



Illegal excavation of sand embankment reported in Northern Samar

Published July 9, 2020, 12:15 PM by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/09/illegal-excavation-of-sand-embankment-reported-in-northern-samar/>

While Northern Samar was at the height of the community quarantine to contain the spread of the coronavirus disease, environment officials received a report on the illegal excavation of sand embankment along a beach area in Bonbon, Northern Samar.

Acting on a complaint by an overseas Filipino worker who is a native of Bonbon, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Northern Samar, ordered on April 20 the property owner to stop the demolition of a portion of sand embankment that protects residents from strong waves and storm surges.

The case stemmed from a letter complaint dated April 11, 2020 sent by Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates-based Nelson Paredes to the Presidential Management Staff in Malacañang. His complaint was forwarded to the DENR Action Center in Quezon City, which then referred the matter to the DENR-Eastern Visayas.

The DENR team led by PENRO-Northern Samar OIC Angelito Villanueva confirmed that a portion of the embankment measuring 821 square meters in area, 1.5 meters in depth, and an estimated 1,300 cubic meters of sand volume has been removed.

The embankment, located in Barangay Magsaysay, is approximately 225 meters from the shoreline with an elevation of 20 meters above sea level.

“Although the said embankment is located within alienable and disposable land and owned privately, scraping the portion of the land poses danger to the communities living along the coast,” Villanueva explained.

“It could potentially cause landslide and endanger the lives of the people, or erosion that could lead to coastal degradation,” he added.

Villanueva said investigation showed that the sand embankment was scraped before using a bulldozer to further flatten the way going to the private property to provide a good view of the sea.

The excavation was discontinued following objections from the community.



Sand embankment demolition sa N. Samar beach pinahinto ng DENR

July 9, 2020 @ 3:35 PM

<https://remate.ph/sand-embankment-demolition-sa-n-samar-beach-pinahinto-ng-denr/>

Manila, Philippines – Pinahinto ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang isinasagawang excavation ng “sand embankment” sa beach area ng Bonbon, Northern Samar upang mapigilan ang posibleng pagkasira ng baybayin at pagkakaroon ng malalang sakuna habang sumasailalim ang probinsya sa enhanced community quarantine dulot ng COVID-19.

Ang aksiyon na ito ay base na rin sa reklamo ng isang overseas Filipino worker na tubong Bonbon at sa pamamagitan ng Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) ng DENR ay agad na inatasan ang may-ari ng property na si Armida Lim na ipahinto ang demolisyon sa “sand embankment” na siyang nagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa mga residente laban sa matataas na alon at storm surge.

Ayon sa ulat inilabas ang kautusang ito matapos kumpirmahin ng grupo ng DENR sa pangunguna ni PENRO Northern Samar Officer-in-Charge Angelito Villanueva na ang bahagi ng “embankment” na may sukat na 821 square meters, may lalim na 1.5 meters at tinatayang 1,300 cubic meters ng “sand volume” ay natanggal na.

Ang embankment na matatagpuan sa Barangay Magsaysay ay tinatayang 225 meters ang layo mula sa shoreline at may elevation na 20 meters “above sea level”.

“Although the said embankment is located within alienable and disposable land and owned privately by Lim, scraping the portion of the land poses danger to the communities living along the coast,” paliwanag ni Villanueva.

“It could potentially cause landslide and endanger the lives of the people, or erosion that could lead to coastal degradation,” dagdag pa nito.

Ayon sa DENR sa isinagawang imbestigasyon, inamin ni Lim kay Villanueva na siya ang nag-utos na tibagin ang “sand embankment” na nasa loob ng kanyang pag-aari gamit ang bulldozer upang mapatag ang daan papunta sa kanyang lugar at magkaroon ng magandang tanaw ng karagatan. Ang excavation ay itinigil dahil na rin sa hindi pagsang-ayon ng komunidad.



Sand embankment demolition sa N. Samar beach pinahinto ng DENR

Pinaalalahanan din ng DENR si Lim na ang ginagawang pagdemolisyon sa embankment ay iligal dahil kinakailangan muna nitong kumuha ng permit sa Mines and Geosciences Bureau at Environmental Management Bureau bago magsagawa ng ganitong uri ng operasyon.

Ang kasong ito ay nag-ugat mula sa sumbong ni Nelson Paredes na nakabase sa Abu Dhabi noong Abril 11, 2020 sa Presidential Management Staff sa Malacanang, Ito ay ibinigay sa DENR Action Center sa Quezon City na agad na nagpakilos sa mga tauhan ng DENR Region 8.

Mabilis namang inatasan ng DENR regional office ang PENRO Northern Samar na magsagawa ng imbestigasyon hanggang sa ipag-utos sa may-ari ng property na ipahinto ang paghuhukay. Sa memo na may petsang Abril 27, 2020, ipinadala ng regional office sa DENR Action Center ang ulat sa imbestigasyon at resolusyon na ginawa sa reklamo.

Pinuri naman ni DENR Action Center Head Merlinda Manila ang PENRO Northern Samar at DENR Region 8 dahil sa mabilis na aksiyon na ginawa ng mga ito sa reklamo ni Paredes na nagpadala rin ng pasasalamat sa pamamagitan ng email sa DENR field offices.

