

04 September 2022  
Sunday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## U.S. awards P288M in grants to CSOs

*For biodiversity conservation, climate solutions*

THE U.S. government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), awarded Php 288 million (\$5.1 million) in grants to thirteen civil society organizations for the promotion of biodiversity conservation and natural climate solutions in the Philippines.

USAID Philippines Acting Deputy Mission Director Jennifer Crow, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Marilou Erni, and Gerry Roxas Foundation Executive Director Glen de Castro formally awarded the grants at a ceremony held on August 30.

Each of the following CSOs received a grant valued at around Php 16 million (\$300,000) to implement three-year conservation and climate projects that will help communities

adopt environmentally friendly practices, engage the public and private sectors, and establish local enterprises that support conservation: ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, Inc., Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation, Inc., Mount Apo Foundation, Inc., NGOs for Fisheries Reform, PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc., Philippine Association for the Intellectual Development, Inc., Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc., Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc., Sentro Para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Xavier Science Foundation, Inc., and Zoological Society of London-Philippines.

Two grantees were each awarded Php 56 million (\$1 million) to support disability-inclusive climate actions. The Oscar M. Lopez



**USAID Philippines Acting Deputy Mission Director Jennifer Crow (front, fifth from left), DENR Undersecretary Marilou Erni (front, sixth from left) and Gerry Roxas Foundation Executive Director Glen de Castro (rightmost) joins representatives of 13 grantees of USAID's INSPIRE project at a ceremony on August 30.**

Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Foundation, Inc. will develop a dictionary of climate change-related terms in Filipino Sign Language, while Humanity & Inclusion Philippines will meaningfully engage people with disabilities in climate change governance and improve their resilience

to the impacts of climate change.

All projects will also support the Philippine government in conserving and restoring areas that need urgent protection across Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, and in developing more effective and inclusive natural resource governance.

*See page 12...*

"These grants showcase USAID's longstanding commitment to partner with the Philippine government and local organizations in protecting natural resources and improving how these resources, and the places where they are found, are governed," said

USAID Philippines Acting Deputy Mission Director Jennifer Crow. "We also hope that these projects will generate local livelihoods and enterprises that uphold the value of the natural and cultural assets of the Philippines and improve the lives of local communities, including indigenous peoples."

Through its Investing in

Sustainability and Partnerships for Inclusive Growth and Regenerative Ecosystems (INSPIRE) project, USAID promotes natural resource conservation and ecosystem and community resilience by supporting civil society organizations in advocating for and participating in good natural resource governance.

"The DENR values the

support given by USAID to all sectors in order to deliver critical biodiversity and sustainable landscapes targets," DENR Undersecretary Erni said. "We trust that closer cooperation and collaboration between government and civil society through INSPIRE will increase and expand investments for conservation."



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## P288-M US grant for PH conservation, climate solutions

**THE United States awarded 13 civil society organizations with P288 million in grants for biodiversity conservation and natural climate solutions in the Philippines, the US Embassy in Manila said.**

The grants, provided by the US Agency for International Development, would also support the government in conserving and restoring areas that need urgent protection.

"These grants showcase USAID's longstanding commitment to partner with the Philippine government and local organizations in protecting natural resources and improving how these resources, and the places where they are found, are governed," USAID Philippines Acting Deputy Mission Director Jennifer Crow said.

"We also hope that these projects will generate local livelihoods and enterprises that uphold the value of the natural and cultural assets of the

Philippines and improve the lives of local communities, including indigenous peoples," Crow added.

Eleven CSOs would receive P16 million each to implement three-year conservation and climate projects to help communities adopt environmental-friendly practices, engage the public and private sector, and establish local enterprises that support conservation efforts.

The CSOs are the ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, Inc., Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation, Inc., Mount Apo Foundation, Inc., NGOs for Fisheries Reform, PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc., Philippine Association for the Intellectual Development, Inc., Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc., Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc., Sentro Para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Xavier Science Foundation, Inc., and Zoological Society of London - Philip-

pines.

Two grantees, meanwhile, would get PHP56 million each to support disability-inclusive climate actions.

The Oscar M. Lopez Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Foundation, Inc. would develop a dictionary of climate change-related terms in Filipino sign language, while Humanity & Inclusion Philippines would engage people with disabilities in climate change governance and improve their resilience to the impacts of climate change.

To recall, USAID established in 2021 a five-year P800-million grant facility to help CSOs implement biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection, among others.

The fund was launched through the Investing in Sustainability and Partnerships for Inclusive Growth and Regenerative Ecosystems project.



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## Let's take care of the environment – CBCP

By **ROBERTZON RAMIREZ**

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) urged the Catholic faithful to start caring for the environment, amid the recent calamities in the country and as part of the observance of the "Season of Creation" of the Catholic Church.

CBCP president and Caloocan Bishop

Pablo Virgilio David said that people should draw inspiration from the words of Dr. Rachel Walsh, provincial canon for the environment in the Anglican Church of South Africa, "to listen to creation so that we can move from a theology of plunder back to a theology of wonder."

"We join our fellow Christians around the world, as well as communities of faith and people of goodwill in the spirit

of ecumenism and dialogue, as we celebrate the Season of Creation this year 2022 and reflect on the theme 'Listen to the voice of creation,'" David said.

Tagbilaran Bishop Alberto Uy also urged the public to start making a move and start caring for the environment, in compliance with the call of Pope Francis in this Season of Creation to pray and to come up with concrete measures for the earth.

Uy said that people can express their care and love for the environment by initiating tree planting activities to sustain a healthy environment for future generations.

"Let's take action and think about future generations. Let's take care of our environment, plant trees, take care of and grow forests," Uy said in Filipino in an interview over Church-run *Radyo Veritas*.



## Parishes in N. Palawan to plant trees for Season of Creation

**T**HE Apostolic Vicariate of Taytay in northern Palawan will mark this year's Season of Creation by planting at least 400 trees in each of its 23 parishes and eight mission stations.

Bishop Broderick Pabillo said it's their humble contribution to the annual celebration as the local Church also currently commemorates the arrival of Christianity on the island 400 years ago.

"This is our contribution to save the environment," Pabillo said in a pastoral letter.

While Palawan is blessed with rich natural resources, the prelate emphasized that it also comes with great responsibility.

He asked the faithful "not to get tired of caring for our common home" amid combined threats of illegal logging and fishing.

He also called on communities to oppose any mining and coal-fired power plant projects in the province.

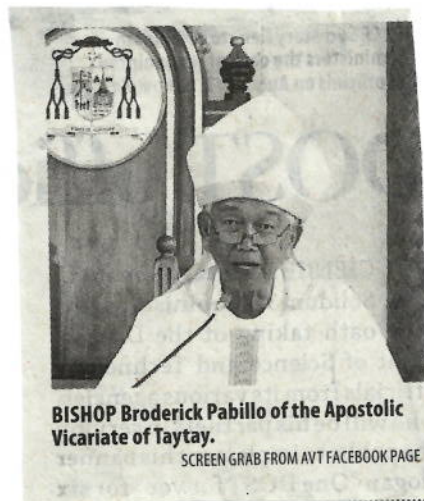
"Let us strive to be responsible stewards of creation," Pabillo said.

The Season of Creation begins on

September 1, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron of ecology.

In the Philippines, the annual Christian celebration of prayer and action for ecology is extended until the second Sunday of October, the Indigenous Peoples' Sunday.

