

09 October 2022 (Sunday)



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY – Senator Cynthia A. Villar (third from left), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga (third from right) and DENR National Capital Region Executive Director Jacqueline A. Caancan (second from left) grace the inauguration of the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park (LPPWP) at the Wetland Center Complex on the occasion of World Migratory Bird Day 2022 on Saturday, Oct. 8, 2022. (Manny Llanes)



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PHOTOGRAPH BY AL PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE

IN line with the celebration of Migratory Bird Day, the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park complex was inaugurated recently by officials of the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources-NCR and the LPPWP.



Let's protect our forest – DENR

TUGUEGARAO CITY: The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 2 has appealed to the public to protect the woodlands following the recent forest fire in Bugatay, Peñablanca, Cagayan.

In a media interview on Friday, Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan of DENR-Cagayan Valley said, according to the investigation report, there were no traces of *kaingin* or forest clearing found within the area.

"The fire was possibly due to a thrown cigarette butt in the area," she claimed.

The investigation spearheaded by the DENR Sub-Office of Cagayan revealed that the incident took place within the National Greening Program forest plantation of Bugatay Upland Farmers Association (BUFA) in Peñablanca town.

Over 20,000 narra, tuai and tindalo indigenous species planted in 12 hectares and the 2.5 hectares adjacent grasslands were burned with a total damage of P300,000.

"I appeal to the public, especially to the local residents and barangay local government unit of Bugatay, to be responsible in throwing your cigarette butts, not just anywhere, especially when within forest areas and plantations. The government has invested funds to establish a forest plantation under the National Greening Program as measures against the effects of climate change such as strong winds," she added.

A replanting activity will be jointly conducted by the DENR and members of the BUFA using the NGP maintenance and protection fund.

"Upon our immediate investigation, the fire incident, which alarmed us in the DENR, did not happen within the mountainous part of Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, contrary to what the netizen posted on Facebook," Bambalan said as she clarified that no big trees were affected in the plantation.

She also emphasized the strict implementation of forest protection and law enforcement in the region through the operation of the Protected Area Management Board chaired by the DENR, enlisting the active involvement of the law enforcement agencies.

VINCE JACOB VISAYA



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NO-FLY ORDER ALSO EXTENDED TILL SUNDAY

MAYON ACTIVITY SUBSIDES BUT ALERT LEVEL 2 REMAINS

**By Dempsey Reyes,
Ma. April Mier-Manjares
and Julie Aurelio**
@Team_Inquirer

State volcanologists have not detected any critical activity at Mt. Mayon as of this reporting late Saturday, although the warning status on the volcano has remained on alert level 2 since Friday.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Saturday said that, apart from "moderate emission of white steam-laden plumes," no signs of volcanic earthquakes were observed.

The alert level 2 status on Friday afternoon followed after the Phivolcs reported "contin-

ued ... growth of [Mayon's] lava dome."

The agency, however, noted that "the presence of freshly extruded lava at the base of the ... dome" was "aseismic," or not marked by earthquake activity.

Nevertheless, Phivolcs said it "is raising the alert level of Mayon Volcano from alert level 1 (abnormal) to alert level 2 (increasing unrest). This means that there is current unrest driven by shallow magmatic processes that could eventually lead to phreatic eruptions or even precede hazardous magmatic eruption."

Phivolcs' highest alert level is No. 5, indicating "hazardous eruption in progress."

Mayon had been under monitoring since late August when alert level 1 was raised.

Danger zone

On Saturday, the agency continued to warn the public from entering Mayon's 6 kilometer-radius permanent danger zone, while the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines extended its no-fly order near Mayon until Sunday.

Despite the threat of possible eruption, residents of towns and cities at the foot of the volcano still choose to till their farms within the danger zone.

Nonito Alemania, barangay chief of Mi-isi in Daraga town, said the farmers have to earn a living and all village officials

like him could do, for now, was to observe the volcano and keep a log book on farmers entering that area.

"Residents have products to harvest like vegetables, coconut and they have farm animals there. Their main livelihood is farming," explained Alemania.

He said around 50 farmers living at the slopes of Mayon were already relocated to Barangay Salvacion, a good distance away from the danger zone, but they felt the need to return to their fields.

Mayon straddles eight localities in Albay province—the cities of Legazpi, Ligao and Tabaco, and the towns of Daraga, Camalig, Guinobatan, Malilipot and Santo Domingo.

In an advisory on Saturday, Albay Gov. Noel Rosal directed local officials to remain on alert and urged residents and farmers to stay away from the volcano area.

'Help from outside'

Meanwhile, Albay Rep. Joey Salceda urged the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to be ready with relief supplies and other emergency support amid Mayon's continuing unrest.

"While the risk remains completely manageable, may we request your team's usual alertness and prepositioning of resources for possible mobilization should there be need for evacuation and relief," Salceda

said in his letter to Social Welfare Secretary Erwin Tulfo.

"As in the past, evacuation from Mayon can be protracted, and may require extended support from the government. I am confident that the DSWD, under your leadership, is prepared for such eventuality, as it has been during the competently led relief operations for communities affected by recent natural calamities," added the lawmaker, a former governor of Albay.

"In Albay, we are always prepared. But we also always need help from outside, given the size of the risks involved. So, the usual support will be deeply appreciated," Salceda also said.

—WITH REPORTS FROM NESTOR CORRALES AND DEXTER CABALZA INQ



PH needs permanent disaster agency

As country becomes 'hot spot' for disasters

HOUSE Committee on Ways and Means Chairman and Albay 2nd District Representative Joey Sarte Salceda has said that a global report showing the Philippines to be at the "highest risk" of being hit by disasters shows the need to institutionalize disaster risk reduction and response through a permanent implementing agency rather than a mere coordinating council.

The World Risk Report 2022 by Germany-based Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict at Ruhr University Bochum (IFHV) showed that the global hot spots of disaster risk from natural hazards are in the Americas and Asia, with the Philippines being at highest risk among all countries surveyed.

"This is a huge jump from the score of 21.39 last

year. We are now at 46.82, highlighting how much climate change and other global developments disproportionately affect our country," Salceda said.

"Climate risks and other related risks are thus no longer an issue we can deal with on a time-to-time basis. It is now an everyday reality—something we need to work on permanently rather than merely coordinate about when the disaster comes," Salceda said.

Salceda, the principal author of the law creating the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR), said that the country's risk profile "warrants a permanent agency, not a mere coordinating council."

"Things like, say, a fiesta or a special international event are what you need coordinating councils for. Disasters, especially when they are a key feature of our

socioeconomic reality, need something stronger, more permanent," he said.

"That is why I am prepared, and I believe the House shares this sentiment, to compromise on the size of the agency need if that is what it takes for a permanent agency to be set up," Salceda said, pointing out that while he still believes the ideal case is a "Department" is created, he is willing to go for a version that instead creates a permanent agency under the Office of the President.

"It can be an agency like the NEDA [National Economic and Development Authority] that is not necessarily a Department, but whose head is a cabinet member. It can also be like the Presidential Management System, whose head is also cabinet-rank, but which is fully subsumed in the Office of the President,"

he said.

"Anything that allows us to build capacities for disasters and to implement programs, activities, and projects on a regular basis. Anything that brings disaster-related concerns straight to the highest levels of government decision-making. That is better than what we have now," Salceda added.

Both House and Senate bills on the matter are still pending in their respective committees, although Salceda says he is confident the chambers will take them up after the October break. President Marcos has identified the bill as a "Presidential priority" in his State of the Nation Address (SONA).

"We will have time after the budget. There is a consensus. I am hopeful we can build on it and get it out of both chambers before 2022 ends," Salceda said.

Ryan Ponce Pacpaco



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Disaster dept creation pressed

A lawmaker is calling for the passage of a measure creating the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR).

