

ABS-CBN News 7 hrs · 🌐

Bumalik na sa kulay itim ang tubig ng Manila Bay matapos itong makitaan ng matingkad na kulay ng tubig noong Miyerkoles. #LuzonLockdown



“There’s something wrong with that, baka mayroong nagpakawala ng anumang chemical o pollution diyan kaya nagkakaganyan.”

Usec. BENNY ANTIPORDA
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

COVID-19
27 MARCH 2020

WORLDWIDE
CASES: 465,915
DEATHS: 21,031

SOUTH KOREA
CASES: 9,241
DEATHS: 131

PHILIPPINES
CASES: 803
DEATHS: 54
RECOVERED: 31

Source: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

TUBIG SA BAHAGI NG MANILA BAY NAG-IBA NG KULAY

0:28 / 1:56 [ng lang sa 528-1164 o 527-0900 local 188.](#) [pede pang it](#) [hacc](#)

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ABS-CBN News 7 hrs · 🌐

Bumalik na sa kulay itim ang tubig ng Manila Bay matapos itong makitaan ng matingkad na kulay ng tubig noong Miyerkoles. #LuzonLockdown



“Maraming hotels diyan. Ang kulay ay mukhang galing sa swimming pool. Tinitingnan natin kung maaari yan ang nangyari.”

Usec. BENNY ANTIPORDA
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

COVID-19
27 MARCH 2020

WORLDWIDE
CASES: 465,915
DEATHS: 21,031

MALAYSIA
CASES: 1,796
DEATHS: 21

PHILIPPINES
CASES: 803
DEATHS: 54
RECOVERED: 31

Source: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

TUBIG SA BAHAGI NG MANILA BAY NAG-IBA NG KULAY

0:37 / 1:56 [ng direktang news.abs-cbn.com mula sa inyong mga](#) [ple at andri](#) [dev](#)

👍👎❤️ 663 69 Comments 97 Shares

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/27254475167/posts/10158145158215168/>

Earth Hour on

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 28, 2020 - 12:00am



MANILA, Philippines —Conservation group World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) will push through with the observance of Earth Hour online tonight.

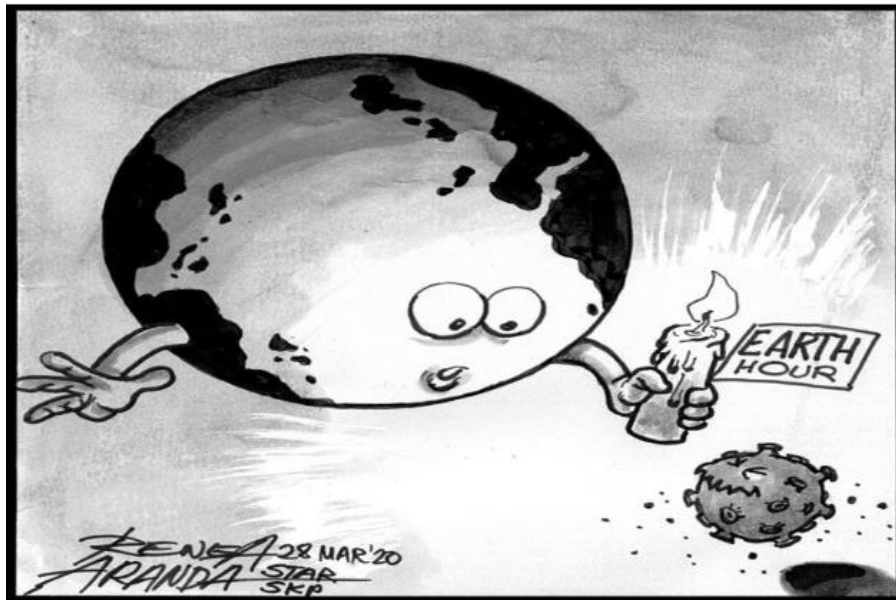
"There's this whole digital space that we haven't fully maximized yet. So a lot of countries are going online this year," said WWF-Philippines Earth Hour national director Angela Ibay.

The WWF offices in Singapore, Nigeria and Senegal, among others, are also exploring digital efforts this year.

"Earth Hour 2020 Philippines will largely be a digital effort. WWF-Philippines is urging Filipinos to take part in Earth Hour 2020 from their own homes, through actions as simple as closing and leaving off non-essential lights for the night," Ibay urged.

She is hopeful that the Filipinos' preference to go digital could help them reach more people and further widen their impact with reduced strain on manpower and other resources.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/03/28/2003895/earth-hour-on>



EDITORIAL- Lights out for the Earth

(The Philippine Star) - March 28, 2020 - 12:00am

It's difficult to look for any silver lining in the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, which continues to claim lives around the planet. Environmental advocates, however, cite an obvious consequence of suspending much of transport operations by land, air and sea to prevent the further spread of COVID-19: air quality has become much cleaner.

This is the only piece of positive news as the international community proceeds with the 13th annual observance of Earth Hour. Tonight starting at 8:30, participants in the Philippines will switch off non-essential lights for an hour, in a symbolic commitment to confront climate change and protect the environment.

Because of the extraordinary circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, activities to mark the event will be conducted digitally, as people stay at home and observe physical distancing. The virtual observance is a show of solidarity with those affected by the disease.

COVID-19, which has killed over 24,365 people and infected over 542,000 others in 199 countries and territories as of yesterday afternoon, need not kill Earth Hour as well. In the Philippines, local curfews start at 8 p.m., imposed by many local governments in Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon, which is under enhanced community quarantine. People heeding calls to stay home can switch off lights for an hour.