This year's worldwide theme is "Listen to the Voice of Creation," a focus on the voices of those who suffer the impacts of the ongoing climate emergency and biodiversity crisis. **CBCP News**



**BISHOP Broderick Pabillo of the Apostolic Vicariate of Taytay.**

SCREEN GRAB FROM AVT FACEBOOK PAGE



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**HEY!**

**Extensive deforestation has wreaked havoc in local ecosystems. Now, only a fifth of the Philippines is covered in forests.**



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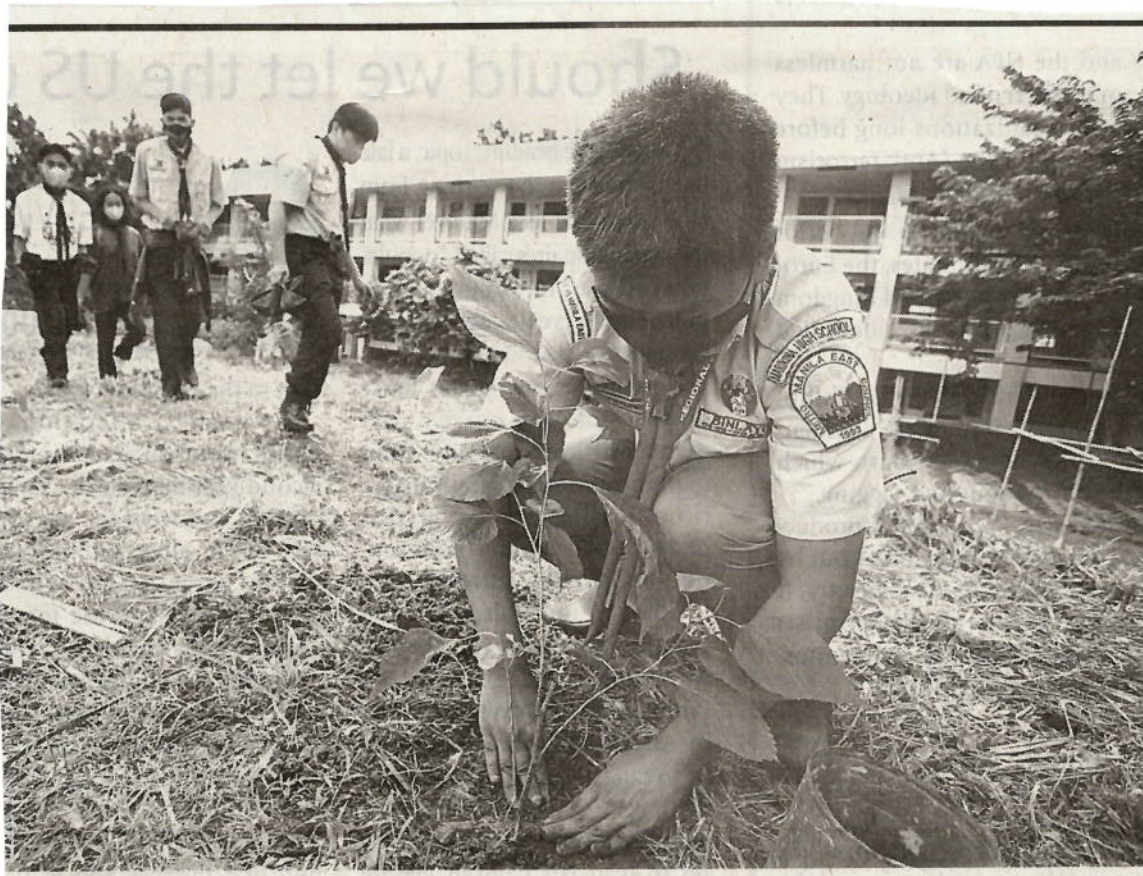
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## GREENER TOMORROW

A member of the Rover Scout of the Philippines Metro Manila East Council plants fruit-bearing trees at the Nangka High School in Marikina on Saturday, Sept. 3, 2022, as part of their activity to 'Plant a tree for a better tomorrow.' PHOTO BY JOHN ORVEN VERDOTE



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**Boy scouts plant fruit-bearing trees such as mangoes, mulberries, bananas, cotton fruit and tamarind at the Nangka High School in Marikina yesterday.**

MICHAEL VARGAS





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THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRAMS  
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**MANILA BULLETIN**  
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**TREE-PLANTING** – The Boy Scouts of the Philippines–Metro Manila East Council plants fruit-bearing trees at Nangka High School in Marikina City on Saturday, Sept. 3, 2022 with the theme 'Plant tree for a better tomorrow.' (Mark Balmores)



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# Daily Tribune

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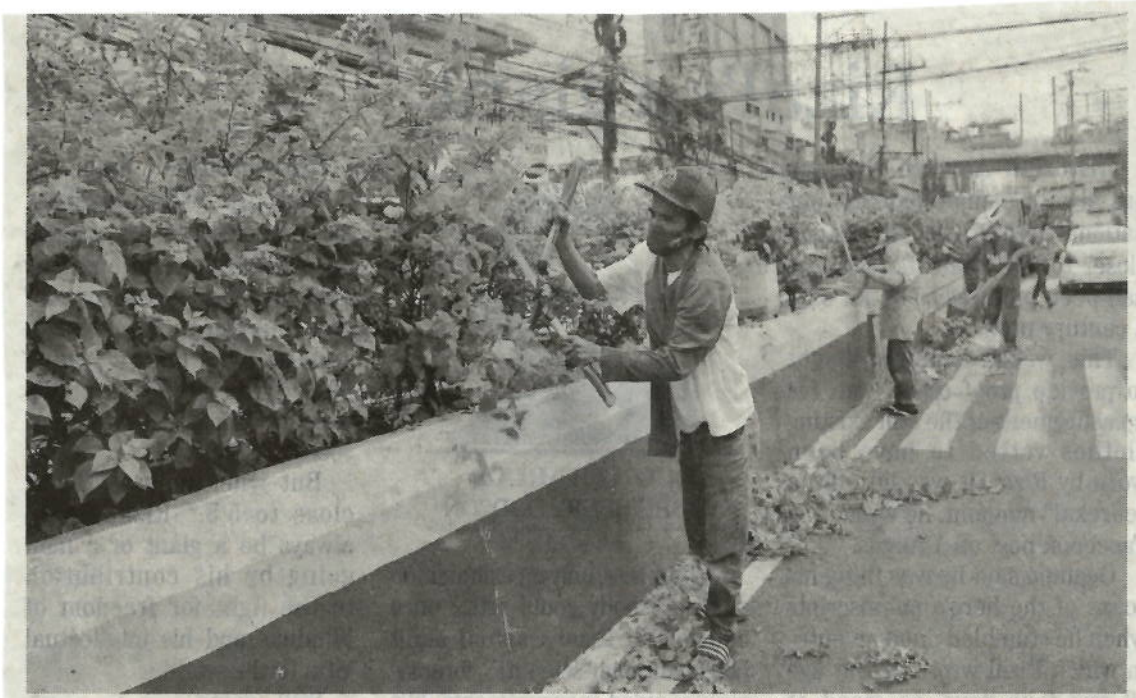
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PHOTOGRAPH BY AL PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephil\_al

THE Parañaque City Environment Natural Resource Office continues running the facility to preserve, protect and manage the environment.



# Review tax rate approval on mining

A few weeks ago, the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives approved a new measure seeking to rationalize a fiscal regime and raise the effective tax rates on mining companies.

The committee adopted the version of the Department of Finance, which, if passed into law, would raise the effective tax rate on mining to 51 percent and generate some P37.5 billion in revenues. The proposed rate would also make the Philippines at par with other countries, such as Australia and Indonesia.

Under the approved version, mining companies will be imposed a royalty tax of five percent on the market value of the gross output of large-scale mining operations, as well as a minimum government share of 60 percent on net mining revenues, including all government taxes, fees and charges.



**THE Z PERSPECTIVE**  
**JOE ZALDARRIAGA**

A 10-percent tax will also be levied on the market value of mineral ore exports to encourage companies to process mineral products locally.

The mining sector plays a huge role in the country's economic growth. Even at the height of the pandemic, the sector contributed P102.3 billion to the country's 2020 gross domestic product, according to a report by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mining and Geosciences Bureau released in June 2021.

However, raising tax rates does not seem to be the viable option this time, especially as businesses are only beginning to recover from the effects of the pandemic.

In fact, the tax rate hike would only go against the promise of the government to revitalize the sector; would not be conducive to its growth and instead, will prevent it from playing a major role in economic recovery.

*Turn to page 10*

**Raising tax rates does not seem to be the viable option this time, especially as businesses are only beginning to recover from the effects of the pandemic.**

### *From page 9*

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines has already expressed its apprehension on the approval, lamenting the lack of consultation within the industry, and saying that the onerous provisions of the bill would only make the mining industry one of the highest taxed in the world.

Three flagship mining projects, which are seen to contribute to economic development and prosper to the areas they are located, are also seen at stake. This includes the Tampakan Copper-Gold

project by Glencore Xtrata and Indofil, which is valued at around \$5.9 billion and is the single largest foreign direct investment in the country to date.