Albay Representative Joey Salceda, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, underscored the need to institutionalize disaster risk reduction and response through a permanent implementing agency rather than a mere coordinating council.

This is because of a global report showing the Philippines to be at highest risk of being hit by disasters.

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Jester Manalastas



EDITORIAL

Climate agenda

It took only six hours for last month's Typhoon "Karding" to develop into a supertyphoon—showing how storms have become unpredictable due to climate change. Those who were in its path were not exactly unprepared—previous typhoons have taught them hard lessons—but they were still caught off guard by its intensity. This situation will prevail, with even worse consequences, if the government continues to romanticize Filipino resilience instead of being accountable—and this is as worse as denying that climate change exists.

Last Oct. 5, President Marcos Jr. assured that the country's resiliency and adaptation to the new normals of climate change, which he called the world's "first truly global crisis," are on top of his administration's national agenda. This policy direction, however, will remain as mere rhetoric unless matched by tangible programs aimed at not only mitigating the impact of disasters on Filipinos, but equipping them with more knowledge and options to avoid death and damage to property. These could include livelihood initiatives that are insulated from extreme weather events, and better infrastructure in the form of public housing and permanent evacuation centers across the country.

Based on the World Risk Index 2022, the Philippines ranks as the most disaster-prone country in the world, with an index score of 46.82. Each Filipino will have their own disaster story to tell, whether they live in rural or urban areas. Sixty-two percent of the population live in coastal areas, including major cities, where they are likely to experience the full wrath of typhoons. And even those who are not in the coastal zones may be living along fault lines instead, or in areas where human activities such as logging and mining pose risks to their lives.

Ironically, in a survey conducted by Pulse Asia last month, only 9 percent of the respondents believed that "stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment" was an urgent national issue. Understandably, controlling inflation (66 percent), increasing workers' pay (44 percent), creating more jobs (35 percent), reducing poverty (34 percent), and fighting graft and corruption (22 percent) are gut issues that need urgent attention from the government, but environmental issues are part of the chain that impacts Filipinos' lives, their livelihood, and food security.

Aside from stronger typhoons, climate change is expected to bring higher sea levels and storm surges, the main cause of deaths for thousands during Supertyphoon "Yolanda" in 2013. These climate-related impacts will affect the farming and fishing industries, and reduce the productivity of farmers and fisherfolk impacting the availability and cost of food—which, in fact, is already happening.

Aside from the President, his predecessors have also committed to combating climate change. So have world leaders. But as Foreign Affairs pointed out in an article published in October last year, decarbonization—the central goal of climate policies—has remained unchanged despite international agreements over the last three decades. It cited three reasons why: lack of incentive to decarbonize, inadequate investment in low-carbon technologies, and the expectation that other countries will act first.

In 2009, the Philippines passed Republic Act No. 9729, or the Climate Change Act, which requires local government units (LGUs) to develop their own local climate change action plan (LCCAP). Government data show that 1,394 out of 1,700 LGUs already have LCCAPs as of 2021. This is an impressive increase from only 137 LGUs in 2015, and hopefully indicates that progress is being made on the local front.

On the national level, however, the government must address the issue of reliance on fossil fuels to generate power and machinery for the transportation and manufacturing industries. World Bank has noted that while the country is a minor contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, it ranks in the top 25 percent among low- and middle-income countries; emissions from the energy sector are projected to quadruple by 2030, making it even more unlikely for the Philippines to meet its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent by then.

The President vowed that his administration's climate initiatives will be "smarter, more responsible, more sustainable." He can start by seeing to it that existing environment-related laws—on forestation, mining, waste management, clean water, clean air, wildlife conservation, etc.—are properly implemented to help the country do its part for the planet. Because if there is one catastrophe that must be avoided, it is a climate policy failure.



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Manila Water flood-proofs sewage treatment plants near Marikina River

WITH the perennial rise of the Marikina River, especially during typhoon season, which often causes it to breach its banks, Manila Water continues to improve the flood resiliency of its facilities built near the river to ensure that flooding would not disrupt nor endanger the

operations of the facilities, particularly the Olandes Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and Marikina North STP.

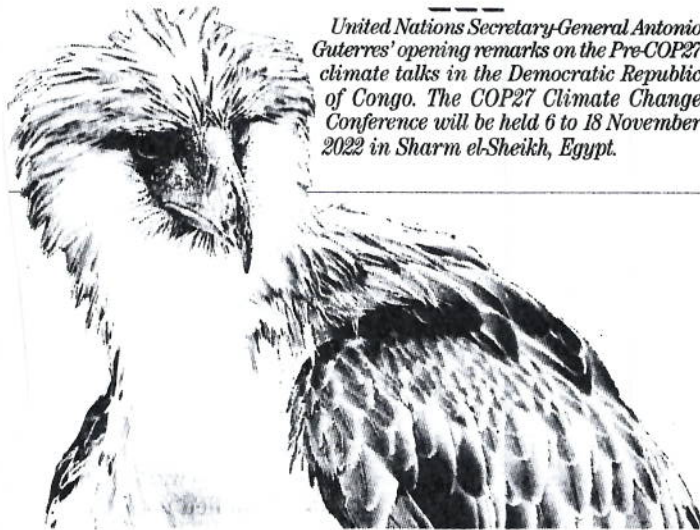
Olandes STP, which began operations in 2010, treats wastewater coming from Sitio Olandes, Brgy. Industrial Valley Complex in Marikina City and Barangays Blue Ridge A and B

and Libis in Quezon City, covering nearly 48,000 population.

Manila Water is retrofitting its Olandes Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) to withstand floods caused by overflowing of nearby Marikina River. Once

completed, operations of the facility will be unhampered nor interrupted even when the river reaches 20-meter level.





United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' opening remarks on the Pre-COP27 climate talks in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The COP27 Climate Change Conference will be held 6 to 18 November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JOMARK FRANCIS VELASCO/UNSPASH

THE MAJESTIC Philippine eagle.

New tools eyed for Philippine Eagle, Mindanao bleeding heart pigeon conservation

New spatial methods to conserve the critically endangered Philippine eagle are being used for the first time, which will also benefit conservation management efforts for the vulnerable Mindanao bleeding heart pigeon, primarily in the Eastern Mindanao Biodiversity Corridor.

This was revealed during a recent webinar on Philippine Eagle range metrics and spatial conservation planning organized by the Biodiversity Corridor Project under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility.

Together with the Philippine Eagle Foundation based in Davao City in Eastern Mindanao and The Peregrine Fund based in Boise, Idaho, USA, the webinar last 30 September cited earlier technical reports on space-time home range estimates and resource selection for the national bird – one of the biggest raptors in the world.

Primary resource speakers were the PEF's Dr. Jayson Ibañez and The Peregrine Fund's Dr. Luke Sutton, UK-based ornithologist and

montane forest botanist, who were the main authors of earlier scientific reports on novel processes and approaches on Philippine Eagle telemetry and range estimates.

Density estimate

“For the first time, we determine two important spatial processes for this critically endangered raptor that can help in directing conservation management,” Sutton said in the reports. “Rather than employing a single home range estimator, we recommend that analysts consider multiple approaches to animal movement data to fully explore space-time and resource use.”

Quantifying home range size and habitat resource selection have been important elements in wildlife ecology. They are useful for informing conservation actions, especially with regard to the Philippine Eagle.

Based on their latest inferred habitat, the current global population estimate of the Philippine Eagle is 352 breeding pairs, or 704 mature individuals across the Philippine Eagle global range.

MR CONFESOR





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New tracking tool for PHL eagle introduced

By MANUEL T. CAYON

DAVAO CITY—Government and global raptors' conservation program are introducing "new spatial methods to conserve the critically endangered Philippine eagle are being used for the first time" to allow greater tracking of the movement of the eagle and help conservationists plot the direction and range estimates of the eagle in the wild.