“Considering restricted movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this field operation work deserves a commendation,” sabi pa ni Manila. Santi Celario



Demolisyon sa “sand embankment” sa Northern Samar beach pinahinto ng DENR



Leader News Philippines

17 hrs · 🌐

JULY 10, 2020 5:30AM

<https://www.facebook.com/1535812816731782/posts/2603153876664332/>

Upang mapigilan ang posibleng pagkasira ng baybayin at pagkakaroon ng malalang sakuna ay pinahinto ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang isinasagawang excavation ng “sand embankment” sa beach area ng Bonbon, Northern Samar habang sumasailalim ang probinsiya sa enhanced community quarantine dulot ng COVID-19.

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Demolisyon sa “sand embankment” sa Northern Samar beach pinahinto ng DENR

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“Considering restricted movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this field operation work deserves a commendation,” sabi pa ni Manila.



DENR stops illegal quarry operations in Coron mountain

Jul 8, 2020 Patricia Laririt and Aira Genesa Magdayao

<https://palawan-news.com/denr-stops-illegal-quarry-operations-in-coron-mountain/>



(Quarrying operation in Mt. Dipulao, Barangay 6 Coron. Contributed photo)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has stopped a large-scale quarrying operation in Coron that has been cutting a large swath of mountain as filling materials for a reclamation project and several government infrastructure projects.

A local DENR official told Palawan News a notice of violation (NOV) on the project was issued by their Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), prompting them to stop the quarrying activities.

Development Management Officer (DMO) Pete Velasco of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) said that they have ordered the contractor of the project undertaking the quarrying activities to stop their operations.

“Bale nagsulat kami sa kanila nang dalawa noong May pa. Ngayon lang, kinausap na lang namin sila na huminto. Nag-issue rin ang EMB ng notice of violation noong June 23,” Velasco told Palawan News.

Joint government projects

Velasco told Palawan News that the quarry materials are being utilized for an ongoing reclamation project of the provincial government and several infrastructure projects of the municipal government.

“Dalawa ang tinatambakan diyan. Isa ‘yong sa project ni Gob [JCA], ‘yong Coron Bay Development Project, at ‘yong isa, ‘yong para sa public market na project naman ng LGU,” Velasco said.



DENR stops illegal quarry operations in Coron mountain



(The DENR stoppage order posted on the quarry road. Contributed photo)

However, upon confirming with Provincial Information Officer Winston Arzaga if this was indeed a project of the current provincial administration, he said that to his knowledge, it is a project of the Coron local government unit (LGU).

“Wala kaming feedback doon. Project daw iyon ng LGU Coron. Malaking project daw ‘yon. Actually, alam ko LGU ‘yon, eh, ‘di ko alam, wala akong info doon,” Arzaga told Palawan News.

“Pero alam ni Mayor [Mario T. Reyes] ‘yan. Alam niya ‘yan,” he added.

Palawan News has so far been unable to reach the office of Mayor Reyes. However, a councilor has told Palawan News that the project did not go through the Sangguniang Bayan of Coron.



(A portion of the ongoing Coron bay reclamation. Contributed photo)



DENR stops illegal quarry operations in Coron mountain

Luchie Cabantoy, Coron municipal councilor and chair of the Sangguniang Bayan's committee on infrastructure, told Palawan News that the quarrying activity has no permit issued by either the DENR or the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), including an environmental compliance certificate.

“Alam naman natin na kahit government project ‘yan ay dapat dumadaan ‘sa tamang proseso. Dapat may matatanggap kami na document from the barangay and others for the endorsement. But, being a chairman of the committee on infrastructure ay wala pa kaming nare-receive na documents from the project. Sa level ng Sangguniang bayan ay wala pa rin pero hindi ko lang sigurado kung may advance silang binigay sa Mayor’s Office,” Cabantoy said.

The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS), which issues a special clearance to all major development projects in Palawan, also confirmed that the quarrying activity was being utilized for the ongoing reclamation project.

PCSD spokesperson Jovic Fabello, in an interview with Palawan News on July 6, noted that the private contractors undertaking the quarrying have no permits.

“Wala ngang mga papeles ang contractor ng quarry, pero sa ngayon pino-proseso na nila. Iyong Dipulao na quarrying, doon kinukuha ang panambak para sa reclamation site sa town proper,” Fabello said.

Fabello did not explain why the project was allowed by the PCSD to go on without securing the proper permits.

Asked who are the contractors involved in the project, Velasco stated:

“Basta ang isa, Mercado ang may-ari. ‘Yong isa naman, BCT name ng company. Hindi ko alam ang ibig sabihin ng BCT,” said Velasco.



(A quarry operator's truck delivering quarry materials to the reclamation site. Contributed photo)



DENR collects 11 tons of wastes from water bodies in C. Luzon

By Zorayda Tecson July 9, 2020, 5:54 pm
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1108478>



RIVER PATROLLERS. More than 11 tons of mixed waste have been collected by Department of Environment of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) river patrollers from various bodies of water in Central Luzon since March 2020. The DENR and other mandated agencies are committed to clean Manila Bay, a large part of which is within the region. (Photo by DENR-Region 3)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – More than 11 tons of mixed wastes have been collected by river patrollers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) from various bodies of water in Central Luzon since last March.

Cynde Pagador, Manila Bay regional focal person, said the patrollers have continued the efforts to clean and restore the historic bay in Central Luzon even amid the dangers being posed by coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

The wastes collected were brought to the Metro Clark Sanitary Landfill in Capas, Tarlac for proper disposal.

"Our nearly 300 estero rangers or river patrollers in the region have been critical in our efforts to clean Manila Bay and the rivers draining from it during this quarantine period," Pagador said in a statement on Thursday.

