



Highlights of USEC Benny Antiporda's interview with Mr. Weng Dela Peña on DZBB

1. Ang Virus na nagdudulot ng COVID-19 ay hindi airborne
2. Mga nangongolekta ng basura, dapat gumamit din ng personal protective equipment.
3. May treatment facilities para sa hospital waste.
4. Naglalaro sa Good and Fair ang Air Index Natin Ngayon.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/dzbb594/videos/1075471382814152/>



24 ORAS LOCKDOWN SA KALSADA AT PALENGKE

March 28, 2020 @ 5:32 PM 13 hours ago
Views: 111

Manila, Philippines – MAGANDANG tingnan ang mga ginagawa ng mga lokal na pamahalaan kung paano pigilin ang paglaganap ng Corona Virus Disease-19.

Pinaiiral na ng maraming pamahalaang panlalawigan at bayan ang 24 oras araw-araw na lockdown maging sa mga national highway bilang panlaban sa paglaganap ng Corona Virus Disease-19.

Ayon sa mga mapagkakatiwalaang source at nakaranas na bumiyaha nang malayuan, may kanya-kanyang harang at checkpoint sa mga boundary ang mga bayan, gayundin ang mga lalawigan.

Ang mga barangay ay naghaharangan din at sa mga boundary ng mga bayan, kasama ng mga pulis at military ang mga barangay official at tanod sa pagsasagawa ng mga harang at checkpoint.

Tanging ang mga nagdedeliber ng pagkain ang nakalulusot nang malayuan subalit dapat na makapagpakita pa rin ang mga ito ng mga kinakailangang dokumento.

Kasama sa mga pinapayagang makalusot ang mga dinadala sa mga ospital o klinika o doktor kahit hindi sakay ang mga ito ng ambulansya subalit dapat ding may mga dokumento na iniisyu ng mga opisyal ng barangay at kaukulang health unit.

Ang mga emergency lang ang madaliang pinalulusot sa mga checkpoint.

PAGPALENGKE BINABALASA

Upang hindi magkaroon ng kumpulan sa mga palengke, hinaharang sa mga checkpoint ang mga galing sa isang bayan na patungo sa ibang bayan.

'Yun bang === mamalengke ka na lang sa sarili mong public market o mall o grocery store o sari-sari store.

‘Yung iba, nag-aabutan na lang sa mga boundary ng mga bayan o lalawigan ng mga paninda o binili sa mga palengke na wala sa iba ngunit kailangan na kailangan, gaya ng mga disinfectant, pagkain, gamot at panggastos.

Binabalasa na rin ang mga barangay gaya ng pagtukoy sa kung anong barangay ang dapat mamalengke sa takdang araw o bahagi ng araw sa isang linggo.

Halimbawa sa Camalaniugan, Cagayan, na may 28 barangay, may mga pinagsama-samang barangay na pinapayagan lang mamalengke sa public market tatlong beses sa isang linggo at maaaring sa umaga lang o sa hapon.

Para silang nasa eskwela na may pasok sa Lunes, Miyerkules at Biyernes ngunit bawal sila sa Martes, Huwebes, Sabado at Linggo.

Maraming bayan ang nanghuhuli naman sa mga namamalengke nang walang dalang barangay quarantine pass kahit ilang metro lang ang layo ng bahay ng mga ito sa palengke.

At dapat na isa lang ang mamalengke mula sa isang pamilya.

Dito ramdam na ramdam ang pag-iral ng batas sa enhanced community quarantine sa buong Luzon at ang mga patakarang ito marahil ang isang malaking dahilan kung bakit mabagal ang paglaganap ng Covid-19.

WALANG PALAKASAN WALANG ASTIG

Isa pang katangi-tanging nagaganap sa mga checkpoint at lockdown ang istriktong pagpapatupad ng pagkapantay-pantay ng lahat sa enhanced community quarantine.

‘Yun bang === walang palakasan kaya naman lahat ay tumanggap ng mga barangay quarantine pass upang ligal na makalabas ng bahay, mamalengke at makapunta sa napakahalagang puntahan ang isa mamamayan.

Ganap na nabura ang pagpuslit ng mga niluluhuran at sikat sa mga barangay, bayan, lungsod at lalawigan.

Hindi na ring umuubra ang mga astig, mataray at may koneksyon kina kapitan, mayor, kongresman at gobernador.

Bago ka kasi makalusot, bukod sa mga checkpoint na binubuo ng mga tanod, pulis at militar, daraan ka na rin sa mga thermal scanner para sa lagnat at iba pang pagsusuri kung may ubo at iba pang palatandaan ng Covid-19.

‘Yung iba, dinaraan na lang sa mga ilog at malalayong bukirin ang pagpasok sa mga barangay subalit nakararating din ito sa kaalaman ng mga opisyal ng barangay na kumikilos para kumastigo o magsailalim sa iyo ng 14 araw na quarantine.

Itong 14 araw na home quarantine ang kinatatakutan ng mga tigasin, walang disiplina at wais na pumapasok nang walang pahintulot at kaukulang papeles sa mga barangay.

DAPAT LANG

Dapat lang talaga na pairalin ang mga ganitong patakarang paglalapat ng enhanced community quarantine upang hindi tayo basta masalakay at pinsalain ng nakahahawa at nakamamatay na sakit.

Hindi natin dapat hintayin na may mamatay na daan-daan sa isang araw gaya sa Espanya o halos isang libo gaya sa Italy bago tayo magpairal ng mahigpit na quarantine.

Tatandaan natin, tila may 10 Pinoy nang namamatay at halos mahigit 50 nagpopositibo kada araw.

Dapat nating tiisin ang iba't ibang anyo ng kawalan natin ng kalayaan sa pagbiya-biyahe at paggawa ng gusto nating gawin.