The new methods would also likely benefit the conservation program for the vulnerable Mindanao bleeding heart pigeon (*Gallicolumba crinigera*), a bird endemic to the country and could be found only in Mindanao, Basilan, Samar, Leyte and Bohol.

The use of the new method was bared during a recent webinar on Philippine eagle range metrics and spatial conservation planning organized by the Biodiversity Corridor Project, under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme,

and the Global Environment Facility.

The Philippine Eagle Foundation and the Peregrine Fund also sponsored the webinar, which described the new program as "using remote sensing data to model population distribution in Eastern Mindanao Biodiversity Corridor."

Resource speakers Philippine Eagle Foundation's Dr. Jayson Ibañez and Peregrine Fund's Dr. Luke Sutton cited earlier technical reports on space-time home range estimates and resource selection for the national bird, which is one of the biggest raptors in the world.

"For the first time, we determine two important spatial processes for this critically endangered raptor that can help in directing conservation management," Sutton said, citing the report.

"Rather than employing a single home range estimator, we recommend that analysts consider multiple approaches to animal movement data to fully explore space-time and resource use," he said.

Sutton said the reports quantified home-range size and habitat resource selection, which he said have been important elements in wildlife ecology, useful for informing conservation action especially for the Philippine Eagle, while many home-range estimators and habitat resource selection functions are currently in use.

"However, both methods are fraught with analytical issues inherent within autocorrelated movement data from irregular sampling and interpretation of resource selection model parameters to inform conservation management," he pointed out.

Sutton explained: "Here, we apply satellite telemetry and remote sensing technologies to provide first estimates of home-range size and resource selection for six adult Philippine eagles [*Pithecophaga jefferyi*], using five home range estimators and non-parametric resource selection functions."

Using space-time autocorrelated kernel density estimate to measure the largest median 95 percent home-range size (68 kms) and a 50 percent

core range (13 kms) for the Philippine Eagle, "from the resource selection functions, all adults used areas high in photosynthetic leaf and canopy structure but avoided areas of old growth biomass and denser areas of vegetation, possibly due to foraging forays into fragmented areas away from nesting sites," he said.

To note, priority conservation areas and a global population estimate for the Philippine Eagle were derived from earlier modelled range metrics using remote sensing habitat characteristics.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List uses three range metrics that define species distributions and inform extinction risk assessments: extent of occurrence, area of occupancy and area of habitat.

"However, calculating all three metrics using standard IUCN approaches relies on a geographically representative sample of locations, which for rare species is often spatially biased," the report said.



FEMALE Philippine eagle named "Bangsa Rae" was rescued in Lanao del Sur early this year. BARMENRE FILE PHOTO

"Here, we apply model-based interpolation using Species Distribution Models (SDMs), correlating occurrences with remote-sensing covariates, to calculate IUCN range metrics, protected area coverage and a global population estimate for the Philippine Eagle, with their final range wide continuous SDM having high predictive accuracy [using Continuous Boyce Index]," the report added.

Sutton said current global population estimate is 352 breeding pairs, or 704 mature individuals across the Philippine eagle global range based on latest inferred habitat.

Sutton is a UK-based ornithologist and montane forest botanist, and together with Ibañez, authored earlier scientific reports on novel processes and approaches on Philippine eagle telemetry and range estimates.



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Mga tamaraw sa Mindoro nanganganib mawala

Mahigit 100 na tamaraw ang tinatayang nawala o nabawas sa Oriental at Occidental Mindoro.

Ang datos na ito ay mula sa Oriental Mindoro Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO).

Noong 2018, mayroon pang 523 tamaraw na naitala subalit sa kasalukuyan ay nasa 403 na lamang ang mga ito.

Isa umanong sanhi kaya nalalagas ang lahi ng mga tamaraw ay sa kadahilanang may mga nakakalusot na illegal hunters.

Dagdag pa ay ang pagiging maiksi na buhay ng tamaraw na tumatagal lamang ng 15 taon.

Sa Mt. Iglit-Baco National Park na isang protected area, naninirahan ang mga tamaraw.

Gumagawa ng paraan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources para mabigyan ng proteksyon ang mga tamaraw. Tuwing buwan ng Oktubre ay ipinagdiriwang ang Special Month for the Conservation and Protection of Tamaraw sa Mindoro.



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USAID fetes 4 outstanding marine protected areas in Palawan

The US government, through the United States Agency for International Development and the Provincial Government of Palawan, recognized four of the province's best marine protected areas at the second annual Palawan MPA Summit held on 20 September in Puerto Princesa City.

USAID Philippines Deputy Mission Director Rebekah Eubanks and Palawan Governor Victorino Dennis Socrates presented the "Palawan MPAs Empowered through Awards and Recognition to Enrich Marine Life" Award to four USAID-supported MPAs located in Coron, Calamian Islands.

The Siete Pecados Marine Park was named Best Managed MPA, while the San Jose MPA was named Best Emerging MPA. The Balisungan MPA and the Bulalaco MPA were also recognized as Best Community-Managed MPA and as Best Locally Managed MPA, respectively. The Calamianes MPA Network – an

inter-LGU alliance between Busuanga, Coron, Culion, and Linapacan – also received a special award.

MPAs help protect the Philippines from threats such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing that endanger the livelihoods and well-being of coastal communities.

"Since 2018, USAID Fish Right has supported local governments and communities in the Calamian archipelago to address biodiversity threats, improve marine ecosystem governance, advance sustainable fisheries management and increase fish biomass," Deputy Mission Director Eubanks said.

During the summit, USAID led discussions on environmental law enforcement, the promotion of livelihood and biodiversity-friendly enterprises in MPAs, and community engagement to rehabilitate MPAs affected by super typhoon "Odette" last year.

Eubanks also met with government officials and stakeholders from the Kalayaan Island Group to discuss IUU fishing threats in their area of the West Philippine Sea. During a visit to the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, she was able to exchange ideas with members of the local community who were able to start an environmental fund for conservation activities within the national park by participating in community-managed savings and credit associations supported by USAID. She also met several civil society organizations working on conservation in Palawan.

For more than 60 years, USAID has worked with the Philippine government and local organizations to achieve shared development goals, investing more than P247.5 billion (\$5.1 billion) to support the Philippines since 1961.





How Tulumán women are reinventing organic farming

Based on initial findings, the kit can help reduce biodegradable waste by 87 percent in six weeks. Daquioag said crops undergoing the CAS treatment turn out to be heavier and bigger, with more nutrients by as much as 32 percent.

BY JUN AGUIRRE

*"Lapit, mga kaibigan at makinig kayo
Ako'y may dala-dalang balita galing sa bayan ko
Nais kong ipamahagi ang mga kwento
At mga pangyayaring nagaganap sa lupang
ipinangako." — Asin*

Tulumán — Several women in Tulumán, North Cotabato are currently reinventing organic farming, working to produce much-needed alternative fertilizer in just three days using food waste that can be used for smarter, healthier and more organic agriculture.

Lorie Pablo Daquioag, a satellite engineer, has introduced what she calls a Compost Activator Solution, a planting kit solution that processes waste into fertilizer. She developed the product as she was developing her start-up enterprise known as Waste for Good, spearheading the research in collaboration with a group of experts coming from the agriculture industry, engineering, and marketing, among others.

Daquioag, who traces her roots to Tubungan, Iloilo, said the inspiration for her product innovation is the Bokashi balls, a Japanese system that "binds" food waste and converts it to fertilizer for garden soil.

According to Philippine waste volume data, in 2021 the country generated 56.12 million tons of biodegradable waste. Some 10.45 million tons came from urban households.

Daquioag's planting kit package includes 1,000 ml of CAS, an up-cycled waste bucket with 15 liters' capacity, three packs of seeds, 10 pieces of planting pots, compost soil and a 250-ml measuring cup.