She said the river patrollers were tasked with monitoring up to 10 kilometers of water bodies including tributaries daily to ensure that these are kept free of solid waste.

Pagador said it is the commitment of the DENR and other agencies to the public to clean Manila Bay.

"Our estero rangers were also kept busy coordinating with the local government units (LGUs) to ensure that the collection and segregation of solid waste within



DENR collects 11 tons of wastes from water bodies in C. Luzon

their areas of responsibility remained unhampered, even though with the Covid-19 pandemic,” she said.

She also said estero rangers likewise do other tasks such as installation of trash traps in water bodies, eco-bricking, as well as assisting in the distribution of relief goods to communities.

The DENR appealed to the public to properly dispose of their waste, including face masks, to prevent the spread of the virus.

“We encourage the public to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste during this community quarantine to minimize generation of solid waste and prevent dumping in rivers and oceans as most of the people are staying at home,” Pagador added.

Of the 190-kilometer stretch of Manila Bay, 142 kilometers are within Central Luzon, traversing the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan. (PNA)



Manila Bay cleanup continues amid COVID-19 pandemic

By Carlo Lorenzo J. DatuPublished on July 9, 2020
<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1047190>

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga, July 9 (PIA) -- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has continued efforts to clean and restore the Central Luzon portion of the Manila Bay amid the COVID-19 health crisis.

Manila Bay Regional Focal Person Cynde Pagador said over 10,000 kilograms of mixed waste have been collected by DENR river patrollers in various water bodies since March as the entire region was placed under community quarantine.

The wastes collected were brought to the Metro-Clark Sanitary Landfill in Capas, Tarlac for proper disposal.

"Our nearly 300 estero rangers or river patrollers have been critical in our efforts to clean Manila Bay and the rivers draining from it during this community quarantine period. They were tasked with monitoring up to 10 kilometers of water bodies daily to ensure that these were kept free of solid waste," Pagador shared.

She said it is the commitment of DENR and the rest of the mandamus agencies to clean Manila Bay.

"Our estero rangers were also kept busy coordinating with local government units to ensure that the collection and segregation of solid waste within their areas of responsibility remained unhampered," she furthered.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources has continued efforts to clean and restore the Central Luzon portion of the Manila Bay amid the COVID-19 health crisis. (DENR)

Estero rangers also undertook tasks such as the installation of trash traps in water bodies, eco-bricking, as well as assisted in the distribution of relief goods to communities.



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Manila Bay cleanup continues amid COVID-19 pandemic

Minimum health standards including wearing of facemasks and social distancing were observed by those involved during cleanup activities to protect them from the virus.

Relative to this, DENR appealed to the public to dispose properly their waste, particularly those used facemasks.

“We encourage the public to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste during this community quarantine to minimize generation of solid waste and prevent dumping in rivers and oceans as most of the people are staying at home,” she added.

Of the 190-kilometer stretch of Manila Bay, 142 kilometers falls within Central Luzon, traversing the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan. (CLJD-PIA 3)



DENR stops construction at new Cebu City COVID-19 cemetery, as 300 mahogany trees cut

Posted at Jul 09 2020 06:06 PM | Updated as of Jul 09 2020 06:56 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/09/20/denr-stops-construction-at-new-cebu-city-covid-19-cemetery-as-300-mahogany-trees-cut>



Some 300 mahogany trees were cut without permit at a new cemetery under construction in Cebu City. Donna Lavares, ABS-CBN News

CEBU CITY - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources office in Region 7 has stopped construction work at a new cemetery for COVID-19 fatalities here as some 300 Mahogany trees were cut without permit.

This as the local government sought new burial space in the city, a new hotspot for the coronavirus disease where cases continued to rise and corpses reportedly still remained in morgues.

Mardione De Los Reyes, forester at the Enforcement and Monitoring Section of the City Environment and Natural Resources office, said the trees at a protected area in Barangay Guba were cut illegally.

“Nag-iinventory kami, we’ll record down everything at ipapasa na namin ito sa opisina para sa gagawing imbestigasyon,” De Los Reyes said.

(We are doing an inventory, we’ll record down everything and send to the office for the investigation.)

Barangay Guba Chair Orlan Herrera said a public hearing was only held when the trees had been cut down.

Meanwhile, Cebu City Councilor Dave Tumulak, who sponsored the ordinance for the construction, said officials were doing what is needed to comply with requirements.



DENR stops construction at new Cebu City COVID-19 cemetery, as 300 mahogany trees cut

He said public health and safety depend on the construction of the new cemetery.

“Umaapela ako sa DENR na gagawa sila ng solusyon upang mapadali ang proyekto dahil alam natin na gaano ka importante ito. Hindi tayo papayag na ‘yung mga namatay sa COVID ay hindi mailibing nang maayos dahil wala silang pera panggastos sa cremation,” ayon kay Tumulak.

(I appeal to the DENR to find a solution to speed up this project because we know how important this is. We can't allow that those who died of COVID-19 won't be given a proper burial because they don't have money for cremation.)

The Cebu City local government earlier reported that bodies have remained in hospital morgues as funeral homes and crematoriums were fully booked.

Recent weeks have seen a surge in COVID-19 cases in the city, the only remaining area in the country under a strict enhanced community quarantine.

