9 million residents in 1980, their number soared to 13.92 million last year, up 136 percent.

One reason the demand for more spaces in public buses, jeepneys, taxis, and FX services became a matter of daily survival for every breadwinner.

However, a year before, in 1999, the government launched the Manila Metro Rail Transit System (MRT), one of the two rapid transit systems serving Metro Manila along with the LRT, and became fully operational in 2010.

It aimed to encourage car users to leave their cars at home and instead take the mass transport system. Still, Metro Manila's traffic woes were far from over.

Flyover bridges and elevated interchanges rose all over the metropolis to provide new grounds for the endlessly multiplying number of vehicles that fought for every inch of the city road.

Bridges' inadequate capacity

Some noted that one of the major factors contributing to the inefficiency of Metro Manila's road network is the inadequate capacity of the existing 30 bridges crossing major waterways, namely Pasig River, Marikina River, and the Manggahan Floodway.

These bridges accommodate 1.3 million vehicles per day.

Right now, the government is working on the funding of three new bridges that will cross the Marikina River as part of an effort to solve the increasingly severe traffic problem.

The proposed bridges await funding from the Asian Development Bank and construction should start early 2022.

Major thoroughfares

OVER the past 50 years, only two major thoroughfares were built in what is now known as Mega Manila, running their courses from east to west.

These roads are the Marcos Highway that runs from Cogeo, Antipolo City in Rizal, to Katipunan Road in Quezon City, and the Ortigas Avenue, from Cainta, Rizal to San Juan City.

Ortigas Avenue was built towards in the late 60s (as a second-year UE student, I saw the finishing works of the avenue near Gilmore Street in San Juan city in 1967).

The Marcos Highway was an old road known as Highway 55 (of the colonial American era) that started in Manila.

But in recent years, it was remodeled, starting from the Katipunan Road in Quezon City, and has stretched up to Cogeo, Antipolo; Infanta, Quezon; and Santa Maria, Laguna.

So Marcos Highway and Ortigas Avenue stood as the only two major thoroughfares from the eastern side of Rizal spanning towards the metropolis.



[Pasig River Expressway: A brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save us](#)

No new roads

One reason was that there were no available properties that could be expropriated by the government of the day.

To do it these days would mean a costly exercise of demolishing thousands of homes and commercial and business establishments to make way for a new road project.

And if ever there were road projects carried out by the government in recent times, they ran only from east to west for short distances and whose course went across areas with fewer residents and business enterprises being affected.

Just like their problematic counterpart EDSA, or the Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, a 23-kilometer long avenue whose tip ends in Caloocan City while its tail touches the Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City, the Marcos Highway and the Ortigas Avenue are also plagued with traffic congestion problems.

Enter PAREX

THE GOOD NEWS is that a new joint venture company has proposed to end the woes of Metro Manilans using EDSA, Marcos Highway, and Ortigas Avenue.

Food and beverage giant San Miguel Corporation, through its subsidiary company SMC Infrastructure and the Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC), have joined forces to build a new road system that would relieve the metropolis of its present-day traffic congestions.

This P95 billion road system is called the Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) that according to the project proponents, would offer a “permanent solution” to the daily woes of commuters and motorists in the metropolis.

A modern concept in today’s setting of unclogging city streets and avenues, PAREX will be a 19.73km elevated six-lane expressway that will take off at Radial Road 10 at the North Harbor in the city of Manila and ends at a connection to South East Metro Manila Expressway at C-6.

To rise along the banks of Pasig River with its giant pillars encroaching only on one or two meters of the river, PAREX will cut to only 15 minutes the travel time from Manila to Rizal.

Once the road project is finished, PAREX will comprise three segments. Segment 1 will cover R-10 to Plaza Azul which is around 5.74-km.

Then from Plaza Azul, the planned expressway will link up with San Juan River via the Metro Manila Skyway Stage 3 – which will span about 2.7-km. Segment 2 will measure 7.325-km and will see the expressway connecting from the San Juan River to C5 Intersection.

Finally, Segment 3 will bridge C-5 Intersection with C-6 Intersection and span about 6.3-km.



[Pasig River Expressway: A brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save us](#)

Environment friendly

Touted to be the country's first green hybrid expressway, PAREX places the environment and the river's eco-system at the front and center of this ambitious initiative.