Based on initial findings, the kit can help reduce biodegradable waste by 87 percent in six weeks. Daquioag said crops undergoing the CAS treatment turn out to be heavier and bigger, with more nutrients by as much as 32 percent.

"Currently, every urban mom can spend at least a cost-efficient \$79 a year using the W4G planting kit," she added. "In return, they could have savings of as much as \$200 a year from buying veggies and utilizing the 482 kilograms per year of bio-waste used for organic farming."

The kit can be applied not only to food waste but also to paper, leaves and other similar waste products. And it abolishes the usual three weeks' waiting time for tedious composting.



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As a result, users can harvest crops in 48 days – the harvest 32 percent larger and 30 percent faster compared to other solutions offered at present, Daquioag said.

Practical solutions

The W4G has a pending proposal with the Department of Science and Technology to further develop the project.

“Since I was a child, I have been fond of finding solutions to certain problems. I got used to fixing furniture, redesigning clothes, and even repairing our electrical circuits at home. Eventually, I studied engineering in college. That’s where we tackled solving problems and offering practical solutions,” Daquioag said.

She underwent further training for her research as a space engineer for the Philippine Maya Satellite, where she explored a variety of data on emissions in the atmosphere.

“At the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, I realized I needed something to do to solve issues that hound the environment,” she said.

She decided to embark on her long-held idea of developing her own smart bin or intelligent waste management system.

That’s how she came up with CAS. She was then encouraged to apply for the Ashoka grant, a program that helps institutions develop high-impact social entrepreneurs in the Philippines and in the whole of ASEAN.

“I am thankful a lot to Ashoka for considering me as their fellow. My problem-solving skills were sharpened after I attended several of their trainings on social entrepreneurship,” Daquioag said.

Social entrepreneurship

Tulunan is the first municipality to try out CAS. Maria Lourdes Limbungan, Tulunan’s municipal administrator, said that they wanted to optimize Daquioag’s project not only to solve the community’s waste problems but also to help provide livelihood to local women.

“We the LGU have offered to Engineer Lorie our old sanitary landfill as her demo farm, especially in the area of the open dumpsite. We have a group of women dubbed TUWID (Tulunan Unified Women’s Initiative for Development) that aims to harvest plants such as bell peppers, pumpkins and papaya trees from the organic farms as part of our barangay-based social entrepreneurship programs.”

Most of the women beneficiaries of the project were victims of the 6.6-magnitude earthquake that hit the region on 29 October 2019.

To expand the project, the LGU plans to make pickled papaya, chili sauce, and pastes and noodles. “The project will also help us in our feeding programs for children,” Limbungan said.

In its upcoming fiesta this November, Tulunan will recognize Daquioag as one of its outstanding residents for her contributions to the town.

Waste management

For his part, John Bernabe Baylan, sanitary inspector of the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office, said he believes Daquioag’s technology can help alleviate the problems of waste management in their town.

“Several months ago, our sanitary landfill was ordered closed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Central Office because of technicalities. We see hope for the W4G to help us in our waste problems.”

Of Tulunan’s 29 barangays, only seven are lowland

areas. “We’re having a hard time bringing our solid waste management programs to the hinterland areas. We hope that Engineer Lorie’s project can help us address these challenges,” said Baylan.

Janet Tabugan, 47, a massage therapist, helps gather indigenous materials needed for the composting kit. Part of her work is to deploy micro traps to capture microorganisms in the hinterlands. She is one of many local women now involved in this pioneering social entrepreneurship project.

“Great change starts in ourselves,” Daquioag said. “It starts with our own mindset and roots and goes out to our own networks and our environment. Establishing new systems or changing established systems is not easy and impossible to do alone. But we can do it. And we should strive not only to lead, but also to leave a trail to be followed by the next generations.”





PH pasok na friendliest; Boracay nangungunang isla sa Asya

Nakakuha ng boto bilang isa sa 10 pinakamagiliw na bansa sa mundo ang Pilipinas sa 2022 Condé Nast Traveler (CNT) Readers' Choice Awards.

Mula sa rank ng halos quarter ng isang milyong CNT na mambabasa, nakakuha rin ang bansa ng back-to-back wins bilang ang luxury travel magazine na pinangalanang Boracay bilang "top island" sa Asia at Palawan bilang ikawalo.

"Just making it into the top 10, the Philippines (made up of around 7,641 islands) inclusion is proof that the famous Filipino hospitality is alive and kicking," pahayag ng Conde Nast noong October 4 kasabay ng mailabas ang mga nagwagi ng awards.

"Madalas na pinupuri ang bansa dahil sa tila walang kahirap-hirap nitong kakayahang magbigay ng tunay na mabuting pakikitungo sa mga bisita, dayuhan o expatriates.

Itinuturing ng maraming tao na ang Banaue Rice Terraces dito ay ang 'Eighth Wonder of the World', kahit na maraming iba pang mga beauty spot ang marami. Dito. Ang mga isla ay puno ng maringal na mga bundok, mga dekorasyong

Argentina at Switzerland, at iba pa.

Samantala, sinabi naman ito ni Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco bilang welcome development na muling nagpapatibay sa pagsisikap ng Department of Tourism (DOT) na iposisyon ang Pilipinas bilang pangunahing destinasyon sa Asya.

"Ang mga pagkilalang tulad nito ay nagpapatibay sa ating pagsisikap na ipahayag hindi lamang ang mga likas na kababalaghan ng ating bansa kundi maging ang ating kahandaang maging pangunahing destinasyon ng mga

turista sa Asya. Ang Kagawaran ay kaisa sa lahat ng ating mga stakeholder sa turismo, mula sa mga local government unit, private sector partner, at ating kapwa sa pagdiriwang ng mga tagumpay na ito para sa Pilipinas mula sa Condé Nast Traveler," aniya noong Miyerkoles. **(Betchai Julian)**



simbahan at malalawak na mabuhanging dalampasigan," dagdag nito.

Bukod sa pagiging isa sa pinakamakaibigan, ang Pilipinas ay tinanghal din bilang ika-30 pinakamahusay na bansa para pasyalan na nakakuha ng 86.66 at tinalo ang Costa Rica, Belize, Germany, Malta, Indonesia, Mexico, France,



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'Grow Trees Community': All the way to Hamilo Coast

SM Foundation Inc. the social good arm of the SM group, and the Fast Retailing Foundation, a general incorporated foundation in Japan, formally launched the "Grow Trees Community" project in Nasugbu, Batangas on 27 September as the first stop of three provinces for their "treescaping" and reforestation initiative.

The Grow Trees Community project aims to plant and grow trees across the Philippines while helping create livelihood opportunities by working closely with the people's organizations in the communities. The project also joins hands with Costa del Hamilo Inc., Manila Southcoast Development Inc. and the local government of Nasugbu.

"The core of our program is to go beyond planting trees," said Cristie S. Angeles, SM Foundation Assistant Vice President for Livelihood. "It also addresses the social and economic needs of communities by providing them with the means to engage in agroforestry. With this in mind, we want to build a strong foundation to keep growing communities by fostering collaboration and leadership in caring for the environment."

"Facilitating sustainable development is one of the core activities of FR Foundation and we support this program to further promote environmental stewardship, preservation and the economic development among communities," said Yoshio Ishida, FR Foundation's Secretary-General. "We are delighted to partner with SM Foundation who has an extensive experience in

community development and tree planting programs in the Philippines."

Some 8,400 Palawan Cherry blossom trees, locally known as balayong and the bell-shaped *Tabebuia* pink flowering trees are being planted along the 7-kilometer Tarnate-Nasugbu road leading to Hamilo Coast.

The project is also seen to enhance prospects for eco-tourism and, in turn, generate jobs for the community.