The Philippines is a capital-intensive country. We are one of the countries that are heavily reliant on the entry of more investors. Raising tax rates may be the only immediate option to generate funds, but the tax bill will only put into question the stability of Philippine policies, which are detrimental to attracting foreign investments.

According to COMP, foreign investors will only set sight on other markets where

**If tax increases are unavoidable, the tax structure should not be onerous enough to stop more investments from coming in.**

mineral resources are found.

The House Committee, chaired by Rep. Joey Salceda, should revisit the approval of the tax structure and invite experts and industry stakeholders for consultations and give comments and recommendations, so that both parties are given an opportunity to contribute to the passage of a more viable fiscal regime.

On the other hand, if tax increases are unavoidable, the tax structure should not be onerous enough to stop more investments from coming in. At the end of the day, the country needs to strike

a balance between raising revenues and protecting businesses.

I had a chance to speak to Chamber of Mines chairperson Atty. Mike Toledo and he said, "We are with government in pursuing a development agenda for mining in order to spur economic recovery and growth, but we also need its support to further develop the industry through policies that will elevate mining to the next level. We hope our plea to rationalize taxation will be one of the steps that will be addressed to help us pursue this." I can't agree more.



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## Providing a head start

The yellow rain fall warning issued by PAGASA for Metro Manila and other areas due to Typhoon Henry as of this writing brings unavoidably, fears of massive flooding.

For some areas such as Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava), floods have become part of their residents' lives. These four cities are situated in the estuary of several river deltas and have become prone to frequent flooding, especially during high tides, heavy rains, and when rivers and dams overflow. They are also commonly affected

by interconnected rivers, one of which is the Tullahan River.

In recent years, floods have worsened, reaching as much as several feet deep, affecting families in communities along or near the riverbanks. The river is also said to have become narrower and shallower over the years and its capacity to hold water has increased and with intense rains, the riverbanks flood, reaching low-lying and densely populated areas.

In March 2019, San Miguel Corp. signed a landmark MOA with the DENR to implement a comprehensive

dredging and cleanup of the 59.42-km Tullahan River system which starts from the La Mesa Reservoir and traverses the cities of Valenzuela and Malabon before reaching the mouth of Manila Bay through Navotas.

After two and a half years, the massive cleanup initiative has been completed, ridding the Tullahan river of over 1.12 million tons of solid waste that had been clogging the river for the longest time.

SMC spent P1 billion of its own money for the Tullahan River clean up and another P2 billion for Pasig River, both heavily polluted and neglected rivers.

SMC's Tullahan project, together with government's undertaking to put up pumping stations and fortify river walls to protect communities near the river, have succeeded in mitigating severe flooding in Camanava.

Just a year after the project started, communities reported

lesser incidences of severe flooding in their areas, as the Tullahan River was able to channel more flood water away from streets and into Manila Bay.

By extracting wastes, SMC effectively deepened the river, and also widened some portions where silt had built up through the years. As a result, areas of the river that effectively became bottlenecks were freed up, increasing its carrying capacity, and minimizing flooding in flood-prone areas.

With its accomplishment at the Tullahan River, there is now even more heightened anticipation as to what it can achieve for the Pasig River, which it has also been cleaning up since last year. To date, SMC has removed around 510,760 metric tons of silt and waste from the river.

Pasig and Tullahan are among the world's top 10 largest plastic-emitting rivers, responsible for the world's ocean plastics, according to a 2021 research by ourworldindata.org.

They are also the rivers where Metro Manila's untreated sewage usually end up. Incidentally, also on that list are rivers belonging to the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System (MMORS), which SMC is expected to clean-up next as part of its ongoing advocacy.

But as with any river cleanup effort, wins can't last very long even with the best intentions, if there is no sustained, consolidated effort from all stakeholders. Solid waste management also needs to be addressed by long-lasting solutions. Without this, the Tullahan river can go back to its old, pitiful state.

This is however just the start. If we want to bring back these rivers to a state that is able support healthy marine life, and to make them a source of clean water, all stakeholders must show commitment, action, and behavioral change.

### Reducing carbon footprint

One company that is leading the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector's efforts in helping the country attain its commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce carbon footprint is TDCX Philippines.

Last April, the British Standards Institution (BSI) awarded TDCX with a satisfactory opinion statement, evaluating that TDCX's carbon footprint report meets the ISO 14064-1:2018 criteria for greenhouse gas management system documentation.

According to TDCX Philippines vice president for business strategy Eliza Acuna, businesses play an important role in promoting and accelerating sustainability and given the far-

## HIDDEN AGENDA



MARY ANN  
LL. REYES



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reaching impact of climate change, they have made it a priority to reduce carbon footprint across TDCX' operations globally.

"By contributing to global sustainability targets, we are helping ourselves. We have all experienced volatile energy prices in the past year. To minimize such volatility, we must all play a part in reducing the effects of climate change. It also ensures that we remain competitive in the long run. As governments and businesses incorporate sustainability factors into their requirements, companies that do not meet these criteria may find themselves losing business opportunities as a result. It also helps in our talent strategy. Employees are becoming more conscious about their impact on the environment and want their employer to embrace such values as well," she said.

Acuna explained that to reduce carbon emissions in its operations, TDCX enabled a hybrid work environment to minimize employee commuting, used energy efficient options and reduced water use and waste production in its offices, invested in renewable energy, and has been educating its employees on environmentally friendly practices and rewarding their efforts.

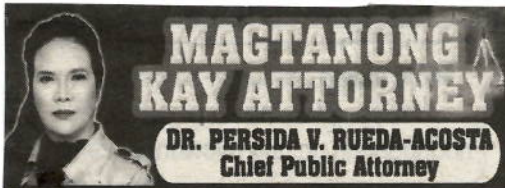
In weaving sustainability into their operations, she reminded companies that even small efforts such as resource management in offices can be a way to start, adding that it is important to get company leadership onboard to ensure that resources are available to support sustainability objectives.

She said that TDCX is committed to ensuring that its carbon footprint is kept at a minimal and to finding more ways to reduce it further.

"Today, we are proud to have a robust carbon footprint management plan in place to keep us on track. In order to be truly net zero, this needs to extend to all businesses and individuals involved in their operations with TDCX. All these stakeholders must also have their own renewable or net zero goals," she emphasized.

Acuna added that one way that the government can encourage the BPO sector to become more environmentally friendly is through the establishment of "green" economic zones. This, she said, will lead to developers having a greener push, thus enabling BPOs to improve the sustainability of their operations.

*For comments, e-mail at [mareyes@philstarmedia.com](mailto:mareyes@philstarmedia.com).*



PANAHON na naman ng tag-ulan. Kamakailan lamang ay nagkaroon ng pagbaha sa ating mga karatig na lugar na nakaapekto sa kanilang kabuhayan. Maraming tanim ang nasalanta na magdudulot na naman ng hapis sa ating mga kababayan na ngayon pa lamang nagsisimulang umusad ang mga kabuhayan dahil sa nakaraang dulot ng pandemya. Kaya naman ang ating kalikasan ay marapat na mabigyan ng proteksyon nang maiwasan ang mas grabeng sakuna sa tuwing panahon ng tag-ulan. Ang tubig ulan ay hindi lamang baha ang dulot. Kailangan din natin ito upang matugunan ang patubig para sa ating mga magsasaka at mapanatili ang tubig na kinakailangan sa ating mga dam.

Ang ating kalikasan ay importante na mapanitiling maayos at malinis nang ito ay maging kanais-nais at mapakinabangan pa ng mga susunod na henerasyon. Ang paglapastangan sa ating kalikasan ay marapat lamang na mabigyan ng katapat na kaparusahan.

Kung may paglabag o banta ng paglabag, sa batas tungkol sa proteksyon ng kalikasan at kapaligiran, maaaring maghain ng petisyon sa husgado upang makakuha ng *Writ of Kalikasan* sa ilalim ng *Rule 7 ng A.M. No. 09-6-8-SC*, na mas kilala bilang "*The Rules of Procedure for Environmental Cases*." Ito ay maaaring isampa sa Korte Suprema o sa anumang sangay ng Court of Appeals ng tao o grupo, kabilang na ang mga *people's organization, non-governmental organization (NGO)* at ng iba pang grupo ng pampublikong interes na kinikilala ng ating gobyerno. Ang petisyon ay ihahain sa galan ng mamamayan na ang karapatang magkaroon ng malusog na ekolohiya ay malalabag o nanganganib na malabag dahil sa kagagawan ng publikong opisyal o pribadong indibidwal na maaaring magdulot ng malaking kasiraan ng kapaligiran at makaapekto sa buhay, kalusugan at ari-arian ng mga naninirahan sa dalawa o higit pang siyudad o probinsya.