Para rin naman sa lahat ng indibidwal, pamilya at komunidad at sa ating buong bansa ang giyera sa Covid-19.

Matatapos din ang lahat ng ito sa Abril 14 o higit pa, depende sa pambansa nating kalagayan.

Basta magtulong-tulong at magkaisa tayong lahat at magdamayan na rin nang lubos sa gitna ng mga sari-saring krisis na ating nararanasan, lalo na sa loob ng mga pamilya, particular sa parte ng mga talaga namang isang kahit, isang tuka.

Source: <https://remate.ph/24-oras-lockdown-sa-kalsada-at-palengke/>

Algal bloom, pollutant possible causes for

March 29, 2020

TITLE: **Manila Bay discoloration**

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Algal bloom, pollutants possible causes for Manila Bay discoloration

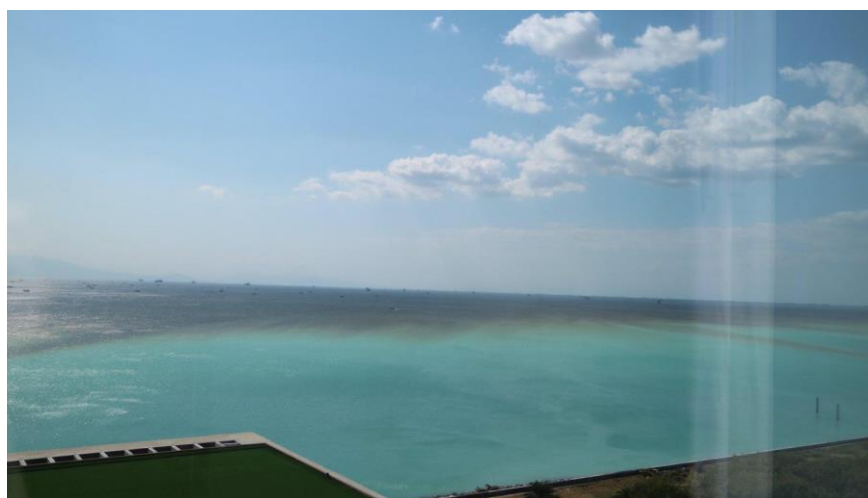
Published March 28, 2020, 4:04 PM

By **Gabriela Baron**

Photos and videos showing Manila Bay's waters turned turquoise went viral, prompting some to believe it's the effect of the Luzon-wide quarantine.

So does that mean Manila Bay is finally clean?

The Marine Science Institute of University of the Philippines (UP-MSI) begs to differ.



(Photo courtesy of Jemah Rasul / MANILA BULLETIN)

Possible causes of discoloration

"Kung palatandaan ito na malinis na ang Manila Bay, bakit ito ay pansamantala lamang at nauulit kahit walang umiiral na enhanced community quarantine?" the research institute said.

(If this is an indication that Manila Bay is now clean, why is it only temporary and repeatedly occurring even without the enhanced community quarantine?)

UP-MSI noted that in March 2014, Manila Bay waters had the same turquoise color for two days.

The discoloration may be due to algal bloom or a manifestation that there might be pollutants discharged into its waters.

Thousands of microorganisms live in seawater, including phytoplankton. The type of growing phytoplankton or algal bloom depends on the season, temperature, and the waters' nutrients. Algal bloom can change the color of the waters.

Other types of phytoplankton are caused by harmful algal blooms (HABs) or red tide.

"Pero wala pang HABs na nagdulot ng turquoise na kulay sa tubig sa Manila Bay," UP-MSI added. (No HABs have ever turned Manila Bay waters to turquoise.)

The research institute further explained that there is one group of phytoplankton that colors waters turquoise and they are called "coccolithophores."

"Ayon sa pag-aaral, sila ay dumarami lamang sa mga dagat na may mababang nutrients at sa gitnang dagat na walang polusyon na dulot ng tao," it said.

Algal bloom, pollutant possible causes for

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(According to a study, they only grow in oceans with low nutrients and in the middle of seas with no human-induced pollution.)

UP-MSI added that pollutants or chemicals like chlorine may have also caused the discoloration.

"Maaaring mula sa pestisidyo na ginagamit sa mga pananim at palay na nadadala sa mga ilog papunta ng Manila Bay," UP-MSI said. (It may be from pesticides used in crops and rice that are carried along rivers to Manila Bay.)

Pollutants and chemicals possibly come from establishments nearby that have swimming pools or commercial aquariums, or from disinfectants like bleach used against the coronavirus.

Pollution hotspot

UP-MSI underscored that two to three weeks of enhanced community quarantine is not enough to suddenly cleanse Manila Bay because it is categorized as a pollution hotspot.

The institute added that rivers like Pasig, tributaries, estero (estuaries), canals, household wastes, industrial wastes, and land reclamation damage Manila Bay.

"May mga pamantayan at indicators para masabi na ang Manila Bay ay malinis na, at kailangan pa ng mas marami at patuloy na pag-aaral o research para maisakatuparan ang mga ito," UP-MSI underscored. (There are standards and indicators to say that Manila Bay is clean, and more research is needed to prove this).

Fisherfolk groups raise concern over Manila Bay discoloration

Fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) urge the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to probe the discoloration of the Manila Bay waters.

"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," PAMALAKAYA said in a statement.

The group ruled out the possibility that it was algal bloom, as the water was clear and did not show any indication of algae.

"The color of the water can be likened to a swimming pool that underwent chlorination; thus, we can't set aside a possibility that some establishment carried out tank cleaning and outrightly discharged the toxic cleaning chemicals into Manila Bay," it added.

Oceana, an international nonprofit ocean conservation organization, also urged DENR and the Department of Agriculture (DAR), and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to further investigate.

"The 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.