"This endeavor will definitely boost eco-tourism here in Nasugbu, with the flowering trees creating a picturesque view of the property," said Franklin M. Bolalin, Assistant Vice President for Hamilo Estate Management. "This will promote not just Hamilo Coast, but also the local community, with no other property hosting this vast array of Palawan Cherry and other flowering trees."

Since 2007, Hamilo Coast has looked after one of the largest mangrove forests in the province of Batangas in partnership with WWF Philippines. The 24-hectare mangrove belt is covered by lush 50,000 mangrove trees.

Three of Hamilo Coast's coves, namely Pico de Loro, Etayo, and Santelmo, have been declared as Marine Protected Areas since 2009.

The sites serve as marine sanctuaries for diverse marine animals and a resilient locale for migratory and unique species of birds, now totaling 96, which includes the vulnerable Philippine eagle-owl (*Bubo philippensis*).

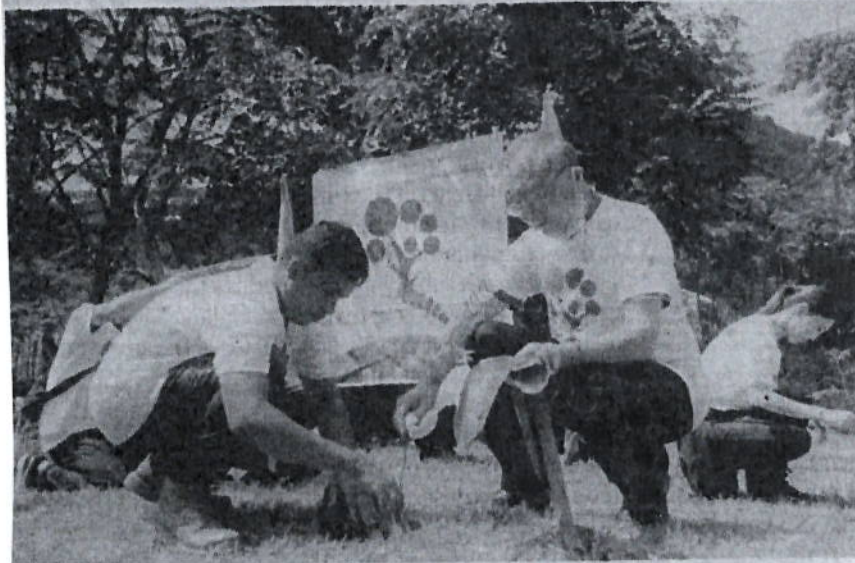
The presence of more trees in these areas will act as a natural protection against erosion and help absorb planet-warming greenhouse gases.

Grow Trees Community is in support of the SM Green Movement, which aims to improve the quality of life of communities through sustainable solutions that promote a green planet, green living and a green culture.

FR Foundation focuses on promoting research designed to help make the world a better place, spurring technological development, nurturing human resources, and supporting socially vulnerable individuals or groups.

It is part of Fast Retailing Co. Ltd., the leading Japanese retail company that owns well-loved casual wear brand Uniqlo.

Since 2007, Hamilo Coast has looked after one of the largest mangrove forests in the province of Batangas in partnership with WWF Philippines.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SM

FR FOUNDATION Secretary-General Yoshio Ishida (right) plants flowering trees at the launch of Grow Trees Community in Nasugbu, Batangas.





ONCE KNOWN AS "LOWLY," BAMBOO IS SHOWING ITS SUPERIORITY AND IS MAKING A BIG COMEBACK

'Construction material of the future'

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

MORE and more Filipinos are becoming interested in planting the once known as "lowly bamboo" as it is making a big comeback in housing construction, some even calling it the "grass of hope."

This giant grass species has been used for generations by Filipinos in building their traditional bahaykubo, or nipa hut.

They make use of bamboo poles to construct bridges, foundation for big structures and braces, walls or perimeter fences.

It is also used to make tables and chairs and other furniture.

However, the popularity of bamboo was diminished by cement and other durable construction materials, such as steel, fiberglass and plastics.

Resurgence

IN recent years, bamboo has become popular again and is even widely accepted for interior design even among professional builders.

This realization, plus the fact that bamboo is easy to grow, is helping improve the condition of river banks, prevent soil erosion and flooding.

It prompted the government to identify bamboo as "a must" planting material for the National Greening Program to promote its massive cultivation and maximize its potential.

In June 2022, President Duterte signed Proclamation 1401 declaring September as the Philippine Bamboo Month.

Promoting bamboo

LAST month, a global leader in bamboo-based research and technology, Base Bahay Foundation (Base), kicked

off the celebration with a session in an Architecture and Design Forum series, called "Bamboost," that highlighted green technology and the use of bamboo in construction.

Professional builders and bamboo enthusiasts converged at the Green Sun in Makati City to hear local and international experts in the field speak on local and international bamboo architecture and design.

Of course, they promote bamboo as a construction material.

Learning series

THE Bamboost Architecture and Design Forum was part of Base's learning series for bamboo construction enthusiasts.

The foundation has been conducting free training programs for professional builders, such as architects and civil engineers, under its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) learning series.

It gives a head start in anticipation of the standardization of bamboo construction and design and mainstreaming of bamboo in building codes.

Base is working with the Association of Structural Engineers of the Philippines (Asep) to include bamboo in the next version of the National Structural Code of the Philippines.

Alternative building technologies

AN initiative of Liechtenstein-based Hilti Foundation, Base continues to provide alternative building technologies to enable a network of partners to build quality socialized homes that are comfortable, affordable, disaster-resilient, ecologically friendly, and with social impact.

To date, Base has built more than 1,000 homes using its proprietary Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology,



sheltering about 5,000 individuals in 14 communities across the Philippines.

Internationally, Base is pipelined to build disaster-resilient houses in Nepal.

Bamboo experts

SPEAKERS during the forum include Jörg Stamm, a Colombia-based bamboo construction specialist and trainer. He is widely known for his design and construction of engineered bamboo structures in different countries.

Other speakers were Munir Vahanvati, Ray Villanueva, Christian Salandanan and Base Head of Technology Luis Felipe Lopez.

Munir Vahanvati, an architect and urban designer who has worked with bamboo for over 15 years on a wide range of projects in product and building design, large-scale infrastructure and urban regeneration projects, is co-founder of Green Grass. He is focused on community development using bamboo.

Meanwhile, Filipino-American architect Villanueva is co-founder of the Kawayan Collective, a facility that supplies, treats and sells construction-grade bamboo with the objective of elevating the Philippine bamboo as modern building material to provide better homes for Filipinos.

Multi-awarded Filipino architect Salandanan, widely known for his work with bamboo, continues to advocate in his stories in local and international architecture and design publications, bamboo.

Reliable, durable construction material

"OVER 1,200 species of bamboo are abundant across the Philippines and technology and engineering continue

to optimize its use as a reliable and durable construction material," explained Lopez in a news release

"Through intensive research and innovations with our network of partners in the Base Innovation Center, we continue to elevate the use of bamboo and build durable houses for the community using our Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology (CBFT)," Lopez added.

For his part, Base President Maricen Jalandoni said: "As more of our professional builders opt to use bamboo in construction, we are helping to build a circular economy—from the farmers who harvest and individuals who process bamboo to builders engaged in construction."

He added: "With our initiatives, we are committed to bringing a positive impact on the lives of every family and supporting the community sustainably."

Bamboo advocacy

INTERVIEWED by the BUSINESSMIRROR on September 22, Edgardo Manda, president of the Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc., said bamboo is becoming popular again.

"If you will look at Facebook as a platform of its popularity, you will see active discussions about bamboo. Their advocacy, plan to propagate, even in carving. Even the United Architects of the Philippines are becoming involved now," said Manda, whose bamboo advocacy became known during his stint as Laguna Lake Development Authority General Manager.