Ang *Writ of Kalikasan* ay legal na remedyo sa ilalim ng batas ng Pilipinas, kung saan ang karapatan ng mamamayan sa "*balanced and healthful ecol-*

## KARAPATANG PANGALAGAAN ANG KAPALIGIRAN SA PAMAMAGITAN NG WRIT OF KALIKASAN

ogy" (*timbang at malusog na ekolohiya*) ay nalalabag dahil sa gawain ng pampublikong opisyal, empleyado o pribadong indibidwal o grupo. Ang mandato ng *Writ of Kalikasan* ay mula sa *Artikulo II, Seksyon 16* ng ating Saligang Batas, kung saan nakasaad na "*Dapat pangalagaan at isulong ng Estado ang karapatan ng sambayanan sa timbang at kanais-nais na ekolohiya nang naayon sa ahuyoy at tugma ng kalikasan.*" (Filipino version)

Ang paghahain ng petisyon para makakuha ng *Writ of Kalikasan* ay hindi nangangahulugang hindi na maaaring papanagutin ang mga taong lumabag sa batas kalikasan para sa kasong administratibo, kriminal o sibil para makahingi ng danyos.

Kapag mayroong kagyat na pangangailangan at ang naghahabla ay makararanas ng *grave injustice at irreparable injury*, siya ay maaaring humiling sa kanyang petisyon na mabigyan ng *Temporary Environmental Protection Order (TEPO)*.

Ang patuloy na pagkasira ng kapaligiran ay hindi lamang magdudulot ng mga sakuna, bagkus ito ay magiging sanhi rin ng maraming sakit sa mamamayan. Ang mga usok na likha ng mga sasakyan ay maaaring maging sanhi ng asthma o pneumonia. Ang patuloy na pagkakatat ng basura ay magdudulot ng pagbara ng mga kanal at magiging sanhi ng pagbaha. Kaya naman, kaakibat ng ating mga karapatan sa malinis at malusog na kapaligiran ay ang ating mga responsibilidad bilang mamamayan na panatilihin maayos ang ating kapaligiran. Gawin din natin ang ating obligasyon, tulad na lamang ng paggamit ng recycled products, pagtitipid sa tubig, enerhiya o kuryente at pagtatapon ng basura sa tamang tapunan. Ito ay maliliit na bagay, subalit makatutulong nang malaki sa atin na mapanatiling malinis ang ating kapaligiran.



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# Meeting Viggo, face of the P1K banknote, at Kadayawan

I want to return to the Philippine Eagle Center to help—there are many ways, from volunteering to donating items for the forest guards to sponsoring the animals



Viggo in the flesh  
—PHOTO BY JILL TAN  
RADOVAN



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Meeting Viggo ...

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**By Vaughn Geussepe Alviar**  
@koko\_notnut

It was akin to meeting a celebrity, seeing Viggo. As if encountering an idol, I felt a rush looking at this handsome Philippine eagle, the new “face” of the P1,000 banknote.

I knew the questions and controversies surrounding the new bill—Should national heroes be replaced by an animal? Should the polymer bill never be folded?—but the view hushed my mind.

Growing up, I’d watched about the critically endangered Philippine eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) on TV. I’d celebrated births and mourned deaths, feeling connected to them and wanting to meet them one day. Finally, on Aug. 22 at the Philippine Eagle Center (PEC), I saw Viggo and several of his kind.

The 10 I got to view of the 33 “ambassadors” or “educational birds” currently living at PEC explained with their very presence why their species was “Haring Ibon.” These birds possess a piercing gaze and an aristocratic

stance. When they spread their wings or raise their crest, it’s as if they’re asking you to bow.

And perhaps bending the knee is a proper response. Jayson Ibañez, director for research and conservation at the Philippine Eagle Foundation that runs PEC, explained, “It’s hard to find Philippine eagles in the wild, you would be lucky to see one in your lifetime.”

Even in precolonial Philippines when the archipelago was covered in forests, there could only have been a few thousand such eagles. They’re harder to find now, with just 400 nesting pairs in the wild, no thanks to eagle hunting and habitat destruction.

#### A rediscovery

That memorable visit to the PEC was part of the itinerary during AirAsia’s route story conference for Davao City’s Kadayawan Festival, coming back to the streets after a two-year hiatus. With that four-day tour on Aug. 20 to Aug. 23, the low-cost airline also announced more flights bound for the Francisco Bangoy International

Airport by September: seven times weekly from Cebu and 28 times weekly from Manila.

That increase is part of the bigger plan to restore domestic flights to prepandemic levels by end of 2022, said Steve Dailisan, AirAsia spokesperson and head of communications and public affairs. “When we say prepandemic, at least all our aircraft are back to service, at least all our destinations are back, too.”

He added, “We will continue to promote the culture of safety ... The goal, too, is for everyone to maximize the AirAsia Super App because it allows you to transact contactless.”

More Davao flights are an invitation for Filipinos to enjoy “a rediscovery; for us to reconnect to heritage, and more.”

Kadayawan provides a proper preview of Davao’s offerings, of course. Beginning in 1988, under then-Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, it is a thanksgiving and a showcase of the 11 tribes of Davao.

We were unable to catch the Indak-indak sa Kadalanan, the annual street dance competition where

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contingents would interpret folklore. However, we saw dozens of magnificent floats, a la Panagbenga, during the Pamulak sa Kadayawan. We also visited the Kadayawan Village, each tribe represented by a traditional home. I bought trinkets from the “lumad” tribes and *merienda* from the Moro tribes.

#### Rody’s fave Tuna Eye Soup

There was no shortage of food during our visit! The opening salvo was Marinatuna’s popular 10 Way Tuna, which makes use of Grade A tuna from the head to the tail. Duterte comes back for the Tuna Eye Soup, owner Domingo Ang said.

The Teos of Davao welcomed us into their home for an intimate dinner. The fare came from Thai resto Vines by Garden Café, owned by chef Rayhan William Teo. The Green Curry and Tom Yum are must-tries!

At artsy Balik Bukid Farm and Kitchen, we tasted healthy farm-to-table chow prepared by the owner and head chef Paolo S. Garcia.

The Royal Mandaya Hotel, where we stayed, offered generous buffets daily. We also ate at Jack’s Ridge and Rekado Davao both in Davao City, and Aznebo on Samal Island. For dessert, we went to Apo ni Lola Durian Del-

icacies and Bread Shack, as well as the popular Malagos Chocolate Museum.

That gastronomic adventure is the tip of the iceberg; there’s

much left to discover in Davao. From this trip, I took home *malong*, *t’nalak* and more from the newly opened Poblacion Market Central, the new Aldevinco. For

the first time, I visited the IMIN Philippine-Japan Historical Museum in Davao City, and the Sanipaan Vanishing Island and Monfort Bat Sanctuary on Samal Island.

Our guides enumerated other tour packages, including one

where they sample varieties of durians and another called the “Duterte Tour.”

I personally want to return to the PEC to help. Ibañez said there were many ways to do so, from volunteering to donating items

for the forest guards to sponsoring the animals: “Practically, there’s an opportunity for every Filipino and organization to help.”

I would be more prepared to meet Viggo when I return, I imagine. —CONTRIBUTED INQ





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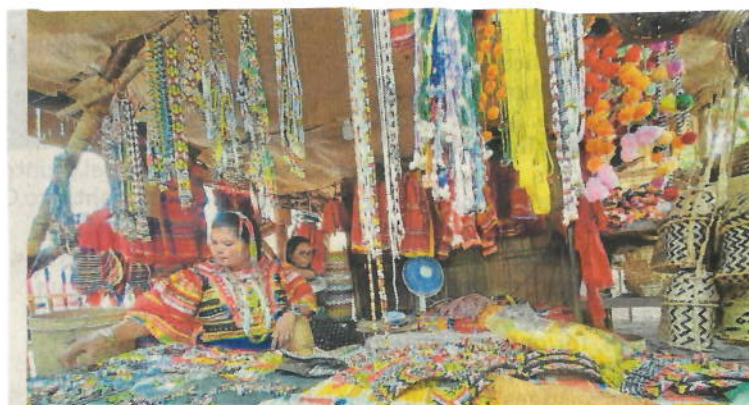
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Kadayawan Village is composed of the traditional homes of Davao's 11 tribes: six Moro (Tausug, Maguindanao, Iranun, Kagan, Maranao and Sama) and five "lumad" (Klata, Ata, Ubo Manuvo, Matigsalog and Tagabawa). —PHOTOS BY VAUGHN ALVIAR



PEC taxidermized Pag-Asa, the first of its kind to be bred and hatched in captivity using cooperative artificial insemination. He died in 2021 due to disease.