Meanwhile, GMA also reported that the waters along Manila Bay are "inconsistent." Water along Roxas Boulevard showed "a blacking and muddy color," while the part of the bay behind the Cultural Center of the Philippines has a "bluish tint and moss green" color.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/28/algal-bloom-pollutants-possible-causes-for-manila-bay-discoloration/>

Earth Hour 2020: 'Switch off lights at your home

TITLE: for an hour

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Earth Hour 2020: 'Switch off lights at your home for an hour'

Published March 28, 2020, 10:00 AM

By **Johannes L. Chua**

If there's any good that the enhanced home quarantine will result to, aside from minimizing the spread of the COVID-19, is that the planet took a "break" — less cars, buses, and tricycles on the road means lesser air pollution; less human activities means lesser burden on the planet as carbon footprint is minimized, too. More than ever, the pandemic showed the importance of sustainability — that people need a cleaner environment to thrive as shown with the importance of sanitizing one's home and practicing the habit of handwashing. People now realize that a cleaner, more sustainable planet is not a dream, but an achievable reality as long as everyone is doing their part.

Earth Hour 2020, set to be held Saturday at 8:30 p.m. in the country, is part of a global movement that saw important landmarks, buildings, offices, and homes go dark for an hour to highlight various important environmental issues. This year, it calls on Filipinos to switch off their lights at home for an hour, in a collective movement to showcase the #ChangeTheEnding campaign of the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines (WWF-PH).

"WWF-Philippines actually decided to do a digital campaign for Earth Hour even before the COVID-19 pandemic. We are encouraging everyone to take part in the comfort and safety of their own home. Earth Hour is more than just an event; it is a movement that encourages people to raise their own voice for nature and do their part in reversing environmental degradation," said WWF-PH Earth Hour Pilipinas national director Atty. Angela Ibay.

Since the first "lights out" event was held in Sydney in 2007, the movement has continued to bring together individuals, businesses, and governments in joint acts of commitment toward a future of environmental integrity and where man lives in harmony with nature. This year, the movement will be inviting millions of supporters to showcase their support online through Voice for the Planet. These e-signatures will then be presented at international forums such as the United Nations General Assembly, to help secure a New Deal for Nature that addresses nature loss and environmental decline in order to safeguard our shared futures.

"We want to be able to use Earth Hour to galvanize people, to bring our messages forward — that our own actions have an effect on our planet, and that our own actions are also the solution that will be able to provide for us and for our shared home," added Ibay. WWF-PH has shared Earth Hour's messages of conservation with the rest of the country since the organization held its first switch-off event in 2008.

"There's this whole digital space that we haven't fully maximized yet. So, Earth Hour, in a lot of countries, is going online this year," she said.

In response to the growing need for environmental action, WWF-PH is using this year's celebration as an opportunity to launch its newest campaign. Entitled #ChangeTheEnding, it shows the public that there are current realities that must be dealt with, and that there are certain, precarious scenarios of environmental collapse and human suffering that could occur if nothing is done.

"Changes in rain patterns, for example, coupled with the Philippines' increasing population could result in severe water shortages before the year 2030 if comprehensive and immediate action is not undertaken today. The campaign reminds the public that in spite of current trends, we can still change the ending if we start acting now," said Ibay.

Businesses, local governments, and individuals are being asked to help combat these issues however they can, with the campaign stressing the need for us to go beyond mere commitments and to start performing actions for the planet.



Earth Hour 2020: 'Switch off lights at your home

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TITLE: for an hour

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"Take part in Earth Hour 2020 from your own homes through actions as simple as switching off lights for an hour to switching off non-essential lights for the night," said Ibay. "For those looking to take part in the Earth Hour 2020 activities, WWF-PH is requesting for content to be shared using the #EarthHourPH2020, #Connect2Earth, and #ChangeTheEnding hashtags. The organization will be sharing this content, together with the #ChangeTheEnding campaign video, as a display of the Philippines' joint commitment to the protection of the natural world."

In the past decade, Earth Hour has inspired global participation in critical climate and environmental initiatives, helping drive awareness and, in turn, action and policy change. Among its highlights, the movement has helped in the creation of a 3.5 million-hectare marine-protected area in Argentina, a 2,700-hectare Earth Hour forest in Uganda, and helped pass new legislation for the protection of seas and forests in Russia. Last year, WWF-Ecuador pushed for a law to ban the use of plastic bags, other single-use plastic, and Styrofoam products in the capital, while WWF-Indonesia initiated the planting of 20,000 mangrove seedlings in 13 cities.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/28/earth-hour-2020-switch-off-lights-at-your-home-for-an-hour/>

A Pause for the Planet

On March 28, Earth Hour 2020 encourages you to switch off lights at your home for an hour

Published March 28, 2020, 2:58 PM

By Johannes L. Chua

If there's any good that the enhanced home quarantine will result to, aside from minimizing the spread of Covid-19, is that the planet took a "break"—less cars, buses, and tricycles on the road means lesser air pollution; less human activities means lesser burden on the planet as carbon footprint is minimized, too.



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This year, the movement will be inviting millions of supporters to showcase their support online through Voice for the Planet. These e-signatures will then be presented at international forums such as the United Nations General Assembly, to help secure a "New Deal for Nature" that addresses nature loss and environmental decline in order to safeguard our shared futures.