As of Thursday, the city has recorded over 7,078 COVID-19 cases, with 2,983 recoveries and 260 deaths. -- Donna Lavares, ABS-CBN News



Gov't efforts continue to curb COVID-19 outbreak in Cebu City

By Patricia Candaza Published on July 9, 2020
<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1047099>

CEBU CITY, July 7 (PIA) -- Two weeks since Department of Environment Natural Resources Sec. Roy Cimatu was assigned to become the Cebu Overseer of COVID-19 response, coordination among various stakeholders have been undertaken to stop the spread of COVID-19.

The strategy being adopted to contain the virus in Cebu City is placing the city under quarantine, strategic testing, and contact tracing.

Cimatu added that the increase in the number of cases for the past weeks can be attributed to the numerous tests being done.

"There were a number of suspected patients who volunteered to be tested unlike before na nagtatago sila," he said.

Meanwhile, Cebu City Mayor Edgar Labella welcomes the team led by Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong who is here to share the best practices in contact tracing that has been proven to be effective in identifying the contacts of those who tested positive for COVID-19.

"A contact tracing strategy is crucial in containing this pandemic, we look forward to learning from them," said Labella.

With all the measures being done by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and the local officials in Cebu City, Cimatu is optimistic about a possible downgrading of the city to general community quarantine (GCQ).

"I am very optimistic that enhanced community quarantine will be downgraded to GCQ by July 16. We just have to cooperate para hindi na madagdagan yung rate of growth of infection dito sa Cebu City," he said.

However, he added that some areas will still be put on lockdown even if the city will be downgraded to GCQ.

"Even if we are downgraded to GCQ, there will still be lockdown in some specific areas. Now we have top 20 barangays, nandyan yung pockets of infection in some sitios and puroks. Yun lang ang i-lockdown natin and these will be managed by the local government units," explained Cimatu. (poc/PIA7)



Stubborn Cebuanos? Duterte remarks a 'positive challenge,' says official

Arienne Merez, ABS-CBN News Posted at Jul 09 2020 04:11 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/09/20/stubborn-cebuanos-duterte-remarks-a-positive-challenge-says-official>



A policeman mans a checkpoint along a road in Cebu City, central Philippines on June 24, 2020, after the government tightened its enhanced community quarantine restrictions amid rising cases of COVID-19 infections in the city. Alex Badayos, AFP

MANILA - President Rodrigo Duterte's comments describing Visayan people as stubborn is a "positive challenge" for Cebuanos amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Cebu City Vice Mayor Michael Rama said Thursday.

Rama said the President's remarks pushed Cebu City to ramp up its response to the coronavirus pandemic after Duterte criticized Visayans for allegedly flouting lockdown rules that led to the surge of COVID-19 cases in their region.

"We'll be taking it as a positive challenge, as an insight para it will give us a lesson to be really united and prove that we can be one in attacking this COVID-19," Rama said during a Palace press briefing.

"Mas mabuti 'yung prangka-prangka na that expression of sentiment ng Presidente, it has become a total challenge sa amin," he added.

(It's better to be frank because that sentiment of the President has become a total challenge for us.)

The President earlier this month criticized the supposed stubbornness of Visayans and cited it as a reason for the increase of COVID-19 cases in central Philippines.

While Metro Manila is still the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in the country, Region 7's Cebu province and Cebu City have been identified as hotspots.

Cebu City is the only part of the country that remains under strict lockdown or enhanced community quarantine.

The President has assigned Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to the Visayan urban hub to lead the city's response to the COVID-19 crisis.



Another tarsier found in Panabo City, DavNor

Published July 9, 2020, 11:38 AM by Ivy Tejano

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/09/another-tarsier-found-in-panabo-city-davnor/>

DAVAO CITY – A new sighting of a tarsier was reported by Tagum Agricultural Development Company, Inc. (TADECO) in Panabo City in Davao del Norte on Wednesday.

Tarsiers have been spotted recently not only in Davao City but also in other parts of the Davao Region.

In the official Facebook page of the Tadeco ko Bai, it said that they did not think of seeing tarsiers near the boundaries of the TADECO.

“We thought we could only see tarsiers in Bohol. It is amazing that these threatened smallest primates are just right there living in their local habitat,” the TADECO said.

According to experts, tarsiers or any wildlife are actually one of the indicators of having a good and healthy forest ecosystem.

“Mindanao has its local tarsier. We have also read in the news recently that there are tarsiers found in the mountainous areas of Davao City,” the TADECO said.

It added that experts have yet to study the species of tarsiers in the forest of Mindanao and its characteristics and distinctions from those that are found in Bohol.

The TADECO, along with the Security Force, turned over on Wednesday the rescued tarsier to Panabo City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO).

Panabo-Centro officer-in-charge Rogelio Hermo said the tarsier will be checked by a veterinarian first before it will be turned over to the wildlife rescue center in Tagum City.

“We hope to preserve these little ones. So, when you find one, please turn it over to the nearest local DENR office,” Hermo said.

Two months ago, a tarsier was also found on a farm near a school in Barangay Megkawayan in Calinan District, Davao City. The tarsier was also turned over to DENR-11 and to a wildlife rescue center.



JULY 10, 2020 6:30AM

<https://www.facebook.com/143947355665943/posts/3666521206741856/>



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14 hrs ·



#SentroBalita | In Nasa-K value of animals belonging to endangered species, confiscated by DENR and NBI | via Naomi Tiburcio



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9 Comments 59 Shares



Permits to develop Laguna Lake shoreland areas suspended

Published July 9, 2020, 11:05 AM by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/09/permits-to-develop-laguna-lake-shoreland-areas-suspended/>

The Laguna Lake Development Authority has suspended the issuance of clearances to develop the Laguna de Bay's shoreland areas pending the review of policies on the management of these portions of the lake.