This year's theme for Earth Hour is "climate action" and sustainable development. The event continues to inspire individuals, organizations and businesses around the globe to commit to measures that will reduce global warming. The Philippines, with its extensive coastline, is one of the countries most vulnerable to the impact of climate change. This year's Earth Hour should prod world leaders to approve the proposed New Deal for Nature & People, which seeks to restore nature by 2030. When a vaccine is finally in use against COVID-19, the existential threat posed by climate change will still be there, calling for a sustained battle.



COVID-19 MALUPIT KAYA MAGKAISA, MAGTULUNGAN

March 27, 2020 @ 3:20 PM 16 hours ago
Views: 94

DUMARAMI ang mga opisyal ng gobyerno na nahahawa o maaaring nahawa sa Corona Virus Disease-19.

Kung iisipin, laging nasa isip at isinasagawa ng mga ito ang mga patakaran para maharang ang paglaganap ng nasabing nakamamatay na sakit.

Subalit natatamaan pa rin sila.

Sana naman, hindi ganito ang sa bahagi ng mga mamamayan.

Sapagkat kung magkahawa-hawa ang mga mamamayan, maaaring matulad tayo sa Amerika, Italy, Spain, China, Iran at iba pang mga bansang labis na sinasalakay ng mabagsik na sakit.

Libo-libo na ang patay sa nasabing mga bansa at ngayo'y sinasabing halos pabagsak na maging ang kanilang pambansang ekonomiya at kabuhayan ng kanilang mga mamamayan.

Mabuti't mayayaman silang bansa.

Paano kung tayo ang matamaan nang husto?

POSITIBO AT NAKA-QUARANTINE

Kabilang na sa mga nagpositibo o naka-quarantine sa COVID-19 ang ilang senador, kongresman, Government Unit.

Sa mga huling ulat, nagpositibo ang maituturing na bahagi ng Palasyo na si Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Felimon Santos habang naka-quarantine sina Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana at Interior Secretary Eduardo Año.

Unang nag-self quarantine sina Finance Sec. Carlos Dominguez, Transportation Sec. Arthur Tugade, Public Works and Highways Sec. Mark Villar at Executive Sec. Salvador Medialdea nang may mag-positibo sa COVID -19 na nakasama nila sa inspection sa North Luzon Expressway Harbor Link noong Marso 5, 2020.

Nakasama rin doon mismo si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaya napilitan siyang magpasuri at salamat na lang na nag-negatibo siya.

Kabilang naman sa mga nagpositibo sina Sen. Migz Zubiri at Coco Pimentel habang nag-self quarantine ang iba na sina Sen. Nancy Binay, Sherwin Gatchalian, Bong Revilla, Francis Tolentino, Francis Pangilinan, Imee Marcos sa pagka-expose sa may positibong resource person nila sa hearing sa edukasyon noong unang dalawang linggo ng buwang ito.

Nagpositibo rin ang isang kongresman gaya nina ACT-CIS Partlist Representative Eric Yap at habang walang nakatitiyak na hindi nahawaan si Cagayan Cong. Kongresista Atty. Ramon Nolasco, Jr. ng kanyang amang ex-Cong. Ramon Nolasco Sr.

May mga nagpositibo ring LGU officials gaya nina Caba, La Union Mayor Philip Crispino at misis nito na si Konsehal Donna; Baliuag, Bulacan Mayor Ferdie Estrella at Naic, Cavite Mayor Junio Dualan.

Ayaw isipin ng Ultimatum, mga Bro, na matulad tayo sa Iran na siyam na ministro, mambabatas at ambassador ang namatay na sa COVID -19 dahil maaaring magkandaheto't hetot ang ating bansa.

HUWAG MALIITIN ANG COVID-19

Huwag nating maliitin o ipagwalang-bahal ang COVID -19.

Sapagkat sa rekord, pangalawa tayo sa Indonesia (may 78 patay at 893 positibo) sa Southeast Asia na may pinakamalalang kalagayan.

Mayroon tayong 45 patay at 707 positibo.

Heto ang isang masakit isipin: sa 45 patay natin, 10 ang doktor samantalang, 3 lang sa Indonesia.

Masakit pa, ilang hospital na ang nag-quarantine ng daan-daan nilang mga doktor, nurse at iba pa, gaya ng Philippine Heart Center na namatayan ng dalawang doktor, University of Sto. Tomas Hospital, Medical City at iba pa.

Halos punuan na rin ng pasyenteng nagpopositibo at nagpapatsekap sa ating mga pampublikong ospital na itinalagang panlaban sa COVID -19 gaya ng San Lazaro Hospital, Lung Center of the Philippines at Research Institute of Tropical Medicine.

Hindi lang 'yan.

Lumalaki ang reklamo sa mga ospital na kulang na kulang na ang mga personal protective equipment gaya ng mask, glove, kasuotan kaya namamatay ang ating mga doktor at naku-quarantine ang iba pa.

MAGTULUNGAN, MAGKAISA

Habang nagaganap ang paglala ng ating kalagayan sa COVID -19, mga Bro, ewan natin kung bakit higit na inaatupag ng mga kritiko ng pamahalaan ang maghanap ng kasiraan ng lahat ng hakbang ng pamahalaan para malabanan ang sakit at mapagaan ang hirap nating dinaranas ngayon.