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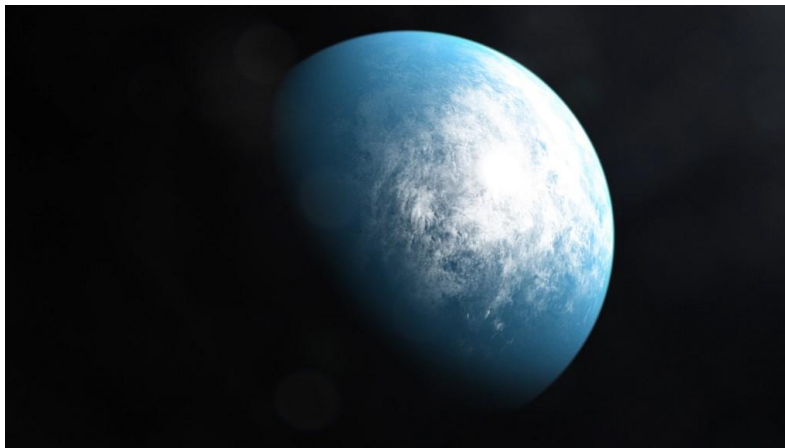
Source: <https://lifestyle.mb.com.ph/2020/03/28/a-pause-for-the-planet/>

Even Earth Hour goes online

Published
3 hours ago

on March 29, 2020 03:10 AM

By **Gabbie Parlade**



One of the largest movements involving protection of the environment, Earth Hour, was held yesterday mainly online in an effort to bring people together to show their commitment amidst the threat of COVID-19.

“There’s this whole digital space that we haven’t fully maximized yet. So, Earth Hour, in a lot of countries, is going online this year,” said World Wide Fund (WWF) Philippines National Director Atty. Angela Ibay.

According to WWF Philippines, there is a growing need for action as environmental changes have continuously affected the country some of which are changes in rain patterns and possible water shortages in the future.

Goal is unity

“We want to be able to use Earth Hour to galvanize people, to bring our messages forward — that our own actions have an effect on our planet, and that our own actions are also the solution that will be able to provide for us and for our shared home,” Ibay said.

In their statement, WWF-Philippines said that campaign #ChangeTheEnding is a reminder that the public can still contribute to a change in our environment.

“The campaign reminds the public that in spite of current trends, we can still change the ending if we start acting now,” they stated.

Lights off

WWF encourages the public to participate and join the movement through actions like switching off unnecessary lights or appliances at home.

Meanwhile, the Department of Energy also encourages the public to contribute to the cause even by simply being at home.

The department is also one of the advocates for the campaign with a theme.

The Department of Energy (DOE) also encourages the public to contribute to the cause even by simply being at home.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/134752476678442/posts/1714716692015338/?app=fbl>

For a brief period tonight, some parts of the world will go dark. It's Earth Hour

By Mion Edwards and Saeed Ahmed, CNN

Published Mar 28, 2020 3:19:43 PM



(CNN) - Don't be surprised if you find your neighbors turning off their lights for a full hour Saturday night. They're taking part in a global movement called Earth Hour.

How did it start?

Earth Hour is an annual tradition in which people switch off their lights to spread awareness about sustainability and climate change. Started by the World Wildlife Fund, it takes place on March 28, 2020, from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local time. (And it's not to be confused with Earth Day)

When did it start?

The symbolic effort started in 2007 in Sydney, Australia, when the WWF encouraged 2.2 million people to turn off their lights for one hour to support action on climate change.

Since then, millions of people around the world have taken part. Landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, Sydney Opera House, the Empire State Building, Buckingham Palace, the Colosseum and Edinburgh Castle also have gone dark for an hour.

What is it intended to do?

It's meant to bring together people who share one common goal: an eco-friendly future.

How can people get involved ?

Organizers suggest you sign a pledge to decrease your environmental footprint and participate in the blackout. The website also has a host of other actions people can take to help ease climate change.

This story was first published on CNN.com, "For a brief period tonight, some parts of the world will go dark. It's Earth Hour"

Source: https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/3/28/parts-world-go-dark-earth-hour.html?fbclid=IwAR2MFcuGo_4WaP58jD-r2Y5nzR6KH0YDz2QTog4ETnwlR2DsdRv8ul2VTqk

EcoWaste group calls on public to practice home composting

Published March 28, 2020, 12:26 PM

By *Chito Chavez*

Environmental group EcoWaste Coalition on Saturday called on the public to practice home composting as millions heeded the government's stay-at-home order in the face of the novel coronavirus pandemic.



(PIXABAY / MANILA BULLETIN)

Together with other zero waste groups, the Quezon City based organization issued the plea saying there is an increase of domestic food scraps with the current situation.

Buklod Tao and the EcoWaste Coalition urged the general public "to embrace easy on the pocket composting methods to recycle kitchen and garden waste into excellent soil conditioner and organic fertilizer during the quarantine period and beyond."

According to "Solid Waste Management Made Easy" published by the National Solid Waste Management Commission, "composting is an inexpensive way of reducing the volume of trash (that) makes use of the natural process of decay and breakdown of organic matter through the action of microorganisms in the soil."

Noli Abinales, founder of Buklod Tao, trustee of the EcoWaste Coalition and an avid composter, explained: "Composting is the most practical way of halving our waste production since food waste and other organics make up 50 percent or more of the waste we generate and dispose of. You don't need a fancy machine to do it at home; your 10 fingers will do! Without doubt, composting will drastically reduce the volume of waste materials requiring disposal during the global coronavirus public health emergency, while generating essential nutrients to enhance soil health.

"Composting is also an effective strategy in mitigating climate change, the other global emergency facing humanity."

Abinales noted the easiest way of halting the formation of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, in mixed waste dumps and landfills" is through composting.

To reduce household waste disposal during the COVID-19 outbreak, the EcoWaste Coalition and Buklod Tao encouraged households to try these 12 easy steps to home composting:

1. Separate biodegradable waste (fruit and vegetable peelings, egg and seafood shells, dry leaves, grass cuttings, twigs, etc.) from non-biodegradables or recyclables.