In a memorandum circular signed by General Manager Jaime Medina last June 15, the LLDA said that the processing, including receipt and approval of applications for Shoreland Development Clearance, will be held in abeyance.

“Our Shoreland Management Office (SMO) shall immediately inform all applicants of the status of their pending applications and of the effectivity of this memorandum,” Medina said in the memo.

In issuing the memorandum, the LLDA noted that despite the Authority's continuous efforts in enforcing its mandate, “unauthorized development on Laguna de Bay shoreland areas have been prevalent in the past years, which undoubtedly pose undue ecological disturbance, deterioration, and pollution within the Laguna de Bay region.”

“Thus, in the exigency of efficiently carrying out the declared policy to protect and preserve the Laguna de Bay and its environs, this Authority is currently reviewing its policies on the Laguna de Bay shoreland management and its proposed amendments,” it added.

The memorandum, however, will not be applicable to proposed development, which are initiated by the national government, its departments, agencies, and instrumentalities, as well as any local governments, and other proposed developments for public use.

“Furthermore, let it be reminded that the Memorandum Circular No. 2018-02, Suspension of issuance of Shoreland Lease Agreement/Shoreland Occupancy Permits, remains valid until revoked or superseded,” it added.

The Laguna de Bay shoreland area, also known as “buffer zone,” is the part of the lakebed along the lakeshore lying at an elevation of 12.5 meters and below and alternately submerged or exposed by the seasonal rising and lowering of the lake levels.



Strategic Communication
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Permits to develop Laguna Lake shoreland areas suspended

It is a linear strip of open space designed to separate incompatible elements or uses, or to control pollution, nuisance and for identifying and defining development areas or zones.

A clearance to develop the shoreland area is granted by the LLDA to national government agencies, including government, whether provincial, city or municipality, and barangays, and to owners of private lands, to use or develop shoreland areas of the Laguna Lake in pursuit of their projects and activities under the terms and conditions prescribed by the LLDA guidelines.



NWRB NAGBAWAS NG TUBIG SA METRO MANILA, KALAPIT NA LALAWIGAN

July 9, 2020 @ 12:42 PM

<https://remate.ph/nwrn-nagbawas-ng-tubig-sa-metro-manila-kalapit-na-lalawigan/>

Nitong June 12, 2020, pormal na idineklara ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) ang pagsisimula ng rainy season sa buong kapuluan ng Pilipinas habang patuloy na kinahaharap ang coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

Dalawang bagyo na nga ang naranasan natin nitong mga buwan ng Mayo at Hunyo, sina Typhoon Ambo (Vongfong) at Tropical Depression Butchoy.

Si TS Ambo ang kauna-unahang bagyo ng taong 2020 ay pitong beses na naglandfall sa San Policarpio, Eastern Samar, Dalupiri Island at Capul Island sa Northern Samar noong May 14, 2020 at kinabukasan sa Ticao Island at Burias Island sa Masbate, San Andreas at Real sa Quezon noong May 15, 2020.

Umabot sa 140,147 pamilya ang naapektuhan o katumbas ng 578,571 katao.

Nasa halagang Php 1.57 bilyon ang nasirang mga imprakstruktura at agrikultura sa Regions II, III, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, V, VIII at CAR.

Nagpaulan naman sa CALABARZON, Region III, I at Metro Manila ang TD Butchoy simula June 11, 2020 hanggang June 13, 2020 kung saan ito ay naging ganap na bagyo pagkalabas ng Philippine Area of Responsibility at tinungo ang mainland China.

Bagama't nagkaroon ng monsoon breaks pagkatapos ni TD Butchoy, umepekto na muli ang Hanging Habagat kaya napadalas ang pag-ulan sa hapon at sa gabi.

Dahil dito, ibinaba ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang alokasyon nito sa Metropolitan Works and Sewerage System sa 46 cubic meters per second (CMS) mula sa dating 48 CMS.

Para naman sa mga irigasyon ay nasa 30 CMS.

Pagtitiyak ng NWRB, may sapat na tubig ngayong panahon ng tag-ulan at ngayong nagpapatuloy tayo sa pagharap sa problema ng global pandemic na ito.



Oil spill cleanup in Iloilo City continues

Published July 9, 2020, 12:41 PM by Hanah Tabios

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/09/oil-spill-cleanup-in-iloilo-city-continues/>

The recovery operations for the remaining 8,000 liters of bunker oil that spilled into the waters of Barrio Obrero in Lapuz district, Iloilo City continues on Thursday, July 9.



(PCG / MANILA BULLETIN)

The operations were led by the Philippine Coast Guard Iloilo Station and the Marine Environmental Protection Unit of Western Visayas.

The PCG said that approximately 32,000 liters have been recovered in all the spillage points since the incident happened on July 3, where at least 48,000 liters of oil spilled into the Iloilo Strait following the explosion of one of the tankers of Power Barge No. 102.

The PCG Station-Guimaras also conducted recovery operations as the spilled oil had reached Barangay Hosky, Jordan, Guimaras.

“Approximately 481.5 liters of bunker oil reached Guimaras. 124 sacks of debris with spilled oil were collected last July 7, 2020,” the PCG told the Manila Bulletin in a text message.