The Kadayawan Village is so much livelier during the festivities. In the "lumad" quarter, you can buy accessories and handicrafts.



Some 80 percent of the interiors at Balik Bukid are upcycled materials.



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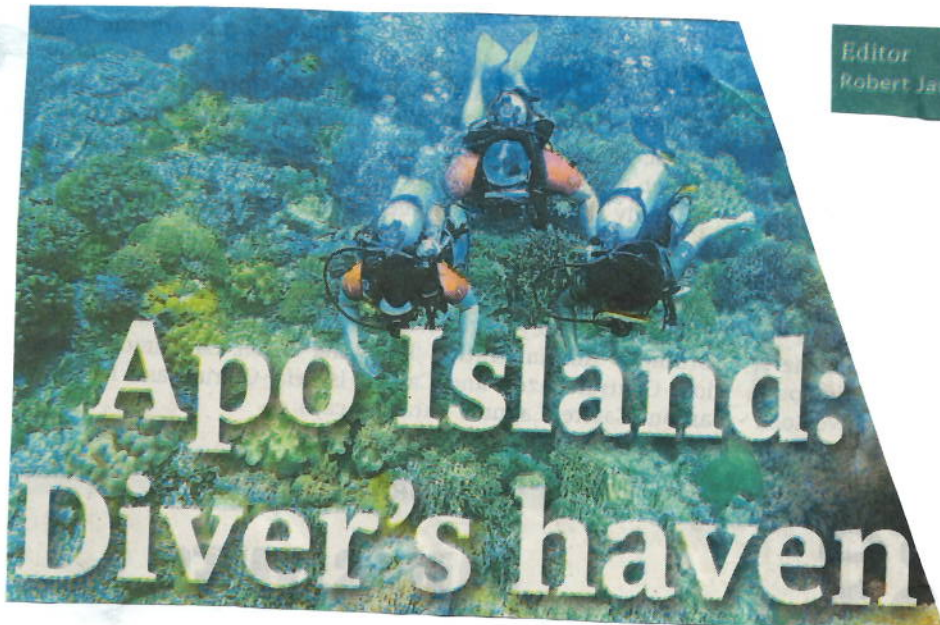
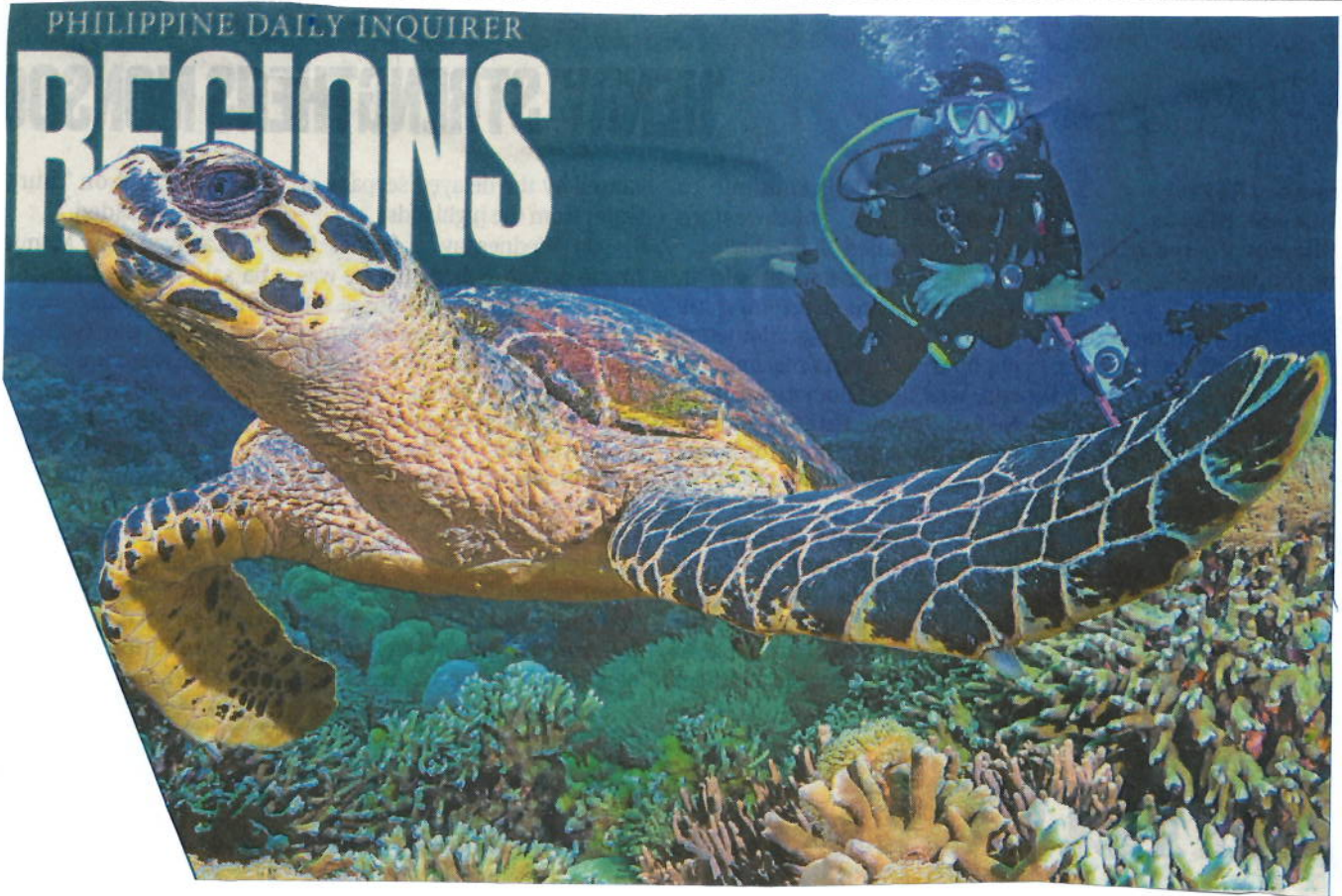
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Editor  
Robert Jaworski L. Abaña

**DIVE BUDDY** Diving with a green sea turtle is one of the main attractions on Apo Island off Dauin, Negros Oriental.  
—PHOTO COURTESY OF DIVE7 DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM-CENTRAL VISAYAS

These turtles breed along the beaches of the island and feed in its waters.



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*Apo Island: Diver's ...*

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**By Jhio Jan Navarro**  
@inquirervisayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—Jack Baller, a tourist and diving instructor from Miami, Florida, was in awe of what he saw during a recent dive off Apo Island.

“You won’t see any of these in Miami. [What you have here is] very clean. No trash at all [and the] reef was very pristine,” he said of the breathtaking underwater seascapes of the island off Dauin town in Negros Oriental province.

Baller shared that he had long wanted to see and explore the undersea wonders of Apo Island after he heard about it from a friend.

Located southeast of the capital city of Dumaguete in Negros Oriental, Apo Island is one of the top diving destinations in the country.

The island, which locals call “apo,” or grandchild of the bigger Negros Island, is 40 minutes away from the coastline of Dauin, and an hour away from Dumaguete. The Malatapay flea market along the coastline of Zamboanguita town is a popular jumpoff point. From there, travel time will take around 40 minutes.

Apo Island can be reached via pump boats which can be rented from P3,500 to P8,000, depending on the number of passengers. Docking fee on the

island is P300 per person, inclusive of swimming and snorkeling fees.

Different resorts offer Discover Scuba Diving (DSD) activities for first-time divers for P4,500, including the rental fee for the equipment.

In DSD, tourists are taught the basics of scuba diving as well as how to use equipment to get the most out of their first underwater expedition.