Ecowaste group calls on public to practice home

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2. Choose the right size and type for your composter (pile, pit, pot, or any container) depending on how much compostable waste your household generates.
3. Select a convenient location for your composter, preferably one that is even, well-drained, and sun-drenched.
4. Chop biodegradable wastes into small pieces for easy decomposition. Paper that is not suitable for recycling such as heavily soiled or greasy paper or box can be composted (shred them, too).
5. Mix the chopped dry and wet biodegradables so that the mixture is not too wet or too dry. Place the mixture into the composter.
6. Start with a layer of coarse materials such as dry leaves and twigs to allow for aeration and drainage.
7. Add kitchen and garden waste as they accumulate, alternating green nitrogen-rich materials and brown carbon-rich materials.
8. Place a thin layer of soil on top of the materials and sprinkle it with a small amount of water.
9. Continue to add layers until the composter is full.
10. Maintain the composter; turn the materials once a week to aerate the pile to help the breakdown process and get rid of the smell.
11. When the interior of the pile is no longer hot and the materials have turned into dark and crumbly soil, composting is finished.
12. Harvest and use your compost as a soil conditioner or fertilizer.

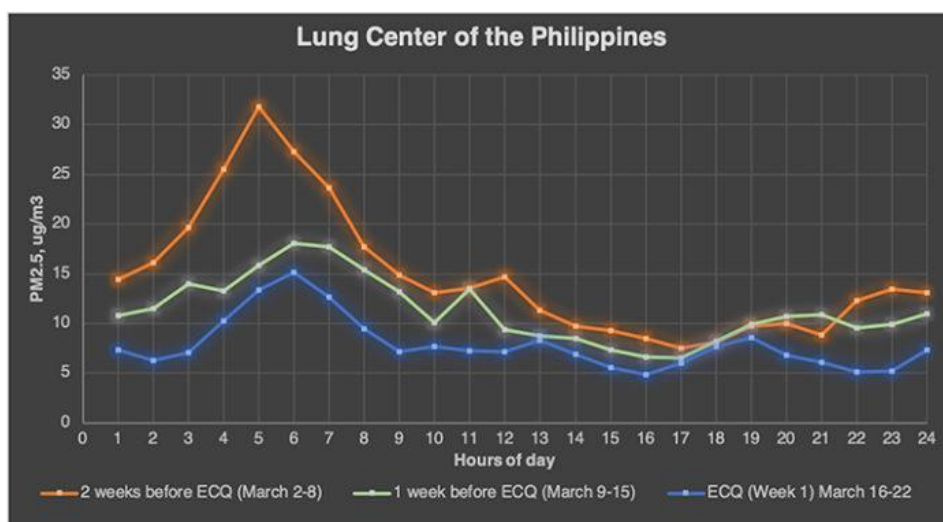
"Using up all the compost and planting on all plantable containers such as empty cans, plastic bottles and others will further help in reducing the volume of trash that goes to the dump," the groups concluded.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/28/ecowaste-group-calls-on-public-to-practice-home-composting/>

Quezon City air quality improves during Covid-19 quarantine

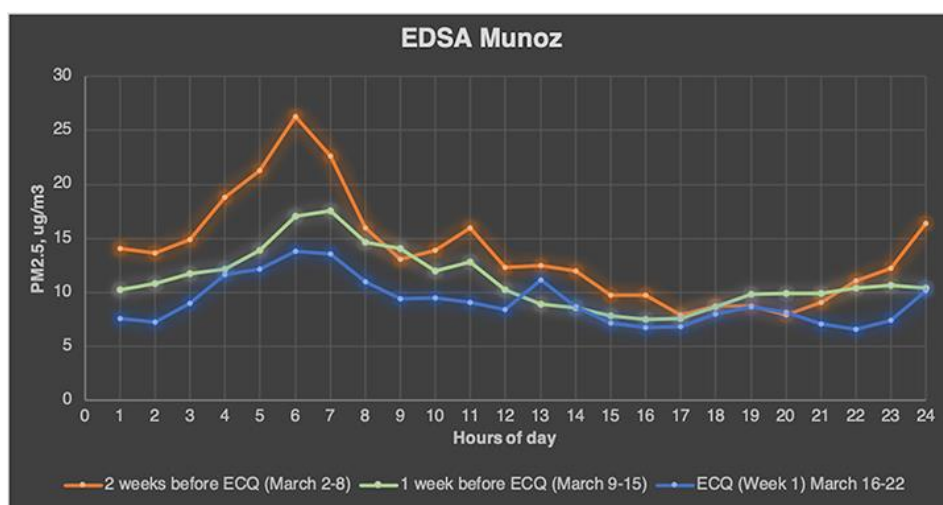
By **BusinessMirror**

-March 29, 2020



In the last couple of months many countries worldwide implemented quarantines and lockdowns to prevent the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) that has affected more than 474,200 people and claimed the lives of more than 21,270 globally.

These actions caused the closure of smoke-emitting factories, and the running of less vehicles in the streets.



The www.airtoday.ph stations in Quezon City are recording improvements in PM2.5 since the enhanced community quarantine (eCQ) was imposed in Metro Manila in March 16. In Figure 1, top line is the PM2.5 concentrations every hour, two weeks before the eCQ; center line is a week before the eCQ, and third line is during the first week of eCQ.

As a result, several environment assessments recorded reduction in air pollutants.

In Europe, the European Union’s space agency’s Earth-observation satellites have detected a significant reduction in the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO2), a by-product of the use of diesel motors and other human activities, in northern Italy as the advance of the Covid-19 has led to drastic measures curtailing ordinary life, The Associated Press (AP) reported earlier.

The agency’s Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service reported last week that with the “abrupt changes in activity levels” in northern Italy, it has tracked a “reduction trend” of NO2 in the last four to five weeks.

Similar drops in pollutants were detected in China after the government there implemented widespread shutdowns of factories and emptied airports to slow the spread of Covid-19.

Calling the reduction in emissions “very dramatic,” Lauri Myllyvirta, lead analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air in Helsinki, calculated that China’s carbon emissions from coal, steel, oil and other industries, were 25 percent lower in the four weeks following the end of the Lunar New Year holiday—roughly the month of February—compared to the same time last year, another AP report said.