Inaprubahan na ng Kongreso at Palasyo ang P300 bilyong ayuda na higit na nakatuon sa pagsagip sa kahirapan ng higit na nakararaming mahihirap.

Mula sa 22 milyong pamilya, sinasabing higit na ibubuhos ang P300 bilyon para sa mahigit 16 milyong pamilya na talagang mahirap.

Malaki umanong kahangalan ito dahil dapat makinabang umano ang lahat nang pantay-pantay.

Napakaliit din umano ang bilang ng mga namamatay at nagpopositibo kaya hindi kailangan ang Enhanced Community Quarantine na may kasamang halos magdamag na curfew at pag-lockdown o panghaharang sa mga kalsada ng mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Binabatikos din ang deklarasyon ng State of Calamity na nag-aatas na gamitin ng mga pambansa at LGU ang kanilang mga calamity fund.

Mga korap umano ang mga opisyal ng pamahalaan at marami umano ang magbubulsa lang ng salapi mula sa calamity fund.

Ang maganda sana ngayon ay magtiwala tayo sa pamahalaan, humanap ng paraan na magtulugan at magkaisa laban hindi lang sa COVID -19 kundi sa gutom at hirap na nagsimula nang gumapang sa milyon-milyong pamilya ng mga manggagawa, tsuper, maliliit na negosyante, magsasaka, mangingisda at iba pa.

Source: <https://remate.ph/covid-19-malupit-kaya-magkaisa-magtulungan/>

Catanduanes State U launches hand sanitizer with abaca extract

Published March 27, 2020, 7:37 PM

By Jinky Tabor

VIRAC, Catanduanes – Catanduanes State University (CSU) has launched its own hand sanitizer enhanced with abaca extract.



(CSU President Minerva I. Morales and employees while reproducing the hand sanitizer with Abaca extract)

The product of a research conducted by CSU President Dr. Minerva I Morales, the sanitizer has abaca extract that was found to have anti-microbial properties.

It was produced following the protocols set forth by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Mass production of the new hand sanitizer will soon start with the provincial government seeking to distribute these to the health workers in the province.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/27/catanduanes-state-u-launches-hand-sanitizer-with-abaca-extract/>

PCG probes sudden discoloration of Manila Bay

Published March 27, 2020, 6:05 PM

By *Betheena Unite*

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is now looking into the sudden discoloration of part of the Manila Bay, saying it could be due to pollutants.



(PCG / MANILA BULLETIN)

When some part of Manila Bay turned turquoise Thursday, people online thought its water is finally healing but it was not the case, the Coast Guard said.

The sudden discoloration of Manila Bay bolstered the Coast Guard suspicion that it could be due to pollutants coming from nearby residences and establishments.

"Iniimbestigahan na ng PCG ang naturang insidente gayong maaring resulta ito ng 'pollutant' dulot ng mga duming itinatambak dito ng mga residente o karatig na establisimiyento (The PCG is now conducting an investigation on the particular incident because it could be the result of pollutant due to wastes dumped by residents or nearby establishments)," Commodore Armand Balilo said.

Commodore Edgardo Hernando, of the Coast Guard Special Operations Force, led a seaborne patrol in Manila Bay Friday to observe the condition of the waters after its sudden discoloration, Balilo said.

"Inoobserbahan ng Philippine Coast Guard ang lagay ng Manila Bay matapos ang kapansin-pansing pag-iiba ng kulay nito kamakailan (We are observing the condition of Manila Bay after its sudden change in color)," Balilo added.

While the reason behind Manila Bay's discoloration remains undetermined, the Coast Guard appealed to residents living nearby to refrain from frolicking in the bay as a precautionary measure to counter the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

On Thursday, residents caught swimming at the bay were accosted and told to stay home until the enhanced community quarantine is lifted.

"Muli, umaapila ang PCG sa publiko na makiisa at sundin ang mga ipinapatupad na regulasyon sa kasagsagan ng enhanced community quarantine sa buong Luzon (The PCG appeals anew to the public to follow regulations implemented for the enhanced community quarantine)," the Coast Guard said in an advisory.

Groups urge DENR to investigate Manila Bay's

March 28, 2020

TITLE: 'turquoise' waters

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DATE

Groups urge DENR to investigate Manila Bay's 'turquoise' waters

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - March 27, 2020 - 7:54pm



MANILA, Philippines — Organizations on Friday called on government agencies to investigate the abrupt change in color of Manila Bay's surface.

This, after photos and videos that showed Manila Bay's waters turning turquoise went viral, fascinating social media users.

But according to a fisheries expert, the discoloration of Manila Bay manifests that there might be pollutants discharged in its waters.

"This abrupt change in color in Manila Bay does not seem natural and should not be attributed to the enhanced community quarantine... For a eutrophic and polluted body of water like Manila Bay, marine rehabilitation will take years and won't happen drastically over a period of a lockdown," Jerwin Baure fisheries expert of fishers group PAMALAKAYA said.

Baure said pollutant materials by an establishment might have been dumped into Manila Bay, which can be hazardous to the marine environment.

"The DENR should get to the bottom of this. In case, on whatever establishment or entity responsible for a possible pollution discharge should be held accountable over violation of the government's very own rehabilitation drive of Manila Bay," Baure said.

Non-profit ocean conservation organization Oceana said the development requires immediate study and continuous monitoring on the water and its impact on fisheries resources and marine environment of Manila Bay.

Groups urge DENR to investigate Manila Bay's

March 28, 2020

TITLE: 'turquoise' waters

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

“The government, while appropriately engulfed in public health response to COVID-19 crisis, should also look into this potential public health and environmental concern, not only for Metro Manila but in nearby provinces, cities and municipalities,” lawyer Gloria Ramos, Oceana vice president, said.