The PCG said if warranted, it will file criminal raps against the owner of the power barge if violations are seen after the investigation.



Squirrels seen at UP Diliman

July 9, 2020 7:15pm

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/hashtag/content/746229/squirrels-seen-at-up-diliman/story/>

Squirrels have been reportedly seen at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus.

On Monday, the Facebook page UP Wild shared a video what looked like the furry creature moving across tree branches.

“Oh no, the squirrels are in UPD!” the caption on the post said.

“This is, to our knowledge, the first squirrel sighting inside the campus. Although it is very cute (let’s give it to them) and reminds us of cartoon characters, this is BAD news for our biodiversity!” it added.

According to UP Wild, Finlayson’s squirrels (*Callosciurus finlaysonii*) are exotic species that have the potential to become invasive.

“They reproduce fast like other rodents, and predate on our native fauna (they raid bird nests). It’s like introducing a novel enemy to the local community (yes, it sounds very familiar),” the page said.

According to animaldiversity.org, Finlayson’s squirrels have a significant impact on native species where they have been introduced. As an invasive species whose diet consists of plants, they are known to strip trees’ barks.

They are also said to destroy electric cables and other structures.

UP Wild said these squirrels are naturally found in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, and are most likely introduced in the Philippines due to pet trade.

“Pet owners may have intentionally or accidentally released squirrels to the wild. Now, the squirrels are breeding in parks and residential areas such as Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife, La Mesa Ecopark, Forbes Park, Alabang and Dasma villages!” said UP Wild.

The page encouraged readers to share other squirrel sightings and urged the public “to be responsible owners and never release pets to the wild.”

According to its Facebook page, UP Wild is “a community to appreciate the flora and fauna in UP Diliman, and to raise awareness on the importance of urban green spaces for biodiversity.” – **RC, GMA News**



Prediksyon ng UP sa COVID-19 cases, tinanggap nang may pag-iingat ng DOH

July 9, 2020 @ 6:50 PM

<https://remate.ph/prediksyon-ng-up-sa-covid-19-cases-tinanggap-nang-may-pag-iingat-ng-doh/>

Manila, Philippines – Pinaigting pa ng Department of Health sa publiko ang mga impormasyong ibinigay ng UP Institute of Mathematics and Ranjit Rye ng UP Department of Political Science hinggil sa kanilang estimasyon na posibleng aabot sa 100,000 ang kaso ng COVID-19 sa katapusan ng Agosto.

Ayon kay Health Usec Maria Rosario Vergeire sa media forum, na kailangang magawa ang dapat gawin upang hindi na umabot sa katapusan ng Agosto ang estimasyon ng UP.

“Lagi nating ipinapalinawanag na kapag may estimate ay tinatanggap naming because that serves something that we refer to kapag nag-aanalyze pero kailangan i-interpret with caution,” ayon pa kay Vergeire.

Aniya, may mga assumption na nakakaapekto sa scientific models.

Kaya naman yung 95,000 o 100,000 na estimate ng UP ay ginawa nila base sa kanilang kalkulasyon.

“Tayo ay pinakikinggan natin sila pero sabi nga marami pang ibang factors na maaring makaapekto niyan, pahayag ni Vergeire. Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden



PH gov't: No need to worry about reemergence of bubonic plague

By CNN Philippines Staff Published Jul 9, 2020 5:14:40 PM

<https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/7/9/China-bubonic-plague-Philippines-Roque.html>

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, July 9)— As the Chinese region of Inner Mongolia is on high alert after a suspected case of bubonic plague, the Philippine government assured the public there is no need to worry about the disease entering the country.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque on Thursday said the country's borders mostly remain shut from international travelers due to the travel restrictions imposed to control the spread of coronavirus.

"Sinenseryo po natin 'yan pero huwag po kayo mabahala kasi ang pagpasok po ng mga dayuhan sa Pilipinas ay hindi pa po pinapayagan nang malawakan, case-to-case basis lang po so sarado pa po ang ating mga borders," he said in a media briefing.

[Translation: We are taking this report seriously. You do not need to worry because the Philippine borders are off limits to foreign travelers, except for some foreigners who are given permission to enter the country, but that is on a case-to-case basis.

The case was discovered in the city of Bayannur, northwest of Beijing, according to state-run Xinhua news agency. A hospital alerted municipal authorities of the patient's case on Saturday. By Sunday, local authorities had issued a citywide Level 3 warning for plague prevention, the second lowest in a four-level system. The warning will stay in place until the end of the year, according to Xinhua.

RELATED: [The bubonic plague is back again in China's Inner Mongolia](#)

Bubonic plague causes painful, swollen lymph nodes, as well as fever, chills, and coughing.

There is currently no effective vaccine against plague, but modern antibiotics can prevent complications and death if given quickly enough.



Plasma potential cure for coronavirus—Health

posted July 10, 2020 at 02:20 am by Willie Casas and Vito Barcelo, Rio N. Araja, Joel Zurbano
<https://manilastandard.net/news/top-stories/328225/plasma-potential-cure-for-coronavirus-health.html>

About half of COVID-19 patients who received convalescent plasma showed speedy recovery, the spokesperson of Philippine General Hospital (PGH) said on Thursday.

PGH spokesperson Jonas del Rosario, during an interview on GMA Network's Unang Hirit, said the health facility was now conducting a clinical trial for convalescent plasma as a treatment for COVID-19.

READ: St. Luke's doctor donates plasma for COVID-19 patients

Del Rosario said the treatment was more effective when administered to patients before their condition worsened.