The same cleaner air was also observed in some areas in the Philippines. The lockdowns in Metro Manila due to the Covid-19 pandemic have resulted in an apparent improvement in air quality.

Among them was the clear sunset over Manila as shown from Antipolo, Rizal, without any smog obstructing the view, a news report said.

Likewise, a significant proof of reduced air pollution in Metro Manila was recorded in a study in Quezon City.

A 180-percent decrease in fine particulate matter (PM) air pollutant in the city was recorded since the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) was declared by President Duterte in Metro Manila in March 16.

The data were gathered from *www.airtoday.ph* stations in Quezon City, according to the Environmental Pollution Studies Laboratory, Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology-College of Science-University of the Philippines Diliman (EPSL, IESM-CS-UP Diliman).

From the *www.airtoday.ph* station in the Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP) compound, the PM2.5—the minute airborne dust that can penetrate the lungs, can cause shortness of breath, and may aggravate pre-existing respiratory conditions—is showing decreasing trends.

Comparing the levels of PM2.5 pre- and while on ECQ, an improvement of 80 percent to 180 percent (percent PM2.5 prevented due to ECQ) happened during the window hours when the atmospheric ventilation is low (evenings and early morning), from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. in LCP compound, EPSL, IESM-CS-UP Diliman news release said.

The same trend was observed in another *www.airtoday.ph* station along Edsa Muñoz, at 70 percent to 90 percent improvement in PM2.5 since the ECQ.

“On ordinary Thursdays, the PM2.5 would peak to 38 ug/m³ during evening rush hours, which can be unhealthy to sensitive groups,” said Dr. Mylene Cayetano, technical adviser of *www.airtoday.ph*, an initiative by the Rotary Club of Makati, in collaboration with LCP and UP Diliman IESM.

This cleaning of the air in the hospital zone is a feedback of the 500-meter quarantine radius that was implemented around the government-run hospitals in the city.

It includes—the Philippine Heart Center, East Avenue Medical Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute and PLC—to control public access and vehicle traffic to the four city-based national hospitals. The area from East Avenue and BIR Road up to Elliptical Road has been closed since March 18.

“Majority of the air pollution comes from vehicle emissions. Cordoning off East Avenue and Quezon Avenue, both hospital zones, brings positive feedback of cleaning the air. The Covid-19 patients and the rest of the patients present in these QC hospital zone have either obstructive or restrictive breathing, thus, are in much need of clean air,” Cayetano, the EPSL head, said.

Coal communities still don't have fresh air during quarantine, says clean energy group

By **BusinessMirror**

-March 28, 2020



Makati's financial district looks like a ghost town as few vehicles pass on Wednesday, more than a week after the government declared a Luzon-wide lockdown to contain Covid-19.

The Power for People Coalition (P4P) on Friday cautioned the public against welcoming the fresher air in Manila, claiming the continued production of electricity means communities where coal-fired power plants are sited continue to suffer from the emissions of these plants.

“It’s great news that people in Metro Manila are starting to enjoy fresher air. But at the same time, we should not forget those in communities with coal power plants. They will continue to breathe in air contaminated with the byproducts of coal pollution,” said P4P Convenor Gerry Arances.

The clean energy group is reacting to reports that the Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology of the University of the Philippines Diliman saw the level of pollutants in the air had dropped by as much as 180 percent after the imposition of the quarantine.

They said the quarantine might be the best time to test the level of pollution produced by coal.

“The quarantine, as terrible as it may be, offers an opportunity that we are unlikely to have again. Because now there is almost complete absence of other pollutants like vehicle and factory emissions, which will allow us to measure in complete confidence how much damage coal does to the environment,” said Arances.

The group said coal-fired power plants emit sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxide (NO₂) and other gaseous pollutants in the air that can react chemically to form particulate matter that is 2.5 μm in diameter, what is called PM_{2.5}, which is used to measure air pollution.

“Coal pollution causes or worsens asthma, causes chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), stunted lung development or even death for infants, lung cancer, black lung, strokes, cardiac arrest, and developmental delay including reduced intelligence and mental retardation. If coal were to be introduced now, it would never get approval from governments, yet we let its use continue,” said Arances.



Coal communities still don't have fresh air during

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Arances reiterated the stance of P4P that with the availability of renewable energy, the use of coal is unnecessary.

“There is a source of energy which does not cause air pollution, is affordable, and does not break down when asked to produce at capacity, traits coal does not have. Renewable energy already powers many advanced economies. We should not get left behind on this one. Let's end all the ill effects of coal and produce affordable, sustainable, and reliable energy for all,” said Arances.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/03/28/coal-communities-still-dont-have-fresh-air-during-quarantine-says-clean-energy-group/>

Sea turtles in Born to be Wild

posted March 29, 2020 at 12:30 am by **Manila Standard Showbiz**

In today's episode of *Born to be Wild*, viewers are given a closer look at the plight of sea turtles in the country.

Doc **Nielsen Donato** and his team explore the island of Luban in Mati, Davao Oriental. They are surprised to see an endemic ibid or Philippine sailfin lizard basking in the sun.



Since the island is surrounded by saltwater, experts say it is unusual to find the freshwater-drinking sailfin in the area. Some suggest that these lizards can cross between the island and the mainland to look for freshwater. Because Luban Island is undisturbed, the lizards feel safer here.

Sea turtles are often victims of stranding. The cause: they are either entangled by fishing nets or injured by boat propellers.

Meanwhile, Doc **Ferds Recio** responds to a call in San Juan, Batangas to aid a pawikan whose head and carapace are broken. The pawikan needs to undergo an x-ray to see the extent of its wounds. Will it survive?