**Best spot**

Apo Island has white sand beaches and 12 diving sites, the most famous of which is Coconut Point.

A sloping coral reef that can go down to as deep as 25 meters, Coconut Point is considered by advanced divers as the “greatest drift drive of the area” because the current can be strong and unpredictable.

Yet, divers marvel at its coral gardens, trevallies and schools of big fish.

Coconut Point and other dive sites on Apo Island are visual delights teeming with marine life like starfish, anemones, schools of multicolored fish and sea slugs navigating through the vibrant expanse of soft corals.

Since the island is also home to green sea turtles, tourists on the island may swim up close with them.

Pablo Quiza, a dive master



**VISUAL DELIGHT** Apo Island boasts of vibrant coral reefs teeming with marine life that delight divers from all over the world. —PHOTO COURTESY OF DIVE7 DOT-CENTRAL VISAYAS



from northern Spain, described the dive sites on Apo Island as "one of the best in the country."

With its vast stretches of pristine coral reefs punctuated by diverse marine life, it joins the ranks of Cebu's Moalboal and Palawan's Tubbataha Reef Marine Park, a protected area in the middle of Sulu Sea, as among the best diving spots in the Philippines.

#### Main income source

Glenn Carballo, president of Negros Oriental Diving Association, said thousands of tourists used to visit Apo Island before the country closed its borders in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The influx of tourists provided livelihood to island residents. From tour guides and dive masters to

souvenir and food entrepreneurs, tourists ensured revenue for locals.

Carballo estimates that 250 households on the island, with around 1,500 residents, depend on tourism money. They lost their main source of income when travel and health restrictions were imposed by the government as the pandemic raged in 2020 and 2021.

Carballo said tour guides and dive masters had to cross to the mainland to look for jobs at construction sites since there was no work on Apo Island for them. Others went back to fishing.

Analyn Alabata, 40, an island resident who sells

shirts and other souvenir items aboard a kayak, said the pandemic wiped off their livelihood.

"Zero *talaga kami. Nagtanim na lang kami ng kahit anong pwede naming makain* (We had zero income. That was why we decided to plant anything that we can eat)," she said.

Now that pandemic restrictions had been lifted, Carballo said tourists were starting to return, albeit slowly.

Residents, she said, are glad because they can now get back on their feet.

Alabata, for one, said that with the arrival of tourists on the island, her daily income would average P500 while her husband resumed his job as a tourist guide.

#### Marine sanctuary

Chad Moses Alanano, tourism support staff of Dauin, said the town welcomed 5,784 tourists last June.

Initiatives are also being done to further promote Apo Island and other tourist destinations in Negros Oriental to encourage people to visit and help Dauin hit its prepandemic arrival levels.

According to Carballo, resort owners have been attending dive shows and expositions in the country and abroad to gain tourism traction.

The Department of Tourism

in Central Visayas is also supporting the local initiative by holding a travel trade as well as dive and media familiarization tours.

The agency recently held DIVE7 Festival that brought together local and foreign professional divers and dive enthusiasts in various diving destinations in the region, like Apo Island.

It included activities like a beach and underwater cleanup and underwater photography contest.

Carballo said efforts were being undertaken to ensure that Apo Island would be protected as a marine sanctuary.

"We tried to convince the locals not to overfish and not to hunt for small critters," he said.

According to Carballo, locals are also being taught how to segregate trash, which are taken to the mainland for proper disposal. Strict rules on waste disposal are also enforced among tourists.

To ensure that the diving sites on Apo Island are not pushed beyond its capacity, an existing regulation is enforced to limit the maximum number of divers allowed on the island per day to 150.

With these preservation and protection efforts, the diver's haven that is Apo Island, promises to captivate generations to come. INQ



**PARADISE** Located southeast of the capital city of Dumaguete in Negros Oriental, Apo Island, offers tourists not just white sand beaches but 12 pristine dive sites. —JHIO JAN NAVARRO



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# SARANGANI ON MY MIND

The southern province associated with Manny

Pacquiao emerges as one bright tourism spot in the South.

By MANUEL T. CAYON

**S**ARANGANI is one province of a growth region to watch. It is an area launched in the 1990s to form the showcase of regional growth, taking the name Soccsksargen, an acronym for the Cotabato provinces of the rich plains of south-central Mindanao: South Cotabato, North Cotabato or simply named Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City.



A couple of decades later, the expected growth appears to have eluded the region despite its innate potential as the country's rice bowl, the smaller version to Central Luzon's rice granary tag in the textbooks.

Efforts are still on to win the national government's faith in the growth potential of Sarangani province. Local government officials have even pushed boundaries to reassert it.

In General Santos City, one fine airport and a seaport built of global in construction standard came one after another.

### Strides

SARANGANI has its share of the efforts, building a big clean and brisk-looking capitol building at a sprawling ground in Alabel town on a modest shoestring budget.

It also upgraded the district hospital in Maitum to a provincial hospital on June 30, to bring improved hospital care to patients from neighboring towns.

Several years later, in the second decade of the 2000s, Sarangani branded itself ecologically as one of the nesting sites of the endangered Philippine Eagle, as one of the stopovers of seasonal migration of birds from the cold and temperate regions to warmer countries, to the discovery of anthropomorphic pots and earthen wares in a cave and the allure of its



**"A tribe which does not know its culture and its environment is like a tree without roots."—Bae Limpayen Jennifer Sibug-Las, commissioner for Central Mindanao of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples** NCIP.GOV.PH

protected seascape along the Sarangani Bay.

Needless to say, Sarangani has easily attracted visitors to one of the country's most participated coastal summer fun, the SarBay, or days of fun concerts and beach frolic and environmental conservation and education rolled into one to ensure a sustainable festival.

This is what Sarangani would tell the world: that ecotourism is an educational and fun way of con-

tributing to the coffers of the provincial government.

For a place that for years also drew attention for famous son Manny Pacquiao, it seemed only right that people also associate Sarangani with other positive things besides the world-class sports icon turned senator, who is adored worldwide, even beyond the boxing field, for being the only one to dominate eight divisions in a tough field.

### Other small ways

FROM June 20 to July 6, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office honed the disaster response skills of 31 civilian volunteers from the seven towns of the province on 16 days of Search and Rescue Auxiliary Training course.

The trainees would help improve the readiness and capability of the seven Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices (MDRRMO) of the province to efficiently and effectively respond in times of disaster.

Ten members from the Provincial Security Group also attended the training course.

1Lt. Audifax Abcede of the 505th Search and Rescue Group of the Air Force said the participants underwent water search and rescue, rope rescue techniques, collapsed structure search and rescue, and vehicle road accident rescue.

While South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat have put up their school of living tradition to preserve the tradition of tribal communities, Sarangani would be seeing soon the Sarangani Eco-Villages: A Model for Resilient, Dynamic, and Progressive Indigenous Peoples' Communities.

A certain Fulung Fredo P. Basino presented on July 4 the concept to Governor Rogelio D. Pacquiao "to create a sustainable, equitable and livable community for the indigenous peoples (IP) in Sarangani" and emphasized citizenship accountability, safety and resiliency.

"This will also establish an identified and well-designed community for the IP communities in



**A CONTESTANT pulls off a wave turn in a Bankarera contest during the Sarangani Bay Festival.** SARANGANI INFORMATION OFFICE

the province which will include the provision of spaces for watershed, food production, and recreation, including tribal governance centers, school of living traditions museum, worship sites/parks, markets and related facilities," Basino said.

Sarangani towns, like Maasim, have been commemorating the IP day for the valuable contribution of the tribes in appreciating the conservation and protection of the environment to perpetuate the existence of human kind.

Maasim hosts the T'boli and B'laan tribes and holds the annual Kestebeng Festival, the 15th year this year, and to commemorate the founding anniversary also of the town, its 53rd.

Mayor Zyrex Pacquiao has lauded the tribes during the June 19 event.

Bae Limpayen Jennifer Sibug-Las, commissioner for Central Mindanao of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), encouraged the T'bolis and B'laans of Maasim to always look back to their roots and to never forget their identity.

"*Ang tribu nga walay kaalam sa iyang kultura ug kinaiya, sama ra sa usa ka kahoy nga walay ugat* [A tribe which does not know its culture and its environment is like a tree without roots]," Sibug-Las said.