While providing travelers and motorists with a modern, efficient expressway, SMC will also undertake the clean-up and rehabilitation of the Pasig River alongside PAREX.

Already, SMC has earmarked P 2 billion for the extraction of some three million tons of silt and solid waste from the river to improve its carrying capacity and flow.

This would prevent flooding and improve the water quality of the river.

SMC project planners are confident that a rehabilitated river would make possible the safe use of the river as a mode of transportation.

Criticisms

The project, however, was met with criticism and skepticism.

Environmentalist groups have called on the government to evaluate further the effects of the PAREX project on the overall ecosystem along its 19-km stretch before allowing it to proceed.

Much better, scrap it all along for just being a new, gigantic eyesore stretching across the city.

They pointed out that PAREX will remove much of the vehicles from EDSA, Ortigas Avenue, and Marcos Highway alongside the tons of fumes they produce and transfer them to its 19-kilometer concrete structure where they would create a new launching pad to pollute the environment.

Because of the ease in traveling over the new elevated expressway, over time, more and more Metro Manilans will buy new cars, thus contributing further to road congestions in the city.

Pure conjectures

However, SMC branded the accusations as pure conjectures, just like hooking up the kabayo behind the kalesa.

"It's part of an orchestrated and continuing demolition job to paint the project as the opposite of what it truly is," the company said of the negative reaction it has been getting since PAREX was launched in a recent groundbreaking ceremony.

SMC also belied the idea that PAREX "will kill Pasig River, that the structure will cover the waterway, that the project is anti-poor, and that the new piece of infrastructure will worsen traffic and pollution".

Biologically dead

"Pasig river is already considered biologically dead and is a flowing dumpsite for solid waste, industrial and chemical wastes, and sewage."



[Pasig River Expressway: A brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save us](#)

“We are spending P2 billion to remove three million metric tons of wastes as part of our rehabilitation efforts to enable Pasig River to channel floodwaters more effectively and improve the operations of water ferries” the firm said.

SMC then clarified that PAREX will not cover the entire Pasig River, saying the structure’s posts will only take up a meter of the river’s 200-meter average width.

Public transport too

According to SMC, the expressway will benefit more than just private car owners as it will accommodate public transportation as well.

This includes a bus rapid transit system that will connect PAREX to the Skyway, allowing for “faster, more reliable, safer, comfortable and affordable commutes to and from the northern, southern, eastern, and western areas of Metro Manila.

“It is not expressways that induce people to buy more cars. It is insufficient public transportation, pollution, and even personal progress of people,” the statement stressed.

“The number of vehicles will continue to rise with or without PAREX. Traffic and pollution will worsen if we do not build efficient, multipurpose, future-ready infrastructure such as the PAREX.”

Indeed, PAREX is brilliant idea that has finally come in concrete, living color to save the day for us.

And the opposition? Again, they are too late in coming if they wanted to save Pasig River from its virtual built-in pollution.

20 NOVEMBER 2021, Saturday



DENR

NEWS

ALERTS

COVID-19

NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



30% of Filipinos fully vaccinated against COVID-19

(Philstar.com)

- November 19, 2021 - 1:17pm



This June 22, 2021 photo shows individuals lining up at a mall in Manila to receive their COVID-19 vaccine.
The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Nearly 33 million Filipinos have been fully vaccinated against coronavirus in the eight months since the government launched its inoculation campaign.

This is equivalent to 30.25% of the population or a third of the 90% that health experts say must be vaccinated to attain herd immunity.

Another 40.92% million or 37.53% of Filipinos have received the first shot of a two-dose regimen, according to Department of Health figures as of November 18.

The Philippines this week received more doses of the COVID-19 vaccines manufactured by US drugmakers Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech, bolstering the country's procured supply of the life-saving jabs.

A China Airlines plane carrying 1.31 million Moderna doses landed at the Terminal 1 of Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Friday morning while 609,570 more Pfizer shots arrived on Thursday night.



DOH: Delta variant already present in PH prior to first case detection

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Nov 19, 2021 11:59:20 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, November 19) — The Department of Health said the more contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus was already present in the country prior to the detection of the first case in May.

"Gumawa tayo nung Oct. 22 ng run at nakakita tayo ng mas maaga na detection ng Delta variant and that was on March 31, 2021," Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said in a virtual forum.