Don't miss these wildlife stories on *Born to be Wild* today after *AHA!* on GMA 7.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/showbitz/tv-movies/320608/sea-turtles-in-born-to-be-wild.html>

Aklan stops all public transport, including boats bound for Boracay

Boy Ryan B. Zabal

Published 4:25 PM, March 28, 2020

Updated 4:25 PM, March 28, 2020

Though there is still no outbreak in Boracay, there are already 3 coronavirus disease cases in Aklan province



AKLAN, Philippines – Governor Florencio Miraflores Saturday, March 28, cancelled all public transport in the province including, sea traffic in Boracay Island, imposing stricter measures to stop the spread of the dreaded coronavirus disease.

So far, Aklan has 3 confirmed coronavirus cases in Kalibo, Malay, and Libacao, and more than 3,800 persons under monitoring (PUMs), said the Provincial Health Office (PHO-Aklan).

Miraflores said the public transport suspension would not apply to cargo trucks, government and private vehicles under his Executive Order No. 20-B.

Under the amended EO, essential private and public establishments like banks, remittance centers, laundry shops, bakeries, gas and water refilling stations, supermarkets, pawnshops, fast food restaurants, hospitals, clinics, media establishments, drugstores and pharmacies should provide transportation services to employees or workers coming in or leaving their workplaces.

The new guidance issued on March 28 also directed town mayors to refrain from issuing work pass, instead, company identification cards of frontliners will be allowed in border control checkpoints. All work passes issued were also recalled.

Following the news of confirmed coronavirus cases, the governor has issued stay-home orders for at least 600,000 residents in Aklan. They are advised to observe proper hygiene and physical distancing to reduce the spread of pandemic.

The governor earlier shut down schools and non-essential businesses and cancelled all public and private events and gatherings in Aklan to prevent transmissions in communities. Church activities for Holy Week were also cancelled.



Aklan stops all public transport, including voats bound for

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“We have to sacrifice by suspending public transport for the next two weeks for public health protection. We are asking your cooperation, follow health protocols of authorities. Stay home,” the governor stressed.

Miraflores said on Saturday that border checkpoints in barangays and towns are also established by law enforcement agencies to restrict movement.

People with home quarantine pass, however, are allowed to leave home to buy medicines and essential commodities. – **Rappler.com**

Source: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/256211-aklan-cancels-public-transport-including-boracay>

'Don't blame bats for Covid-19'

By **BusinessMirror**

-March 29, 2020



Genomic research showing that the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) likely originated in bats has produced heavy media coverage and widespread concern. There is now danger that frightened people and misguided officials will try to curb the epidemic by culling these remarkable creatures, even though this strategy has failed in the past.

As an environmental historian focusing on endangered species and biological diversity, I know that bats provide valuable services to humans and need protection.

Instead of blaming bats for the coronavirus epidemic, I believe it's important to know more about them. Here's some background explaining why they carry so many viruses, and why these viruses only jump infrequently to humans—typically, when people hunt bats or intrude into places where bats live.

The challenges of life as a bat

It's not easy being the world's only flying mammal. Flying requires a lot of energy, so bats need to consume nutritious foods, such as fruits and insects.

As they forage, bats pollinate around 500 plant species, including mangoes, bananas, guavas and agaves (the source of tequila).

Insect-eating bats may consume the equivalent of their body weight in bugs each night—including mosquitoes that carry diseases like Zika, dengue and malaria.

Bats convert these foods into droppings called guano, which nourish entire ecosystems, have been harvested for centuries as fertilizer, and have been used to make soaps and antibiotics.

Since fruits and insects tend to follow seasonal boom-and-bust cycles, most bats hibernate for long periods, during which their core body temperatures may fall as low as 43 degrees Fahrenheit (6 degrees Celsius).

To conserve warmth, they gather in insulated places like caves, use their wings as blankets and huddle together

When fruits ripen and insects hatch, bats wake up and flutter out of their roosts to forage.

But now they have a different problem: Flying requires so much energy that their metabolic rates may spike as high as 34 times their resting levels, and their core body temperatures can exceed 104 degrees F.

To stay cool, bats have wings filled with blood vessels that radiate heat. They also lick their fur to simulate sweat and pant like dogs.

And they rest during the heat of the day and forage in the cool of night, which makes their ability to navigate by echolocation, or reflected sound, handy.

Diverse and unique

Humans are more closely related to bats than we are to dogs, cows or whales. But bats seem more alien, which can make it harder for people to relate to them.

Bats are the most unusual of the world's 26 mammal orders, or large groups, such as rodents and carnivores. They are the only land mammals that navigate by echolocation, and the only mammals capable of true flight.

Many bats are small and have rapid metabolisms, but they reproduce slowly and live long lives. That's more typical of large animals like sharks and elephants.

And a bat's internal body temperatures can fluctuate by more than 60 degrees Fahrenheit in response to external conditions. This is more typical of cold-blooded animals that take on the temperature of their surroundings, like turtles and lizards.

Carries 200 coronaviruses

Bats carry a range of viruses that can sicken other mammals when they jump species.

These include at least 200 coronaviruses, some of which cause human respiratory diseases like SARS and MERS.

Bats also host several filoviruses, including some that in humans manifest as deadly hemorrhagic fevers like Marburg and probably even Ebola.

Normally, these viruses remain hidden in bats' bodies and ecosystems without harming humans.

People raise the risk of transmission between species when they encroach on bats' habitats or harvest bats for medicine or food.

In particular, humans pack live bats into unsanitary conditions with other wild species that may serve as intermediate hosts. This is what happened at the Wuhan wet market where many experts believe Covid-19 emerged.

With a few exceptions—such as rabies—bats host their pathogens without getting sick.

What makes bat a bat

Recent media coverage attempting to explain this riddle has focused on a 2019 study suggesting that bats carry a gene mutation, which may enable them to remain healthy while harboring such viruses.