This is the message that the province has been instilling in stewarding its development by embracing environmental conservation.

This was emphasized when an injured eagle was released to Maitum town, where its nest was believed to be when it was found trapped in the thicket last year.

"What we have done is a platform for public awareness, and the injuries caused by the improvised marble guns to the Sarangani Eagle is a manifestation that this type of hunting is still popular in this area," Jayson Ibañez, director for research and conservation of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, said as he urged the locals to be part of the advocacy in preserving and protecting the wild.

Salagbanog/Sarangani Eagle was released back to its original home at Mount Busa in Barangay Ticulab on June 13. The eagle was rescued on January 2021 after it was seen trapped in the thorny rattan vines in the vast forest of Salagbanog Falls in Ticulab.

The Philippine Eagle was found with a *jolen* or marble lodged between its muscles and skin in its right shoulder. It also had an air-gun pellet visible on the same shoulder closer to the neck.

But as the tribes would show

the rest of the world, it conducted a traditional T'boli ritual called *damsu* at the release site to offer the release of the rejuvenated eagle to their deities "for abundant harvest, blessings, guidance and protection." The ritual is always done at the start of any important event and the environmental emphasis would reverberate immediately.

The Alsons Power Group's Sarangani Energy Corp. (SEC) and Siguil Hydro Power Corp. have committed to preserve and protect the key biodiversity area of Mount Busa in Sarangani Province, which serves as home to a significant Philippine Eagle sub-population together with other 430 rare animals and birds.

SEC has provided the funding and logistical support for the tracking and protection of Salagbanog/Sarangani Eagle for the next three years.

This involved the provision of an electronic tracker that will map the whereabouts of the eagle.

The release of Salagbanog/Sarangani Eagle is the second in Sarangani Province after the release of Sarangani Pride in 2017.

Indeed, there's so much to inspire pride in Sarangani these days, and so much for the country—and the world—to watch out for.



## Mama leopard

**ALAMIN KAY  
KUYA KIM**

**KIM ATIENZA**

Motherhood comes with its own set of challenges. There are no set rules about it.

A video featuring a mother leopard crossing the road with her cubs shows how the challenges of motherhood are quite similar across species.

In the video posted on Yahoo, the mama leopard is seen using different tactics to ensure that her rebel cub who stops in the middle of the road, eventually crosses it.

The clip, shared by Indian Administrative Services official

Supriya Sahu, shows Mama leopard picking up the baby with her mouth trying to put it in the correct direction. Finally, the cubs decide to abide by their mum.

The viral video has been captioned: "Every family has that one special kid who will have his/her own way."

**ALAM NYO BA:** A baby kangaroo is called joey.

In the kangaroo world, mother and child engage in a game characterized by survival of the fittest.

Mommy kangaroo can kick out her own child from her pouch to protect her own life.

Send your questions to Kuya Kim through my Twitter account @kuya-kim\_atienza.







## GMA Network, Nestlé PHL ink pact for plastic waste advocacy



**KAIS MARZOUKI (left), chairman and CEO of Nestlé Philippines, and Atty. Felipe Gozon, chairman and CEO of GMA Network during the virtual signing of a partnership between the two companies to intensify consumer education and encourage action on plastic waste. NESTLÉ PH PHOTO**

**T**HE Philippines is one of the world's biggest sources of plastic waste. With only 33 percent of total plastic waste in the country disposed of in landfills or dumpsites, and just 9 percent recycled, plastic pollution has become a complex problem that requires a whole of society approach.

As a major food and beverage manufacturer, Nestlé PHL has made local sustainability commitments in line with Nestlé's global ambition and roadmap to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050.

With plastic as a significant source of GHGs, the company is taking a leadership role in tackling plastic waste toward a waste-free future. Among its pioneering initiatives in the country, Nestlé PHL is the first multinational fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) firm to achieve and maintain plastic neutrality, recovering the equivalent volume of plastic packaging it puts out in the market.

Timed with the celebration of its second year of plastic neutrality this month, Nestlé PH has inked a partnership with leading broadcast company, GMA Network, to intensify consumer education and encourage collective action on plastic waste. Through the years, the GMA Network has launched various environmental initiatives under its Kapuso ng Kalikasan advocacy.

In a virtual ceremony, Atty. Felipe Gozon, chairman and CEO of GMA Network, and Kais Marzouki, chairman and CEO of Nestlé Philippines, signed a memorandum of agreement for the partnership.

"We believe that our partnership with GMA Network can help move the needle to involve more consumers in creating a lasting, positive impact on the environment. GMA has the credibility, reach and influence to mobilize people for the cause of sustainability and ultimately the regeneration of the planet," Marzouki said.

"If we put all our efforts together, we can make a difference. Our joint campaign to build awareness on the impact of plastic waste can go a long way," he added.

"With this partnership, we will be able to communicate that it does not take a lot to become environmentalists. Through our joint efforts, Nestlé and GMA will inspire Filipinos that through basic acts at home, like proper waste disposal, power and water conservation practices, creative recycling and re-purposing, and even simply embracing a less material lifestyle, all these can make a big difference," Gozon said.

The advocacy campaign will feature relevant and timely educational content and sustainability practices focusing on plastic waste management.



# Hawaii quits coal in bid to fight climate change

BY CALEB JONES  
*The Associated Press*

**H**ONOLULU—The last bits of ash and greenhouse gases from Hawaii's only remaining coal-fired power plant slipped into the environment this week when the state's dirtiest source of electricity burned its final pieces of fuel.

The last coal shipment arrived in the islands at the end of July, and the AES Corporation coal plant closed Thursday after 30 years in operation. The facility produced up to one-fifth of the electricity on Oahu—the most populous island in a state of nearly 1.5 million people.

"It really is about reducing greenhouse gases," Hawaii Gov. David Ige said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And this coal facility is one of the largest emitters. Taking it offline means that we'll stop the 1.5 million metric tons of greenhouse gases that were emitted annually."

Like other Pacific islands, the Hawaiian chain has suffered the cascading impacts of climate change. The state is experiencing the destruction of coral reefs from bleaching associated with increased ocean temperatures, rapid sea level rise, more intense storms and drought that is increasing the state's wildfire risk.

In 2020, Hawaii's Legislature passed a law banning the use of

coal for energy production at the start of 2023. Hawaii has mandated a transition to 100 percent renewable energy by 2045, and was the first state to set such a goal.

But critics say that while ending the state's dirtiest source of energy is ultimately a good move, doing so now is not. Renewable sources meant to replace coal energy are not yet on line because of permitting delays, contract issues and pandemic-related supply-chain problems. So the state will instead burn more costly oil that is only slightly less polluting than coal.

"If you are a believer that climate change is going to end because we shut down this coal plant, this is a great day for you," said Democratic state Sen. Glenn Wakai, chair of the Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Technology. "But if you pay an electricity bill, this is a disastrous day for you."

The end of coal and the additional cost of oil will translate to an increase in electricity bills for consumers who already face the

nation's highest energy and living costs. Hawaiian Electric Company had projected ratepayers would see a 7 percent spike in their bills, but Thursday revised that to 4 percent because of a drop in oil prices.

"What we're doing ... is transitioning from the cheapest fossil fuel to the most expensive fossil fuel," Wakai said. "And we're going to be subjected to geopolitical issues on pricing for oil as well as access to oil."

The AES coal plant closure means Hawaii joins 10 other states with no major coal-fired power facilities, according to data from Global Energy Monitor, a nonprofit advocating for a global transition to clean energy. Rhode Island and Vermont never had any coal-fired power plants.

While Hawaii is the first state to fully implement a ban on coal, a handful of others previously passed laws. The 2015 law in Oregon, the first state to pass a ban, isn't effective until 2035. Washington state's 2020 coal ban starts in 2025. California, Maine and Texas are among states that have restricted construction of new coal-fired plants.

The number of coal-burning units in the United States peaked in 2001 at about 1,100. More than half have stopped operating since then, with most switching to more cost-effective natural gas.

US Energy Information Administration data shows oil generated about two-thirds of Hawaii's electricity in 2021. That makes Hawaii the most petroleum-dependent state, even as it tries to make a rapid transition to renewables.