Manila Bay is a principal fishing ground for sardines, mackerel, mullet, threadfin, bream, squid, blue crab, round scad and fusilier, according to the National Fisheries and Research Development.

“The people’s expressed interest on this observed change in color of the surface of the bay indicates a heightened awareness and concern in protecting not only the heritage and beauty of the world renowned sunset view but also the benefits of its marine resources for the people dependent on this body of water for their livelihood,” Ramos said.

The rehabilitation of Manila Bay kicked off on January 23 last year.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/03/27/2003846/groups-urge-denr-investigate-manila-bays-turquoise-waters>

Amid COVID-19 crisis, Manila Bay discoloration is also a public health concern. Here's why.

By Euden Valdez

- March 27, 2020 - 8:25 PM



The usual brackish water of Manila Bay clears up in some areas as the natural harbor rests from usual human activities amid Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine on Thursday. (The STAR/KJ Rosales)

Aside from the improving air quality in **Metro Manila** sans public transportation, several online users also noticed that Manila Bay became cleaner during the **enhanced community quarantine**.

Has the Manila Bay waters turned turquoise?

On Wednesday, videos and photos circulating online showed Manila Bay with turquoise-tinted waters prompting some netizens to believe that it's also the effect of the Luzon-wide quarantine.

However, a **Philippine Coast Guard** official said that the changed in surface color may be due to harmful pollutants.

“Based on previous reports of Marine Environmental Protection Command, the water’s discoloration occurs when there are pollutants,” said PCG Commodore Arman Balilo in a [GMA News report](#).

International advocacy organization **Oceana** also urged the **Department of Environment and Natural Resources**, the **Department of Agriculture** and the **Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources** to further investigate the Manila Bay water discoloration.

“This development requires immediate study and continuous monitoring by experts on the water and its impact on the fisheries resources and marine environment of Manila Bay,” said Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president for Oceana in the Philippines.

Oceana and its partners, as well as civil society and the private sectors, oppose the illegal dumping of waste and other chemicals to Manila Bay. It can cause irreversible damage to one of the Philippines’ major marine ecosystems and fisheries.

Apart from its famous sunset, Manila Bay is also known to supply seafood and livelihood to nearby communities.

The non-profit conservation organization cited that a study of **National Fisheries and Research Development Institute** showed that it is also the fishing ground for sardines, mackerel, mullet (banak), threadfin, bream (bisugo), squid (posit), blue crab, round scad (galunggong), and fusilier (dalagang bukid).

On Thursday, GMA News posted a video of [Baseco residents harvesting mussels](#) along the coastline to provide food for their families as they await relief goods from the local government of Manila.

Oceana deemed the discoloration a potential health concern. “The government, while appropriately engulfed in public health response to COVID-19 crisis, should also look into this potential public health and environmental concern, not only for Metro Manila but in nearby provinces, cities and municipalities,” Ramos added.

Asked if the Manila Bay can really become cleaner during enhanced community quarantine, Ramos told **Interaksyon** that it may pave way for the healing of nature.

“Human activities are the sources of pollution and destruction of our environment. When we stay away, due to ECQ, from activities that cause pollution, destruction and degradation to the natural environment, whether on land, sea or air, nature heals,” she said.

In the same way fisheries management hinders commercial fishing in municipal waters, fisherfolk and villagers reap the benefits of a healthy and bountiful ocean.

Under threat of reclamation

The conservation organization is also among the environmental groups opposing the reclamation of Manila Bay. It is a member of the People’s Network for the Integrity of Coastal Habitats and Ecosystems, an alliance calling for the restoration, instead of reclamation, of the Manila Bay.

Among the newest projects proposed to be developed along the bay’s shorelines include the Sangley International Airport, which was given a Notice of Award by the Cavite Provincial Government just last February.

This came even after [President Rodrigo Duterte committed](#) to ban Manila Bay reclamation until the end of his term.

During the enhanced community quarantine, the group is hopeful that reclamation projects are also put on hold.

“As we are in lockdown mode, movements are carefully monitored so it is unlikely that such activities are happening. We hope so,” Ramos said.

Source: <https://www.interaksyon.com/trends-spotlights/2020/03/27/165289/amid-covid-19-crisis-manila-bay-discoloration-also-a-public-health-concern-heres-why/>

More medical waste expected as COVID-19 cases surge

Kristine Sabillo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Mar 27 2020 04:45 PM | Updated as of Mar 27 2020 05:18 PM



Trash collectors gather garbage at a creekside residential area in Tondo Manila on June 26, 2019. © Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News/File

MANILA — An environmental group has warned the Philippine government to ensure the safety of communities as medical waste is expected to increase with the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

“We need to educate the public and urge direct interventions from public authorities on the need to disinfect used face masks, tissue papers, and other waste potentially contaminated with COVID-19,” said Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE, in a statement.

“If the government does not initiate mass disinfection measures, the country’s 44,000 tons of waste generated daily are now likely infectious and can cause new surges in COVID-19 outbreaks,” he said.

Kalikasan said that while the country has 135 treatment, storage and disposal facilities for hospital waste, the increased use of face masks, personal protective equipment and other contaminated waste outside medical facilities may get mixed with municipal waste.

Since the start of the outbreak, ordinary Filipinos have resorted to wearing face masks when going outdoors. This is despite the Department of Health’s reminder that only those who are sick and are working in hospitals are encouraged to wear it. Local government units have also started giving out face shields to their personnel amid the Luzon lockdown.