Manda has been actively promoting the propagation and cultivation of bamboo through various speaking engagements, sharing his knowledge and experience, in various parts of the country.

Increasing enthusiasm

THE enthusiasm about bamboo, he said, comes only after the realization that bamboo has many uses.

The increase in interest in bamboo in many provinces, like in Mindanao, Manda said, was a result of private initiatives.

"Some are interested in cultivation, some in propagation and some in export items. But all these are private initiatives," he said.

Unfortunately, Manda said there's a need to support the propagation and cultivation of bamboo like other cash crops.

"What is happening is 'token involvement.' What we really need is a national program," he told the BUSINESSMIRROR in Filipino.

Agricultural commodity

ACCORDING to Manda, bamboo is slowly being recognized as an agricultural commodity.

While it is known as a lowly construction material, he said the leaves is also popular as feed for big ruminants.

As food, Filipinos also cook and consume bamboo shoots, known as "labong," like other vegetables.

To make it a popular agricultural commodity, he said government agencies like the Department of Agriculture and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) should work together to promote bamboo and establish plantations in areas where they are suited to grow.

Right now, he said, there are only a few areas in the Philippines with vast areas planted to bamboo and there is no commercial plantation.

Government support

ACCORDING to Manda, the government should take the lead for the



Philippines to grab a foothold in the global bamboo market and eventually, become one of the main players.

A national program on bamboo is also needed to initiate a massive campaign and provide the necessary capacity-building activities to support the industry.

"If you want to be the main player in the global trade of \$60 billion annually, the government should take the lead and focus it like other agricultural commodities like coffee and cacao," Manda said.

Tree farms of Tomorrow

INDEED, bamboo is the best alternative, not only to construction but to other types of wood, said Gregg Yan, an environmental advocate and founder of Best Alternatives Campaign.

He said bamboo tree farms may become the tree farms of tomorrow."

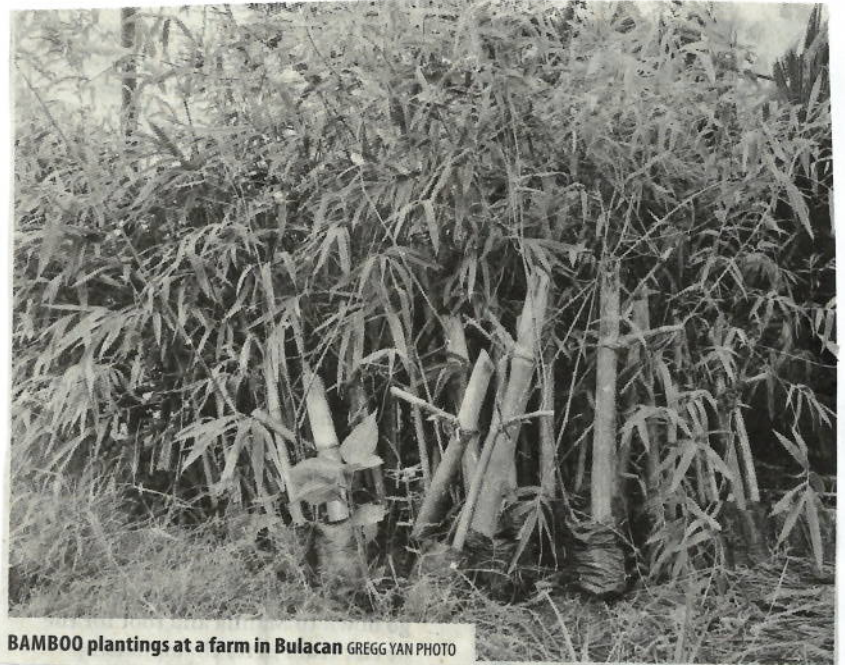
"Bamboo is the best alternative to other types of wood because it grows amazingly fast, with some species growing over a meter per day. Since bamboo is a type of grass, harvesting its shoots will not kill it. Meaning a bamboo grove can be harvested sustainably for years on end," Yan told the BUSINESSMIRROR via Messenger on October 5.

He added that bamboo poles are incredibly resilient.

"Under proper conditions, bamboo can be harder than steel, making it an alternative construction material." He said.

Yan said native bamboo groves make excellent habitats for fauna, so a bamboo farm can bring back biodiversity, not just profit.

"We don't need to keep inventing the construction materials of the future. Sometimes, we just need to turn to nature for answers," he pointed out.



BAMBOO plantings at a farm in Bulacan GREGG YAN PHOTO



BUHO bamboo with the famous Mt. Binakayan at the background. PHILIPPINE BAMBOO FOUNDATION INC. PHOTO



BOLO bamboo is endemic in the watershed of Sierra Madre Mountain Range.

PHILIPPINE BAMBOO FOUNDATIO, INC



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World Bank spent almost \$15 billion on fossil fuel projects since Paris deal

WASHINGTON, United States (AFP) — The World Bank has pumped \$14.8 billion into fossil fuel projects globally in the period following the landmark Paris climate accord, a report said Thursday.

Though the multilateral lender pledged in 2018 to end financing for upstream oil and gas, and direct funding had declined, the move failed to include indirect financing, according to the report compiled by an NGO coalition called The Big Shift Global.

It comes amid growing pressure on US President Joe Biden to fire World Bank chief David Malpass, a Trump appointee who has dodged questions about the reality of human-driven climate change.

"Each time the World Bank invests in another fossil fuel project, it fuels more climate disaster," said Sophie Richmond of Big Shift. "There is no justification for using taxpayers' money to exacerbate the climate crisis."

One of the main ways the Bank continued to fund fossil fuels was by exploiting a "major loophole" by lending to intermediaries such as banks or financial institutions and by acting as a guarantor in case a country did not meet its obligations, the report said.

Under the 2015 Paris deal, world leaders committed to limiting long-term warming to 1.5 Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) to avert devastating outcomes for the planet's future habitability.

The biggest project listed in the report, called "Investing in Climate Disaster: World Bank Finance for Fossil Fuels," was the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline in Azerbaijan, funded in 2018 to the tune of \$1.1 billion, with the Bank acting



File AFP photo of a massive coal-fired power plant in Cilegon, Indonesia

as a guarantor.

"It serves to perpetuate on-going use of fossil gas in Europe," the report said, while noting that while the pipeline may increase gas export revenues, market volatility makes it an unreliable source of income.

The World Bank Group's own assessment stated the project was "expected to have potentially significant adverse social and environmental impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented" -- but it gave a green light anyway.

Coal plants

Another project highlighted was the construction of two coal plants in Indonesia called Java 9 and 10, where the Bank supplied \$65 million in indirect funds -- despite the fact that the Java and Bali grid is already experiencing 40 percent oversupply of electricity.

"It is obvious that the new Java 9 & 10 coal-fired power plants will bring more disaster in terms of environmental, social and health issues, in an

area already covered with coal plants and industries," said Yuyun Indradi of Trend Asia, an NGO that promotes clean energy.

The report's authors also rejected the Bank's treatment of natural gas as a "bridge" between fossil fuels and renewable energy, saying it crowded out needed investments in clean energy.

In a statement to AFP, the World Bank said, "We dispute the findings of the report: it makes inaccurate assumptions about the World Bank Group's lending.

"In fiscal year 2022, the Bank Group delivered a record \$31.7 billion for climate-related investments, to help communities around the world respond to the climate crisis, and build a safer and cleaner future."

A separate report published by Oxfam earlier this week said the World Bank "supplies very little evidence to support its claims about the amount of climate finance it provides," leaving the public to take their figures "on faith."



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Mayor Binay presents Makati climate change initiatives in Germany forum

By PATRICK ELY GARCIA

Makati City Mayor Abby Binay presented the city's initiatives to address climate emergency and its investments in climate change adaptation and mitigation at a climate change forum in Bonn, Germany on Thursday, Oct. 6.