As they continue with the clinical trial, Del Rosario said PGH would also give plasma treatment to moderate COVID-19 cases.

However, the PGH is short on convalescent plasma supply as some survivors did not want to go back to the hospital due to the fear of catching the virus again.

Borders closed

Malacanang said the country's borders remained closed to foreigners due to the pandemic, as it allayed fears of another deadly virus from China, the bubonic plague that killed millions of people in Europe in the mid-1300s.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque said foreign tourists and foreigners wanting to visit the country without valid reasons were not yet allowed to enter the country as part of the government's effort to contain the spread of COVID-19.

In a press briefing, Roque said the government was taking the matter seriously after reports that a case of suspected bubonic plague emerged in Inner Mongolia, which is a part of China.

"Our borders are closed so we have nothing to worry about," he said.

New Zealand donation

The New Zealand embassy in Manila donated a total of P800,000 to the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi) for its procurement of additional personal protective equipment for healthcare workers and front-liners.

The embassy said two Filipino students approached Ambassador Peter Kell and appealed for PPE upon hearing that the center was having a shortage of equipment.

In their letter to the ambassador, Santino, and Lorenzo Tanjutco, Grade 11 students from Everest Academy said: "Both of us strongly believe that in a time of crisis such as the pandemic, nations should work together to be able to support one another."



Plasma potential cure for coronavirus—Health

The New Zealand embassy approached the NKTi through its executive director, Dr. Rose Liqueste, to facilitate the donation, which was turned over by Kell himself on Thursday.

Face mask violators

The Quezon City government vowed to go after face mask violators to help slow down the spread of COVID-19.

Retired police general Elmo San Diego, Department of Public Order and Safety chief, however, said those who would lower their face masks momentarily just to eat or drink would be spared from apprehension.

Last Wednesday morning, GMA-7 broadcast journalist Howie Severino was apprehended by DPOS traffic enforcers when he was supposedly not wearing a face mask to take a drink along Mother Ignacia Street.

READ: Broadcaster Severino held for not wearing mask

San Diego clarified Severino did not go through a short seminar on COVID-19 when he was taken to the Amoranto Sports Complex, where hundreds of violators were brought. "It was just an interview validation," he earlier told the Manila Standard.

'Observe protocols'

Pasay City Mayor Imelda Rubiano reiterated her call for her constituents to strictly observe health and safety protocols as the number of COVID-19 cases in the city continued to rise.

As of July 8, the city's Health Office recorded a total of 1,096 confirmed cases.

"Even if certain restrictions have been lifted, it's not the time to let our guard down. COVID-19 is still here and it continues to infect a number of people," said Rubiano.

According to Health Office's surveillance and epidemiology unit, hardest hit among the villages were Barangay 193, which has 32 active confirmed cases; Barangay 183, 32 active confirmed cases; and Barangay 144, 39 active confirmed cases; Barangay 37, 20 active confirmed cases; and Barangay 169, 22 active confirmed cases.

"Let us not bring back the harrowing days of a lockdown, where curfew hours were longer and the movement of people and products were restricted," Rubiano said.



LGU chiefs, worried by virus, holding up tourism reopening

By [Ma. Stella F. Arnaldo](#) July 9, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/07/09/lgu-chiefs-worried-by-virus-holding-up-tourism-reopening/>



El Nido bay and Cadlao island at low tide, Palawan

LOCAL government units (LGUs) are directing the pace when their respective regions and provinces will reopen to tourism.

This was underscored by Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat in response to repeated appeals from various stakeholders and tourism enterprises who already want to get their businesses going by reopening to tourists.

“We’ve been talking to a few governors and mayors, whose provinces are already Covid-free, and urging them to slowly reopen to tourism,” she told the BusinessMirror. “But many of them are still hesitating, understandably so, and working first to make sure they have testing labs and fully equipped hospitals to receive patients. Of course, we have to respect their wishes.”

For now, only Boracay Island has reopened to tourists, but only to those from Western Visayas, as agreed between the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force and the local government representatives led by Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores and acting Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista. Romulo Puyat said they are just monitoring the island for 30 days, “and if there are no new Covid cases, we can talk about allowing tourists younger than 21 and older than 60 years old, to enter Boracay,” or when the island is declared Low-Risk Modified General Community Quarantine. At present, Boracay is under MGCQ.

In a visit to El Nido in Palawan last week, Romulo Puyat met with Mayor Edna Lim, who, along with Palawan Gov. Jose Ch. Alvarez, allowed the “dry run” of tourists between Manila/Clark and El Nido. The date of the dry run, however, has yet to be determined.



LGU chiefs, worried by virus, holding up tourism reopening

Others lined up for possible reopening to tourism are Bohol and Baguio City, but no dates have been firmed up either for when this will happen.

[\(See, "Key destinations in Palawan lose over P3 billion in tourism receipts," in the BusinessMirror, July 4, 2020.\)](#)

Romulo Puyat said tourism businesses in these Covid-free areas should bring up their concerns to their respective LGU heads. "We understand their pain, and we know what they are going through. This pandemic has really impacted on their businesses, and many are just hanging by a slim thread. But the decision to reopen their areas is not up to the Department of Tourism."

The International Labor Organization has estimated that close to 2 million workers have been affected by Covid-19's impact on local tourism businesses. Last year, foreign tourism arrivals reached 8.26 million.