“Municipal waste collectors are the first to be exposed to this infectious contagion,” Dulce said. “They do not have sufficient personal protective equipment and do not have employment and other economic securities.”

The group pointed out that only 32 percent of villages have a materials recovery facility and only 24 percent of local government units have access to sanitary landfills.

Kalikasan urged the public to

- disinfect face masks, soiled tissue paper and other healthcare waste with a 10% bleach solution (one part bleach, nine parts water) or 60-70% alcohol solution.

- be careful with handling garbage and with the use of cleaning agents by wearing PPEs
- make sure the disinfecting solution is appropriate for the material you are cleaning or simply use soap and water to be safe
- segregate the PPEs and healthcare waste in a separate trash bag and label as containing ‘face masks and other healthcare waste.

The group said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for COVID-19 ensure the allocation of funds for waste management.

“The Duterte government has to do more to shield garbage collectors and sanitation workers from COVID-19 infection. It should also provide capacity building, sanitation materials, and protective equipment for households and barangays,” Dulce said.

On the other hand, the group warned against the “indiscriminately spraying of bleach solutions and other cleaning agents on unsegregated waste (that) may result into chemical reactions that can create dioxins and other pollutants.”

The DENR has already asked garbage collectors to disinfect waste to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. It said it will coordinate with LGUs on how to properly dispose waste.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/27/20/more-medical-waste-expected-as-covid-19-cases-surge>

Palawan upscale resorts get ‘turtle friendly’ recognition

posted March 27, 2020 at 09:30 pm by **Steph Llarena**

Luxury accommodations amid a biodiverse marine ecosystem, where holidaymakers can relax in peace in the same place where aquatic animals thrive. This could very well be written all over in the upscale resorts in El Nido, Palawan after they received a wildlife tourism recognition.



Palawan-based resort chain Ten Knots Group was recently awarded by the Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network (WFEN), the world’s first-ever “Sea Turtle Friendly Tourism Certification,” for its exceptional care for the aquatic animal.

According to the group, it has been working with WFEN since 2017 to develop and implement best practice guidelines for resorts and tourism stakeholders to contribute to conservation.

A subsidiary of Ayala Land Inc., the group is composed of four luxury El Nido resorts—Apulit Island, Miniloc Island, Lagen Island, and Pangulasian Island—and Lio Tourism Estate, a 325-hectare master-planned mixed-use sustainable resort community in mainland El Nido with low-density boutique hotels, commercial establishments, residences, restaurants, and lifestyle shops.

Ten Knots boasts that each of its property has met the requirements for mitigating key threats to sea turtles and their survival through its Be GREEN (Guard, Respect, Educate El Nido) program, which includes best practices to minimize negative impacts.

Conservation practices include ensuring beachfront lighting does not cause disorientation of hatchlings, and conducting sea turtle patrols to help protect nests, hatchlings, and adult turtles from poachers and other threats.

Located in northern Palawan, El Nido town is home to over 850 fish species, 45 genera of corals, over a hundred bird species, and five out of the country’s seven marine turtle species. Its beaches are important nesting habitat for the endangered Green, the critically endangered Hawksbill, and the vulnerable Olive Ridley sea turtle.

Other rare and protected species within the aforementioned El Nido resorts include the Palawan Hornbill, the Asian Fairy-Bluebird, and the Philippine Pangolin.



Be GREEN started out as an environmental education program in 1999 for Ten Knots' staff, and eventually expanded to include nature interpretation trainings, community outreach, youth camps, and other projects undertaken by the group's Environment and Sustainability Department.

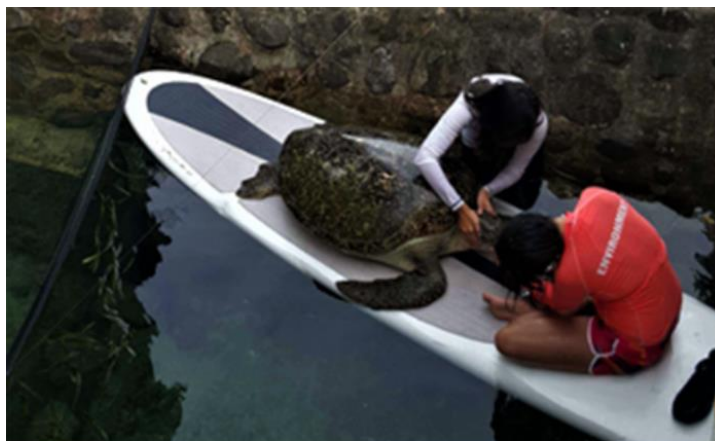
"This certification comes at an opportune time as Ten Knots Group celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, and validates our efforts, showing us we are on the right track when it comes to preserving the environment," marketing director Joey Bernardino said in a statement.

Enjoining guests in the cause, the resorts highlight education to ensure safety of sea turtles, and have also eliminated disposable plastic products to help address marine plastic pollution. They also undertake periodical coastal and underwater cleanup efforts to ensure the health of the marine ecosystem.

"We are proud to add Ten Knots as part of the global Wildlife Friendly family of brands," enthused WFEN executive director and co-founder Julie Stein.

Stein added, "They are a model we hope other resorts around the world will be inspired by to protect our fragile marine resources through tourism that advances conservation outcomes for species like sea turtles."

WFEN's certification programs represent grassroots farmers, ranchers, herders, artisans, indigenous peoples, and conservation heroes from around the world.