[Translation: We had a run on Oct. 22 and we saw an earlier detection of the Delta variant and that was on March 31, 2021.]

She said the case was a 47-year-old returning overseas Filipino with a travel history to China. The individual fully recovered, and only reported mild symptoms and completed the required isolation period.

The country's health experts said the Delta variant caused the surge in COVID-19 cases last August. The spike prompted the government to implement the strictest quarantine restrictions to control its spread.

Early November, OCTA fellow Guido David said the National Capital Region - the epicenter of the local coronavirus outbreak - had already reversed the Delta surge.

Despite this, Vergeire reminded the public to continue following minimum health protocols.

Government data showed the country currently has 2,823,210 COVID-19 cases, of which only 0.8% or 23,200 are active.



DOH identifies medical conditions eligible for third doses

(Philstar.com)

- November 19, 2021 - 4:02pm



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

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health on Friday said people with specific medical conditions will be prioritized once the government starts giving third doses to immunocompromised individuals.

In a briefing, DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said any of the following can qualify for early access to additional doses:

Related Stories

[Health workers can choose brand of COVID-19 booster jab — DOH](#)

- People who are receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Individuals who received an organ transplant and are having immunosuppressive therapy
- Those who received a stem cell transplant within the last two years or are taking immunosuppressive therapy
- People who have moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency states
- Individuals who have advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Those who are getting active treatments with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress the immune response
- People who are undergoing dialysis



DOH identifies medical conditions eligible for third doses

- Individuals who are living with autoimmune disease and receiving treatment with specific immunosuppressive medications
- Those diagnosed with conditions considered to have an equivalent level of immunocompromised as advised by the physician
- People with rare diseases

People with these conditions should secure medical clearance from their physicians prior to receiving a third dose, Vergeire said.

The department met with experts to finalize guidelines for the administration of additional doses to senior citizens and immunocompromised persons.

The government on Wednesday began the administration of booster shots to health workers.

Since the government began its vaccination drive in March, 32.99 million Filipinos have completed vaccination against COVID-19, while 40.92 million have received partial protection. — **Gaea Katreena Cabico**



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 615

NOBYEMBRE 19, 2021

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

0.8%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
23,200

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

97.5%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
2,753,312

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.65%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
46,698

MGA BAGONG KASO **1,485**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **1,393**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **277**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **2,823,210**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING NOBYEMBRE 17

DATOS NGAYONG NOBYEMBRE 19
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG NOBYEMBRE 17

3.5%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

43,039

BILANG NG
TINEST

HALOS

63.3%

ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

BAWAL
WALANG MASK
AT FACE SHIELD

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (3.8K TOTAL BEDS) **33%** Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (20.1K TOTAL BEDS) **28%** Utilized

WARD BEDS (13.3K TOTAL BEDS) **19%** Utilized

VENTILATORS (3.2K TOTAL VENTILATORS) **20%** Utilized

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (1.3K TOTAL BEDS) **32%** Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.7K TOTAL BEDS) **23%** Utilized

WARD BEDS (3.9K TOTAL BEDS) **23%** Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS) **22%** Utilized

KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO

Mild **59.6%**

3.8% Asymptomatic

5.1% Critical

12.0% Severe

19.56% Moderate



UPDATE AND MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Kahit pa tayo ay nakatanggap na ng ating bakuna, mahalaga pa rin na sumunod tayo sa **Minimum Public Health Standards** upang mas maprotektahan natin ang ating sarili laban sa COVID-19. Kasabay nito ang ating pagiging alisto sa mga sintomas. Sa oras na makaramdam ay agad makipag-ugnayan sa **BHERTS** o sa **One COVID Referral Center** na maabot sa **1555, (02)886-505-00, 0915-777-7777, o sa 0919-977-3333**, para sa karampatang gabay.

Para sa iba pang pangangailangang medikal, puntahan ang <http://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine> upang malaman kung papaano maabot ang serbisyo ng ating **Telemedicine Service Providers**, at ang <http://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines> para maabot ang ating mga ospital sa lalong mabilis na panahon.



Ihahanap ka namin ng lugar para mag-isolate o magpagamot, tumawag lang sa sumusunod:

SMART: 0919 977 3333
GLOBE: 0915 777 7777
TEL NO: (02) 886 505 00



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?