Binay was chosen as a speaker for Daring Cities 2022, a global virtual forum of urban leaders focusing on climate emergency finance challenges local governments face worldwide.

The forum was organized by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, where the mayor is also a member of its Global Executive Committee.

"We have made climate change mitigation and adaptation a priority. We have identified key action areas and are working on both short-term and long-term plans as well as an all-of-society approach that engages our citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders," Binay said.

"I am confident that, by sharing

best practices and working together, we can make our cities more resilient to the impacts of climate change," she added.

In a Youtube video posted on ICLEI's channel, Binay underscored the importance of correct financing of local government units (LGUs) throughout the world in the creation and improvement of their climate change response initiatives, as well as the benefits of engaging in public-private partnerships in the creation of such efforts just like what is being done in Makati.

On Aug. 5, Binay sounded the alarm and declared a state of climate emergency in the city as she called for a whole-of-society approach in responding to the still growing issues of climate change in the country and in the world.

"As temperatures and sea levels continue to rise, low-lying coastal areas in cities like Makati have become more vulnerable to strong typhoons that bring floods and landslides. This

will result not only in the disruption of public services but also in the displacement of families and even entire communities," Binay said during a webinar organized by the Makati Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO).

Based on data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), there has been a 0.75 degrees Celsius increase in the country's annual temperature over the past 70 years and by 2050, the temperature increase is expected to reach as high as 1.8 degrees Celsius.

Binay then laid out her administration's programs and initiatives aiming to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in the city which includes the procurement of electric vehicles (e-vehicles) to be used by the city government, the installation of solar panels in public schools and government offices to minimize energy consumption, and ensuring the continuity of services during calamities.



Climate migration: Floods displace millions of villagers in Indonesia

BY DITA ALANGKARA
& VICTORIA MILKO
The Associated Press

MONDOLIKO, Indonesia—All the crops had died and the farmed fish had escaped their ponds. The only road to the village was flooded and the water just kept getting higher, says Asiyah, 38, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

She knew that she had to leave her home on Java's northern coast, just as many fellow villagers had done months earlier. So about two years ago, after agonizing over the decision for months, she told her husband it was time to go and started to pack.

Java, home to some 145 million people and the Indonesian capital Jakarta, is the most populated island in the world. Scientists say parts of the island will be entirely lost to the sea in the coming years.

Much has been written about the sinking capital, which is being moved partially due to destructive flooding. Other parts of the country with persistent flooding have received less attention.

Some 300 miles (500 kilometers) from Jakarta, entire villages along the Java Sea are submerged in murky brown water. Experts say rising seas and stronger tides as a result of climate change are some of the causes. Gradual sinking of the land and development are also to blame.

Mondoliko, where Asiyah is from, is one of those villages.

Asiyah smiles as she describes what Mondoliko was like when she was young: Lush green rice paddies, tall coconuts trees and red chili bushes grew around the some 200 homes people lived in. She and other children would play in the local soccer field, watching snakes glide through the grass while butterflies flew through the air.

"Everyone had land," she says. "We were all able to grow and have what we needed."

But around 10 years ago, the water came—sporadically and a few inches high at first. Within a few years it became a constant presence. Unable to grow in salt water, the crops and plants all died. With no land left as the water got higher, the insects and animals disappeared.

Asiyah says she and other villagers adapted the best they could: Farmers swapped their crops for fish ponds; people used dirt or concrete to raise the floors of their homes above the water. Net fences

were put in yards to catch the trash the tide would bring in.

For seven years Asiyah, her husband Aslari, 42, and their two children lived with the floods, the water getting higher every year. But they noticed changes as well: Neighbors were leaving their homes behind in search of drier land. The call to prayer at the village mosque went quiet. Even new fish ponds became futile, the water rising so high that the fish would jump over the nets.

She remembers the day she decided they had to leave her lifelong home. Her father, who lived with them, had been battling bone cancer and prostate issues, and some days he was so frail he couldn't stand. Her son was getting bigger and faced an increasingly difficult, waterlogged commute to school over 2 miles (about 3 kilometers) away.

"I was worried when the road flooded—how can we go about our daily lives?" she remembers wondering to herself. "The kids can't go to school or play with their friends.... We can't live like this."



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Restaurants must help conserve Mother Nature

Last Oct. 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, YouTube Originals premiered the documentary "The Letter: A Message for Our Earth," which includes a plea from Pope Francis for everyone to take action against climate change.

Experts estimate that by 2050, some 1.2 billion people will be displaced globally due to climate change. According to the United Nations Climate Programme, we are in a "code red for humanity." Global average temperatures are on the rise and predicted to exceed 3 degrees Celsius this century. This means catastrophic consequences, which we have already started to experience in different parts of the world.

Painful impact

We have all felt this impact in terms of the greater damage from natural disasters and greater effect on food production.

Winemakers alone have been terribly hit. In 2021, French winemakers produced a third less wine after the grape harvest plunged 29 percent due to extreme weather, frost and disease during the spring and summer. Many of France's most important wine regions such as Bordeaux, Champagne and Languedoc-Roussillon were adversely affected by off-season spring frost. It was so bad that the country's minister for agriculture, Julien Denor-



FIRST CLASS

MARGAUX SALCEDO

mandie, described the grape and fruit crop devastation as "probably the greatest agricultural catastrophe of the beginning of the 21st century."

The numbers presented are that world greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be cut by 30 gigatons annually by 2030 to limit temperature rise to 1.5 C, which is needed to halt the worst impact.

Industry effort

Every effort counts, especially from the restaurant industry. Food production and service industries are responsible for up to 30 percent of the world's GHG emissions. More specifically, the food system contributes 19-29 percent of total emissions. The energy that goes into the production, harvesting, transporting and packaging of that wasted food generates more than 3.3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂). Hence, large-scale indus-



When the brand stands up for something like sustainability, this can boost brand presence and be good for business

trial change can have an effective impact to counter climate change.

Here are some actions that restaurants can take:

Stand up for sustainability. Studies have observed that even for restaurants, when the brand stands up for something like sustainability, this can boost brand presence and be good for business.

Impose climate change surcharge. In California, to combat the restaurant industry's carbon footprint, some restaurateurs have initiated a surcharge to raise funds to stabilize renewable farming practices in the state. For example, Mission Chinese Food restaurant in San Francisco already charges its customers

Restaurants must (see page 2)



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a 3-percent "CO₂ offset" fee on a purely optional basis (but nobody opts out!). If 1 percent of restaurants in California could implement the 1-percent surcharge, the fund would raise \$10 million for renewable farming practices. If all of the restaurants in California could implement it, the budget would be closer to \$1 billion.

Support climavorism. A climavore is someone who eats eco-friendly food and makes daily food choice a call to action. This is actually an effort of consumers, not just restaurateurs. But restaurants can also adapt to the shift in behavior by serving food sourced from farms that are mindful of sustainable practices.

Go plant-based. Studies have shown a strong correlation between climate change and the production of animal-based foods. Over half of the emissions of the restaurant industry come from raising and processing livestock. Beef has now become the biggest agricultural threat to our environment because its production creates almost four times more GHG emissions than that of pork. In fact, beef production requires 20 times more land and releases 20 times more GHG than plant-based protein. Not-so-fun fact: global beef production releases as much GHG into our atmosphere as the en-

tire country of India. Hence, the UN Environment Programme's International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management has stated that a global shift toward vegan diet is vital to protecting the world from the worst impact of climate change.

Consider carbon farming. This is a farming method that allows carbon to be absorbed by the soil. According to a soil scientist at Ohio State University, a mere 2-percent increase in the carbon content of the planet's soils could offset 100 percent of all GHG going into the atmosphere.