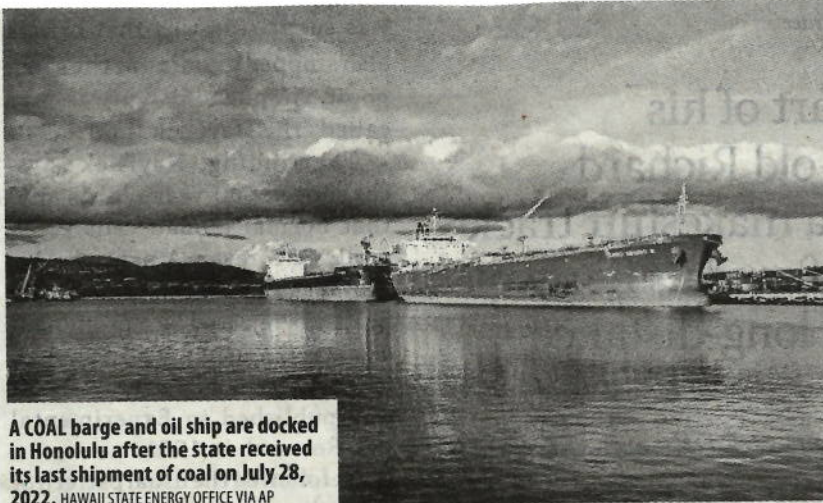
Hawaii already gets about 40



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**A COAL barge and oil ship are docked in Honolulu after the state received its last shipment of coal on July 28, 2022. HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE VIA AP**

percent of its power from sustainable sources including wind, solar, hydroelectric and geothermal.

State Sen. Kurt Fevella, a Republican and the Senate Minority Leader, suggested that Hawaiian Electric Company and other energy corporations should absorb the additional cost of shifting to renewables.

"The fact that Hawaii's families are already doing what is necessary to reduce their energy uses while still paying the most in the nation for household electricity is unsustainable," said Fevella. "While I believe utility companies like HECO can do more to reduce the energy burden passed on to Hawaii's rate-payers, I also believe developers of renewal energy projects should also bear a greater portion of the transmission costs."

Hawaiian Electric Company, the primary distributor of electricity for the state, said it can do little to change the prices to consumers.

"We're a regulated monopoly," said Vice President of Government and Community Relations

and Corporate Communications Jim Kelly. "So we don't set the prices. We don't make any money on the fuels that we use to generate electricity."

AES, the operator of Hawaii's last coal plant, has transitioned to creating clean energy and is working on large solar farms across the state, including one in West Oahu that will replace some lost coal energy when completed next year.

"Renewables are getting cheaper by the day," said Leonardo Moreno, president of AES Corporation's clean energy division. "I envision a future where energy is very, very cheap, abundant and renewable."

Sustainable energy experts say getting rid of coal is critical in curbing climate change. While the current renewable landscape is not perfect, they say technologies are improving.

"This is the decade of climate action that we really need to be moving on right now," said Make-na Coffman, University of Hawaii professor and director for the In-

stitute for Sustainability and Resilience. "And so these are available technologies and they might get incrementally better, but let's not wait 10 years to do it."

Profits from the increased electricity costs to Hawaii consumers will go mostly to overseas oil producers, said Hawaii's Chief Energy Officer Scott Glenn.

Hawaii's petroleum is distributed by Par Pacific, a Houston-based company which has traditionally sourced the state's oil from Libya and Russia. But after the invasion of Ukraine, Hawaii halted oil shipments from Russia and replaced it with products from Argentina.

Extending the coal plant's operation would be complicated and costly, Glenn said, noting that the plant has been planning decommissioning for years and would now have to buy coal at market price.

"Coal is going up. It's getting more expensive," he said of the supply Hawaii gets from clearcut rainforests in Indonesia. "If we were using US coal, it would not be the cheapest energy source on the grid."

Why would Hawaii, a small US state in the middle of the Pacific, try to lead the way in moving to sustainable energy?

"We are already feeling the effects of climate change," Glenn said. "It's not fair or right to ask other nations or states to act on our behalf if we are not willing and able to do it ourselves. If we don't, we drown."

*The Associated Press data journalist Mary Katherine Wildeman in Hartford, Conn. contributed to this report.*



# THE HEALTH RISK TOGETHER IS WORSE THAN EITHER ALONE Heat waves plus air pollution can be deadly

**O**N the morning news, you see the weather forecast is for high heat, and there is an "excessive heat watch" for later in the week. You were hoping the weather would cool down, but yet another heat wave is threatening human health and increasing the chance of wildfires. On top of these warm days and nights, air quality data has been showing unhealthy levels of pollution.

Sounds familiar? This scenario is increasingly the new normal in many parts of the world.

High heat and air pollution are each problematic for human health, particularly for vulnerable populations, such as older adults.

But what happens when they hit at the same time?

We examined over 1.5 million deaths from 2014 to 2020 registered in California—a state prone to summer heat waves and air pollution from wildfires—to find out.

## Deaths spike when both risks are high

THE number of deaths rose both on hot days and on days with high levels of fine particulate air pollution, known as PM2.5.

But on days when an area was hit with a double whammy of both high heat and high air pollution, the effects were much higher than for each condition alone.

The risk of death on those extra-hot and polluted days was about three times greater than the effect of either high heat or high air pollution alone.

The more extreme the temperatures and pollution, the higher the risk. During the top 10 percent of hottest and most polluted days, the risk of death increased by 4 percent compared to days without extremes.

During the top 1 percent, it increased by 21 percent; and among older adults over age 75, the risk of death increased by more than a third on those days.

## Why risks are higher when both hit at once

THERE are several ways the combined exposure to extreme heat and



**FORMATION of a heat wave: a high-pressure circulation in the atmosphere acts like a dome or cap, trapping heat at the surface near the ground.** US NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

particulate air pollution can harm human health.

Oxidative stress is the most common biological pathway linked with particulate air pollution and heat exposure.

Oxidative stress is an imbalance between production of highly reactive molecules known as reactive oxygen species (ROS), and the body's ability to remove them. It's been linked with lung diseases, among other illnesses.

Antioxidants help clean up these molecules, but particulate air pollution and heat disrupt this balance through excessive metabolic ROS production and lowered antioxidant activity.

Our research also showed that the effects of particulate air pollution and heat extremes were larger when high nighttime temperature and pollution occurred together.

High nighttime temperatures can interfere with normal sleep and potentially contribute to chronic health conditions, such as heart disease and obesity, and disrupt how the body regulates temperature.

Older adults may be more susceptible to effects of extreme heat and air pollution exposure, in part because this stress comes on top of age-related chronic health conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or chronic lung disease.

Impaired body temperature regulation in response to heat can also occur with aging. And older adults may be less mobile and therefore less able to get to cooling centers or to medical care and be less able to afford air conditioning.

## Future of high temperatures and air pollution

THIS isn't just a California problem. Climate change will increase exposure to high heat and air pollution in many parts of the country.

Yearly average temperatures in the US are already more than 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) warmer than at the beginning of the 1900s.

By the end of this century, global temperatures are on pace to be nearly 5 F (2.7 C) warmer. Dangerous extreme heat waves, currently rare, will become more common.

Changing climate is also affecting levels of outdoor fine particulate pollution—for example, through weather changes, such as air stagnation events, wind and dust storms, and drier and warmer conditions that contribute to increasingly frequent and intense wildfires. *Erika Garcia, University of Southern California/The Conversation (CC) via AP*

## What to do to stay safe

FURTHER research is needed to



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Heat waves plus Air Pollution

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can be deadly

better understand these effects, such as the full impact of wildfire smoke exposure.

However, enough is known that people should take measures to reduce their risk of harm during periods of extreme heat or air pollution.

That means staying well hydrated and keeping cool. Shopping malls and other air-conditioned public spaces can provide a refuge from heat.

Home air conditioning, especially during nighttime, can reduce mortality. A portable air filter in the bedroom can markedly reduce particle pollution levels.

People with symptoms of heat stress, such as headache, nausea, dizziness or confusion, especially the elderly, should seek medical care.

Many county and state health departments already provide alerts about extreme heat and extreme air pollution. Developing a special category of alert during co-occurring extremes may be beneficial to public health.

Governments also need to take steps now to avoid the worst future climate change scenarios. Some best practices for cities include creating cooling shade cover and green space that will also reduce particle pollution.

**Erika Garcia, University of Southern California/The Conversation (CC) via AP**