Turtle rescue and rehabilitation in Bacuit Bay.

The Sea Turtle Friendly Tourism program will be open to global applicants this year, whose standards were developed by the world's sea turtle experts including veteran Filipino conservationist Romy Trono and the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network, among others.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/index.php/lifestyle/travel-and-leisure/320554/palawan-upscale-resorts-get-turtle-friendly-recognition.html>

PH risks new diseases without forests



By [Leander C. Domingo, TMT](#)

March 28, 2020

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines is warning that loss of forest cover could increase the risk of Filipinos getting infected with new diseases.

Joel Palma, WWF Philippines president and chief executive officer, said that records from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources show about 47,000 hectares of forest cover are lost every year from rampant illegal logging and lack of security in areas declared as protected wildlife sanctuaries.



David G. Quimpo, Haribon Foundation 2019

THREATENED PIGEON SPECIE The pink-bellied Imperial Pigeon is one of the endemic imperial pigeons in the Philippines. With an average length of up to 16.5 inches, it is the second-largest imperial pigeon in the Philippines after the Mindoro Imperial Pigeon. It can be easily identified by its green breast and pinkish grey belly and its humming-like call that is loud. Due to habitat loss and hunting, their population continues to decrease and the specie is now considered as "near threatened" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. PHOTO BY DAVID QUIMPO/HARIBON FOUNDATION

“Should the Philippines continue to lose its forest cover at the pace that forests are being denuded now, the country will lose one of its main protective agents against emerging infectious diseases which are the forests,” he added.

Palma said studies from nongovernment organizations and the United Nations (UN) have stated that emerging infectious diseases in tropical countries like the Philippines are aggravated, if not caused, by changes in land and forest cover, particularly deforestation and forest fragmentation. There are also findings that the coronavirus disease 2019 that has spread worldwide originated from bats.

He explained that without forests, more and more diseases that could be harmful or fatal to humans could emerge from the wild.

“The Philippines has one of the fastest deforestation rates in the world, and yet our forests house two thirds of the planet’s biodiversity, which supports a wide spectrum of flora and fauna. If we continue to allow our forests to be denuded, we will lose our forests in the next two decades and we open ourselves up to risks of emerging diseases,” Palma added.

He said the Philippines could have prevented this from happening if it had been more stringent in the implementation of laws that protect forests.

“The time to act now has already passed. We should have acted yesterday to prevent further damage in the future. But this reality is a reminder for us that the severity of this situation calls for collaborative action — everyone must participate to win this war against deforestation,” Palma said.

This is why WWF recently joined a coalition of like-minded organizations in promoting a greener Philippines through the rehabilitation of forests.

Under the program called GCash Forest, which recently won a Silver Anvil for its groundbreaking use of technology for environmental protection and rehabilitation, GCash users are encouraged to plant and nourish virtual “digital trees.”

Palma said the digital trees, when fully grown, will then be planted at the Ipo Watershed.

“The program calls for the participation of individuals to join hands with us as we rehabilitate the watersheds. We have seen an encouraging number of people willingly volunteering with us as we move on with this project,” he added.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/03/28/business/green-business/ph-risks-new-diseases-without-forests/707431/>

Coronavirus and climate change: Is there any connection?



By [Ludwig O. Federigan](#)

March 28, 2020

In celebration of my 100th column in this esteemed paper — The Manila Times — I am very excited to share with you the views of one of the climate scientists that I admire and follow — no less than professor Katharine Hayhoe, an atmospheric scientist and director of the Climate Science Center at Texas Tech University in the United States. In 2019, she was recognized as Foreign Policy magazine’s 100 Leading Global Thinkers and United Nations Champions of the Earth. I have followed her speaking engagements worldwide and have cited her works in my presentations.

One common question that admired climate scientist Hayhoe has been getting these days, as she shared in her Twitter account, is: “What does coronavirus disease — Covid-19 — have to do with climate change?”

In a quick response, “the short answer is very little,” she said, “but the long answer is everything is related,” she continued. Hayhoe expounded her answers in a series of tweets.

She said that climate change is expected to increase the geographic range of infectious diseases with scary names like Zika or Chikungunya carried by “vectors” — ticks, mosquitoes and other animals — whose geographic range is limited, and expands in a warming climate. In the case of dengue, she said that the range of the disease will shift rather than expand.

She cited the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) Climate and Health Assessment which focuses on the health impacts of climate change.

Three of the key findings include:

1. Climate change is expected to alter the geographic and seasonal distributions of existing vectors and vector-borne diseases;
2. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and a higher frequency of some extreme weather events associated with climate change will influence the distribution, abundance and prevalence of infection in the mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus and other pathogens by altering habitat availability and mosquito and viral reproduction rates; and
3. Vector-borne pathogens are expected to emerge or reemerge due to the interactions of climate factors with many other drivers, such as changing land-use patterns and its impacts to human disease, however, will be limited by the adaptive capacity of human populations, such as vector control practices or personal protective measures.

Climate and health impacts do not occur in isolation, and an individual or community could face multiple threats at the same time, at different stages in one’s life, or accumulating over the course of one’s life, the report continued to explain.

Covid-19, believed to have originated from a wildlife market in Wuhan City, Hubei province in China, has spread throughout the world. Despite massive efforts to contain the disease, based on the data provided by Worldometers as of Mar. 25, 2020 (3:20 GMT), Covid-19 has affected 197 countries, infected 422,829 people worldwide and killed 18,907.