I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH

MESSANGER: Department of Health PH

KONTRACOVID PH: kontracovid.ph



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App

O Gamiting ang WEBAPP

at pumunta sa [Staysafe.ph](https://staysafe.ph)

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUNOD:

OfficialDOHgov

@DOHgovph

doh.gov.ph

(02) 894-COVID / 1555

20 NOVEMBER 2021, Saturday



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Source: <https://youtu.be/bH8sNLsSMg4>

MANILA BAYWALK

MANILA BAY UPDATE TODAY

81 watching now • Started streaming 62 minutes ago

53 1 SHARE SAVE

Ai DHIN 28
7.26K subscribers

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#OFW #DU30 #Manilabay



Please click this link:

Source: <https://youtu.be/h3jove6LD84>

MANILA BAYWALK

LIVE: MANILA BAY UPDATE TODAY NOV. 19,2021

288 views • Streamed live 17 hours ago

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JANICE LLANDER Vlog
35.4K subscribers

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MANILA

DOLOMITE BEACH OUTFALL MANILA BAY 11-19-2021

7,217 views • Nov 19, 2021

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RONSTV VLOG
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MANILANBAY UPDATE DOLOMITE BEACH #manilabay
#dolomitebeach



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Please click this link:

Source: <https://youtu.be/ifcfzrRoO64>

MANILA BAY WHITE BEACH

LIVE AT MANILA BAY TODAY! WOW! DAMI NA IMPROVEMENTS!

1,525 views • Streamed live on Nov 19, 2021

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JING No Boundaries
48.5K subscribers

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#halalan2022
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Please click this link:

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#manilabayupdate #battleformanilabay #rehabilitation
Manila Bay Update: November 20, 2021

89 views • Nov 20, 2021

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PINOY BLOGGER PH
21.8K subscribers

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#manilabayupdate #battleformanilabay #rehabilitation #dolomitebeach

manila bay rehabilitation project ongoing.



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Manila Bay Live Update November 19.2021

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5,774 views • Nov 18, 2021

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MANILA BAY WHITE BEACH

MANILA BAY NOVEMBER19,2021 SHOWER ROOM BANTAY SARADO!MizJuly

1,520 views • Streamed live 16 hours ago

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Miz July
65.1K subscribers

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MANILA

HINDI LANG ISA KUNDI DALAWA COMFORT ROOM & SHOWER FACILITY

1,326 views • Nov 19, 2021

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HINDI LANG ISA KUNDI DALAWA. INUMPISAHAN NA RIN ANG PAG GAWA SA ISA PANG COMFORT ROOM AT SHOWER FACILITY NA MALAPIT SA MANILA YACH CLUB.

#manilabayupdate



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MANILA BAYWALK DOLOMITE BEACH

MANILA BAY UPDATE TODAY/COMFORT ROOM/NOVEMBER 18,2021

400 views • Nov 18, 2021

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Camilo Llemit Vlog
5.08K subscribers

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manila bay rehabilitation project by the government through DENR and other brands of government by the directive of president DUTERTE to clean manila bay #manilabayupdatetoday #dolomitebeach #beachnourishment



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MANILA BAY WHITE BEACH

WOW! THIS IS IT SOSYALING PUBLIC C.R AFTER 30YEARS HETO NA! MANILA BAY MAY SOLAR PA!
NOV.19,2021

228 views • Nov 19, 2021

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LIVE DOLOMITE BEACH MANILA BAY RONSTV VLOG

2,640 views • Streamed live 18 hours ago

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MANILA BAY Update November 19, 2021

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MR. ED Llander
15.9K subscribers

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#EagleNews

Sea turtle, nailigtas sa Brgy. San Jose, Glan, Sarangani

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Matagumpay na nailigtas ang isang pawikan ng Maritime Police Station, Sarangani Province, MARPSTA (Batulaki Marlet), Municipal Agriculture Office, MENRO, at Glan MPS sa baybayin ng Brgy. San Jose, Glan, Sarangani.

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Clean-up drive, isinagawa sa Imelda, Zamboanga Sibugay

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Bilang pagsapit ng ika-44 Araw ng Imelda, ay matagumpay na naisagawa ang clean-up drive sa bayan ng Imelda, probinsya ng Zamboanga Sibugay.

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
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