Eliminate or at least reduce food waste. Food consumption accounts for anywhere between 15-50 percent of GHG. Even if 30-40 percent of food produced around the world is not consumed or simply spoils after harvest or during transportation, emissions associated with food waste could soar from 0.5 gigatons of CO₂ equivalent per year to between 1.9-2.5 gigatons annually by midcentury.

Eliminate or at least reduce plastic waste. This is the simplest and most actionable step a restaurant can take to shrink its carbon footprint and stop unnecessary waste from ending up in landfills or the ocean. Banning single-use plastic may not be possible—but

reducing plastic waste can be achieved easily. Some steps that may be taken: replace plastic cutlery and packaging with biodegradable alternatives; add small signs at self-serve stations to ask customers to take only what they need; and only give out cutlery and straws when asked.

For online orders, add a checkbox to request cutlery, if needed.

Buy local. By supporting local farms and vendors, restaurants can reduce carbon footprint by reducing reliance on long-distance delivery. Traveling results in the constant release of GHG, but the problem can be solved simply by finding local suppliers.

Use energy-efficient appliances. In the United States, lighting alone accounts for 6 percent of CO₂ emissions, and a global switch to LED lighting could offset 1.4 billion tons of CO₂. Hence, simpler and more cost-effective alternatives can have an incremental difference to both energy bills and carbon footprint, such as installing automated lighting and using energy-efficient LED bulbs.

These proposals may take a bit of an effort to initiate but once they are set to practice, people easily adjust. Mother Nature is too sick now to ignore. Let's all collaborate to combat climate change! INQ



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ROBINSONS MALLS' LARGER-THAN-LIFE COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY: Robinsons Galleria amplifies its efforts in raising awareness about environmental sustainability with the unveiling of its 1,000-square meter mural painted by popular artist Happy Navarro. Located at the mall's exterior walls facing Poveda street, the mural, which features visual elements about nature and its bounty, conveys the significance of caring for and protecting the environment now.



TITLE: sustainable tourism (and how to end)...

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Sustainable tourism (and how to end hotel toiletry hoarding)

By **Ira P. Pedrasa**
@InquirerBiz

When the pandemic struck, the earth breathed, they said. As people stayed inside their homes, generally shy bird species came to freely perch on trees and majestic sunsets colored the skies with fiery hues. At a quiet resort in Bohol, flustered owners tended to turtle hatchlings along the shoreline, the first of such occurrence in 20 years.

As people scramble to go back to their lifestyles halted in early 2020, the world, as a backdrop, has changed. It was an accidental benefit from the crisis, but it was a challenge nonetheless to hoteliers and business owners around the globe to keep up with the times.

It's that thing called sustainability, which to Greenview CEO Eric Ricaurte "is figuring out a way to do business better in various ways," because "we can't thrive as a planet." "So we need to figure out a better way to do things that are different to develop our economies and our businesses."

It's a mouthful, but it was already a recurring theme even before the pandemic, more so during the fifth Phuket Hotels for Islands Sustaining Tourism (PHIST) held last Sept. 26 in Phuket, Thailand, where stakeholders such as Greenview gathered for the first time after two years of holding the event online.

Greenview designs the sustainability programs of businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Perhaps a shot at humor, Ricaurte and the other officials of PHIST led by Phuket Hotels Association president Bjorn Courage faced each other onstage, not behind a white ta-

blecloth-covered desk, but on a *muay thai* arena wearing Thai boxing attire and debating about how businesses could "fight" climate change. It was a kind of spectacle and pageantry that the Thais are famous for when organizing events, but the theme, after all, is something where one should not hold punches.

Courage says sustainability should be a "language" and more than the token "reusing of towels [for more than a few times]" during a hotel stay.

Plastic straws are a thing of the past, and shampoo and lotion are now kept in dispensers instead of disposable packaging.

But sustainability should be more than a marketing ploy, he adds. "A lot of people do say they do certain things and then in hindsight, they're actually not doing it. I think people are getting smarter and smarter [seeing] through that, [and] that sustainability [now] becomes more second nature [to them]."

Consumers are also learning how to decipher performance from authentic sus-

tainability, according to Invest Islands CEO Kevin Deisser. He says he recognizes that younger people "would not go back to a hotel if they're disappointed by the level of sustainability practices they can see ... This shows a massive sign of changing the behavior in tourism."

Traceability

World Wildlife Fund Asia-Pacific regional lead in global seafood traceability Maggie Lee tells the Inquirer, "In this day and age, tourism without sustainability is no longer acceptable. What kind of product/service are we selling to our customers or guests, if we knowingly may damage the very environment we rely on? Sustainability is not only a selling point, but a necessity and prerequisite for our enjoyment of our beautiful planet, with or without the pandemic."

But how would a consumer distinguish marketing tactics from legitimate care for the environment? "Sustainability without traceability is just a



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SYNERGY At South Farm, workers build furniture, signages for sister resort, South Palms. The savings unlocked from sustainability measures are used to incentivize workers.



SOUTH FARM This agricultural estate in Panglao, Bohol, provides the food and other ingredients needed by sister resort, South Palms. Guests can also visit for other activities such as fishing. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



'BOXERS' Bjorn Courage (left) and Kevin Deisser (right) deliver verbal blows as they provide insights on issues facing the hotel industry.

promise. Traceability provides the certainty that what was promised is delivered," she says.

She cites, for example, the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability, a framework that allows consumers to know how or where the seafood they are eating on their plates at a restaurant or from a tin can had been sourced.

Expensive

But going "green" can be challenging for hotels and restaurants, hospitality industry stakeholders admit.

Ricaurte says production costs (say, more solar panels on roofs and movement sensors) can be expensive, but notes that benefits can nonetheless be far-reaching.

"Are production costs higher for sustainability? The general answer will be yes. However, in a similar way, there is an opportunity for a high cost and low cost for almost everything in a hotel that you buy. And it's a matter of looking at what is the value, what is the difference [in

terms of] profitability, guest satisfaction and so forth," he adds.

The same could be said for consumers who are willing to pay more for sustainability, Lee adds.

"It definitely is much more important to the hospitality industry, especially high price-point establishments, to embody and provide seafood traceability for their guests," she says, for example.

She adds Asia's hotels still have room for growth when it comes to sustainability, but notes how the Philippines "sets the right example for the world." She cites the closure of Boracay for six months in 2018 to allow its idyllic beaches to recover from overdevelopment.

Bohol

Six hundred kilometers away from Metro Manila, sea turtles turned the beachfront of a resort into a birthing ground as resort owners scamped for ways to assist their nonhuman guests.

"We closed for a few months [during the pandemic] as well,

and it was the first time in two decades that turtles [hatched their eggs] on our beachfront ... We didn't have the knowledge on how turtles do their breeding process," Hope Uy, managing director of South Palms Resort in Panglao, recalls.

It was the unexpectedness of the situation that also shows how one must invest in sustainability, she says.

"Islands such as Panglao and Phuket feel environmental and social issues even more acutely than other destinations. Freshwater, waste disposal, coral bleaching; these are not only concepts—they impact our lives and operations on a day-to-day basis," she says.

South Palm and its sister development, Panglao Shores, also boast of their dedication to sustainability through their close ties with the community. Aside from protecting the local coral reefs through a project called Project Sirena, the resort sources some of its food from a nearby farm that produces organic fruit, vegetables, honey



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and dairy products. They also do rainwater harvesting.

The resort is not yet self-sustaining, but the goal is to get 90 percent of ingredients from the farm.

The investments are beginning to pay off, according to Uy. Sustainability coming full circle, the savings they get from these various measures are used to incentivize the workers at the resort.

To define sustainability, according to Lee, therefore is to "think with the big picture in mind, so that each decision we make is a small change to help the environment."

"With that said, for commercial establishments, sustainability is also a promise to customers." INQ