Like other known diseases — severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), Ebola and Zika — that began in animals and transmitted into humans, Covid-19, she explained, “is currently being spread by humans, not animals, everywhere humans live. So climate change is not significantly affecting the spread of the disease.” That one’s on us. It goes where we go, she added.

Hayhoe said that there’s the fact that a warmer climate may decrease (humans) immune response that makes us more vulnerable to viruses like the flu. But as the planet warms, she added that the flu season could end up being year-round and this would give the virus more time to mutate into more dangerous strains.

In the article titled “Climate Change May Hamper Response to Flu: Study” published in The Scientist in February 2019, it claimed that previous studies have found that a warming climate may change the distribution of different diseases and the insects that carry them. Moreover, a new study suggests that a warming climate may also hinder the immune response of animals and humans infected with viruses and other pathogens.

In summarizing the impacts, she said that “climate change is a threat multiplier” — a statement shared by scientists, political figures and civil society around the world. Climate change takes what we already care about, she added.

As a threat multiplier, climate change makes already dangerous social and political situations even worse. Not only do we have to work to minimize the impact of climate change on our environment, but we also have to deal with how it affects human issues today.

In closing, she made one more connection between Covid-19 and climate change. “When it all comes down to it, most of us want the same thing no matter what side of the political aisle we’re on,” she said.

“What really matters is the same for all of us. It’s the health and safety of our family, our friends, our loved ones, our communities, our cities and our country. That’s what the coronavirus pandemic threatens, and that’s exactly what climate change does, too,” Hayhoe added.

We humans are one species with very little variation in our basic DNA, and we evolved with other species in the planet’s biosphere by natural selection, responding to changes and stresses in our various habitats and environments — two basic lessons we have to realize after decades of self-inflicted global crises — the afflictions of pandemics, flooded cities, burned forestlands, droughts and other increasingly damaging climate disasters — based on the discoveries of Charles Darwin and other biologists in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom) and executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University (USA). He can be emailed at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com.

Holcim sustains use of alternative fuel



By [The Manila Times](#)

March 28, 2020

Leading cement maker Holcim Philippines Inc. plans to further increase its consumption of qualified and properly segregated and pre-processed waste as alternative fuel and raw material to manage costs and help address the solid waste problem in the country.



Holcim officials, led by President and Chief Executive Officer John Stull (fifth from left) and Vice President for Geocycle Frederic Vallat (third from left), visit Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, on Jan. 14, 2020 to share the company's efforts in helping address the waste management problem in the country. PHOTO FROM HOLCIM

Through its waste management unit Geocycle, Holcim Philippines utilized in 2019 more than 170,000 tons of waste materials from industries and communities as alternative fuel and raw materials with its co-processing technology. This allowed the company to avoid coal in cement production for 38 days leading to lower carbon emissions and fuel cost. The initiative also helped the company's partners to manage their wastes in an eco-friendly manner.

Holcim Philippines President and Chief Executive Officer John Stull said the company will continue to drive co-processing operations and consumption of alternative fuel and raw materials to manage costs and have a more positive impact on the country.

“Aside from its business benefits, our Geocycle unit enables us to further contribute to Philippine development in a sustainable manner. Through our co-processing operations, we are able to lower our carbon footprint and help ease the waste management challenges of the country while producing an essential building material for development,” he said.

In 2019, Holcim Philippines agreed to pre-process as alternative fuel the segregated wastes of local governments near its plants in Luzon and Mindanao and expressed readiness to help more communities to participate. The company has also co-processed tens of thousand tons of non-recyclable plastics as it continues to provide waste management services to partners in various industries.

Holcim Philippines officials have also stepped up engagement with key government officials such as Sen. Cynthia Villar, the chair of the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, to push further the company's commitment to support sustainable waste management in the country through co-processing.

In co-processing, qualified waste materials after pre-processing are used as alternative fuel by feeding them into the high-temperature kilns along with other raw materials to produce cement. This process transform wastes to alternative fuel and converts them into energy for cement production. The technology is recognized globally and is approved by the Philippine authorities due to its proven advantages in environmental and safety performance.

Holcim Philippines is listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange and is one of the leading building solution companies in the country.

With cement manufacturing facilities in La Union, Bulacan, Batangas, Misamis Oriental and Davao, as well as aggregates and dry mix business and technical support facilities for building solutions, Holcim Philippines is a reliable partner of builders in the country.

Holcim Philippines is also committed to the highest standards of sustainable operations and manufacturing excellence with its plants certified under ISO 14001:2004 (Environmental Management System), ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management System) and OHSAS 18001:2007 (Occupational Health and Safety Management System).

Holcim Philippines is a member of the LafargeHolcim Group, the world leader in the building materials industry present in 80 countries with over 80,000 employees.

LafargeHolcim has signed an agreement with San Miguel Corp. for the divestment of its entire 85.7-percent shareholding in Holcim Philippines Inc. The process is still ongoing.

THE TIMES

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/03/28/business/green-business/holcim-sustains-use-of-alternative-fuel/707434/>

Gov't buildings, hotels, resorts may soon be used as quarantine sites

JC Gotinga

Published 12:57 AM, March 28, 2020

Updated 12:57 AM, March 28, 2020

Local government units and other government agencies will report to the National Task Force COVID-19 facilities that may be temporarily designated for isolation or quarantine purposes



ISOLATION TENT. A member of the Quezon City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office on March 24, 2020, fixes the isolation tent at the covered court of the Quezon City Memorial Circle which was transformed into a field hospital for patients under investigation/monitoring for COVID-19. File photo by Darren Langit/Rappler

MANILA, Philippines – Government halls, hotels, and resorts may soon be used as quarantine facilities for persons under investigation (PUI) for the [novel coronavirus](#), and confirmed patients with mild symptoms.