But while the mutation may be of interest from a public health perspective, understanding where this novel coronavirus came from requires understanding what makes a bat a bat.

Why do bats carry so many diseases but seem unaffected by them?

Genetic mutations that boost their immune systems may help. But a better answer is that bats are the only mammals that fly.

With thousands of bats crowded together licking, breathing and pooping on one another, bat caves are ideal environments for breeding and transmitting germs.

But when bats fly, they generate so much internal heat that, according to many scientists, their bodies are able to fight off the germs they carry. This is known as the "flight as fever hypothesis."

Bats at risk

Bats may not always be around to eat insect pests, pollinate fruit crops and provide fertilizer.

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Bat Conservation International, at least 24 bat species are critically endangered, and 104 are vulnerable to extinction.

For at least 224 additional bat species, scientists lack the data to know their status.

Overharvesting, persecution and habitat loss are the greatest threats that bats face, but they also suffer from their own novel diseases.

Since it was first documented in upstate New York in 2007, the fungal pathogen *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd), which causes white-nose syndrome, has infected 13 North American bat species, including two listed as endangered.

Nobody knows where Pd came from, but the fact that several bat species seem never to have encountered it before suggests that people probably introduced or spread it.

The fungus thrives in cool, damp places like caves. It grows on bats while they're hibernating, causing such irritation that they become restless, wasting precious energy during seasons when little food is available.

White-nose syndrome has killed millions of bats, including more than 90 percent of the bats in some populations.

Bats are extraordinary creatures that benefit people in myriad ways, and our world would be a poorer, duller and more dangerous place without them.

They need protection from the cruel treatment and wasteful exploitation that also threatens human health.

Conserving inland waters, handwashing are needed today

By **BusinessMirror**

-March 29, 2020

By Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim / *Executive Director, Asean Centre for Biodiversity*

Water supports the sustenance of all life on the planet, more so in this time of the 2019 novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic when handwashing and proper hygiene with clean water prove to be humanity's best defence against the disease.

However, access to clean water remains a global problem with 2.2 billion lacking access to safely managed drinking water, while 3 billion lacking basic handwashing facilities, according to the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization.

As the Asean Centre for Biodiversity joined the recent international community in celebrating World Water Day with a focus on how water can help mitigate the impacts of climate change, we take this opportunity to emphasize the inextricable relationship of biodiversity and water.

Inland waters—such as lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, groundwater, springs and wetlands—supply water for the irrigation of agricultural areas in the region.

The agriculture sector alone consumes 85.5 percent of the total water withdrawals in the region.

This is followed by the industrial sector at 7.8 percent and the domestic sector at 6.6 percent, according to the United Nations Environment Programme.

Inland waters, likewise, support aquatic biodiversity—including reptiles, amphibians, fish, mollusks, insects, other aquatic invertebrates, and water plants, and water birds and several other migratory species in this region.

In this time of climate crisis, conserving inland waters, which are known to contribute to ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation.

While the region's abundant freshwater resources are fortunate to get 9.5 percent of the total global precipitation, water availability is largely influenced by seasonal changes and the rise of global temperatures.

The increasing water requirements for agricultural, industrial and domestic uses of a growing Asean population also pose a threat to the region's inland waters, in effect putting the water supply at risk.

In the region, leading the inland waters conservation are the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership.

At present, the region has 54 Ramsar sites covering 25,160 square kilometers. In terms of coverage, Indonesia has the largest area (13,730 sq km), followed by Thailand (3,997 sq km), and the Philippines (2,440 sq km).

The Asean member-states recognize the value of robust ecosystems in meeting the region's water requirements, thereby integrating sustainable resource management measures into their respective national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The ACB has been mobilizing initiatives across sectors and generating participation of governments and stakeholders to ensure that biodiversity targets are within reach.

Although progress in increasing protected areas has been made in the past years, there is a need to transform individual protected areas into protected area networks to increase the effectiveness of species and their corresponding habitat conservation.

In Cambodia, its protected area system, which has expanded by 23 percent between 2016 and 2018, according to Cambodia's Sixth National Report submitted to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

It said effective protected area management boosts efforts in conserving natural resources like water, and guaranteeing resilience of the ecosystems and human communities.

Indigenous knowledge is an important element in effective community-based resource management.

In Sabah, Malaysia, fishing communities employ the tagal system, which prohibits anyone to fish in parts of a river at certain times.

This partnership between the communities and the authorities raises awareness of the importance of conserving freshwater resources while increasing the income generated by the members of the communities.

To date, there are more than 600 tagal zones in nearly 200 rivers in 17 districts in Sabah.

Conserving biodiversity is in everyone's interest. A holistic, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach is key to strengthening existing laws and policies governing the management and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Under these exceptionally difficult circumstances in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, may we fully appreciate the values of the ecosystem services that inland waters provide. In the end, the whole of society stands to gain from conserving and restoring these ecosystems.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/03/29/conserving-inland-waters-handwashing-are-needed-today/>

Filipina shares her poem about nature: 'Remedy'

By [InqPOP! Creator Community](#)

March 28th, 2020

This #POPCreators entry was submitted by **Mary Jane Boholano**. Here is her poem about nature:

Remedy

Early this morning, the sun was greeted
by an offbeat rural symphony
of birds' boisterous screeching,
roosters' majestic crowing,
and crickets' resolute chirping,
against the stark contrast
of the looming pillars of Skyway 3,
and a jungle of heavy machinery,
locked in suspended animation
four days since the lockdown.
Mother Nature is fast reclaiming urbanity,
of everything that is rightfully hers.
It is as though she took a healthy dose
of the plague to rid herself
of the malady that is humanity,
As though we are her infirmity
and pestilence her remedy.



Source: <https://pop.inquirer.net/89824/filipina-shares-her-poem-about-nature-remedy#ixzz6I1kfe1tZ>