In a televised briefing late Friday night, March 27, Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles read out the latest resolution from the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID).

The resolution, as read by Nograles, includes a directive for local government units and government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCC) "to identify government facilities that may be temporarily converted into isolation or quarantine facilities."

Establishments regulated by the Department of Tourism – hotels and resorts – may soon be tapped, too.

"The Department of Tourism and other government agencies are likewise directed to coordinate with entities under their respective regulatory authorities as applicable in identifying facilities that may be temporarily designated for isolation or quarantine purposes," said Nograles, reading the IATF-EID resolution.

These agencies will report suitable facilities to the National Task Force (NTF) COVID-19, the newly-formed body that will implement the government's policies and measures to address the pandemic.

Gov't buildings, hotels, resorts may soon be used as

March 28, 2020

TITLE: quarantine sites

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DATE

The NTF COVID-19 will then classify facilities according to which ones can be used to isolate PUIs, and others "where COVID-positive patients with mild symptoms may be managed."

If cleared by the NTF COVID-19, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) will inspect the locations and convert them into quarantine facilities.

The DPWH will then accredit construction workers in order to exempt them from "strict home quarantine" or lockdowns.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government will issue guidelines on the implementation of these directives, Nograles said.

Hospitals – public and private – have been reaching full capacity with the increasing number of coronavirus patients, suspected cases, and people wanting to be tested for the virus.

Some local governments have converted establishments such as motels into quarantine facilities to accommodate the growing number of persons under monitoring or investigation for the disease.

As of Friday, the Philippines has recorded 803 confirmed cases of the virus, with 54 deaths and 31 recoveries. – **Rappler.com**

Source: https://www.rappler.com/nation/256153-government-buildings-hotels-resorts-quarantine-sites?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_campaign=Echobox&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook#Echobox=1585332554

'Enchanted River' is real, but it's not Pasig River

[Ratzel San Juan](#) (Philstar.com) - March 27, 2020 - 5:37pm

MANILA, Philippines — If anyone needed to hear it, the trending “Enchanted River” making rounds on social media is indeed real, but it’s not the Pasig River as implied by a Thursday post which has been shared over a thousand times as of writing.

“Pasig river during this quarantine...Thank you po tatay digong (President Rodrigo Duterte),” a Twitter user posted with a heart emoji, possibly as satire spoofing viral but incomplete observations about Philippine landmarks like the Sierra Madre and Manila Bay alleged to be visibly cleaner due to the Luzon-wide quarantine in effect.



The Enchanted River of Hinatuan town is Surigao del Sur's hidden gem.

CC BY 2.0/Bro. Jeffrey Ploquinto, SJ

AC #MassTestingNowPH
@ItsACsLife

omg 22o pla i2 slamat ky tatay dig0ng ❤️
[twitter.com/ribsreprise/st...](#)

todd chavez @ribsreprise
Pasig river during this quarantine ❤️



♡ 2,096 11:26 PM - Mar 26, 2020 ⓘ

🗨️ 147 people are talking about this >

meltedrainbow
@meltedrainbow

Fucking imbeciles who know nothing but spread fake news ,
Enchanted river your ass , whomever you are. Spread positivity
but not at the expense of truth!!! Bobo. Spread truth not lies.
Pasig river during Quarantine your ass, dude.
[twitter.com/ribsreprise/st...](#)

todd chavez @ribsreprise
Pasig river during this quarantine ❤️



♡ 152 2:09 PM - Mar 27, 2020 ⓘ

Whether it was a joke or not, netizens have pointed out that the scenic river featured in the video is not in Pasig, but a popular destination in Surigao Del Sur called the “Enchanted River.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/travel-and-tourism/2020/03/27/2003820/enchanted-river-real-its-not-pasig-river>

Indonesian volcano spews massive ash cloud

posted March 27, 2020 at 04:40 pm

by [AFP](#)

Jakarta, Indonesia | AFP | Friday 3/27/2020

Indonesia's most active volcano Mount Merapi erupted Friday, shooting a column of ash some 5,000 metres (16,000 feet) into the air in its second major eruption this month.



This handout picture taken and released on March 27, 2020 by Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) shows Mount Merapi volcano spewing thick volcanic ash as seen from Yogyakarta.

Handout / BNPB / AFP

Ash and sand covered areas several kilometres (miles) away from the peak of the rumbling crater near Indonesia's cultural capital Yogyakarta.

But authorities did not raise Merapi's alert level.

"There has been no reports of damage from the eruption. We urge people to stay calm and not panic," national disaster mitigation agency spokesman Agus Wibowo said.

Merapi erupted earlier this month, shooting a massive ash cloud some 6,000 metres in the air.

That eruption coated Yogyakarta and neighbouring city Solo with grey dust and forced an airport closure.

Mount Merapi's last major eruption in 2010 killed more than 300 people and forced the evacuation of 280,000 residents.

That was Merapi's most powerful eruption since 1930, which killed around 1,300 people, while another explosion in 1994 took about 60 lives.

The Southeast Asian nation -- an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands and islets -- has nearly 130 active volcanoes.

It sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", a vast zone of geological instability where the collision of tectonic plates causes frequent quakes and major volcanic activity

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