Meanwhile, in response to a question on how government plans to reinvigorate the tourism industry at the pre-Sona briefing on Wednesday hosted by economic managers, DOT Undersecretary for Tourism Regulation, Coordination and Resource Generation Arturo P. Boncato Jr. said, "A major strategy of the TRRP [Tourism Recovery and Response Program] is to restart tourism, and Secretary Puyat really believes that domestic tourism should be the catalyst of restarting the industry all over the Philippines. In fact, she has already started moving around the country and visited several destinations and actually spoke and really engaged with local government units and their leaders, because the role of LGUs is very crucial to determining as to the time of reopening of destinations. That is exactly what the DOT is doing, looking for these destinations that can jumpstart tourism right away."

He cited the concept of "travel bubbles" championed by the DOT chief, where the agency "[looks] for destinations that have contained the virus very well, and there's really openness and willingness of the local leaders to open to tourism, and match them eventually with international markets, but initially, match them with domestic markets."

He added the DOT would soon be issuing new health and safety standards for meeting facilities, travel and tours, tour guides, and "even guidelines for island beach destinations and tourist attractions." Last week, Romulo Puyat and Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez inspected hotels and restaurants to check if minimum health and safety standards are being followed.



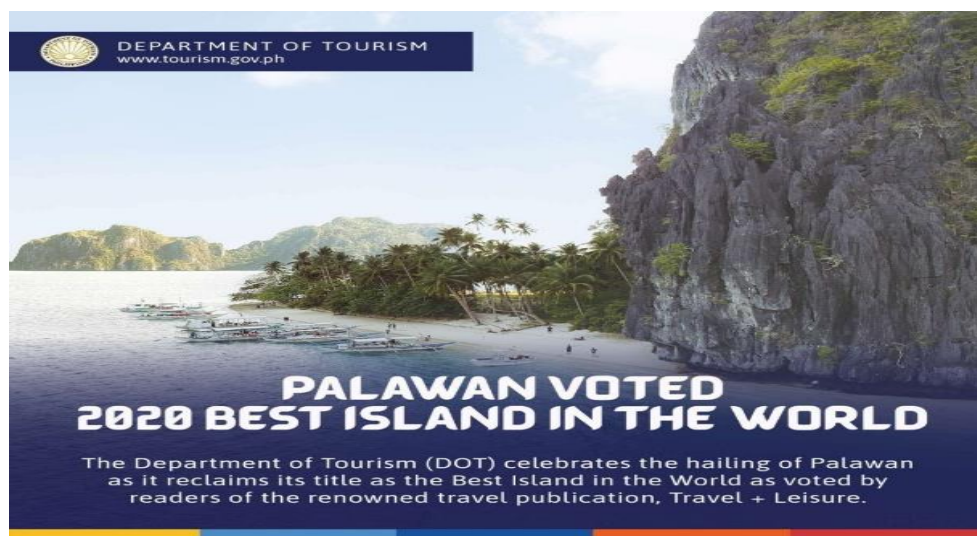
Palawan reclaims distinction as 'Best Island in the World'

Published July 9, 2020, 5:14 PM by Hanah Tabios

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/09/palawan-reclaims-distinction-as-best-island-in-the-world/>

The island province of Palawan has reclaimed its top spot as the Best Island in the World for this year.

The newest distinction was cited by the world-renowned travel publication Travel + Leisure, which now makes Palawan as a four-time winner of the said award.



(DOT via Hanah Tabios / MANILA BULLETIN)

With its mesmerizing lagoons hidden behind the majestic limestone cliffs, not to mention its turquoise crystal-clear waters and mountains rising directly from the ocean palm-edged beaches, Palawan first earned the same distinction in 2013, followed by a back-to-back citation in 2016 and 2017.

Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat applauded this achievement, citing its importance as the distinction was voted by the readers of the prominent magazine.

According to Travel + Leisure writer Sara Clemence, the World's Best Awards survey was conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey closed on March 2, just before the widespread stay-at-home orders were implemented. Hence, she said, the result reflect the readers' experiences before the ongoing global health crisis.

Clemence described Palawan as a place where travelers could enjoy the haunting beauty of World War II wrecks underwater, as well as "explore old-growth rain forests, and paddle one of the world's longest subterranean rivers at Puerto Princesa."



Palawan reclaims distinction as ‘Best Island in the World’

“The landscape and scenery are just gorgeous. It offers the most beautiful beaches, resorts, and scenery anywhere,” she furthered.

Puyat said that the government’s efforts in rehabilitating Palawan in 2018 all materialized following the recognition.

“It’s wonderful to see that our rehabilitation and sustainable development efforts last year, especially in El Nido and Coron, were well-received by tourists everywhere,” she added.

The famed Boracay Island, which was the first to undergo a massive rehabilitation two years ago, also made it to Number 14 in the Travel + Leisure’s 2020 Top 25 Islands in the World.

Surprisingly, both the two Philippine travel destinations surpassed other popular holiday getaways like Bali, Indonesia and Bora-Bora, French Polynesia, which earned the 17th and the 25th spots, respectively.

Clemence said the choice of the top islands across the globe has varying degrees of diversity in terms of climate, natural attractions, appealing resorts, and overall value, just to name a few.

In addition, the DOT said this is the third citation reaped by the Philippines since the imposition of lockdowns in several countries due to the dreaded coronavirus disease.

Forbes magazine earlier ranked the Philippines among the seven countries “that have the potential to become a major tourist destination in a post-COVID world’. Last month, the prestigious Condé Nast Traveler (CNT) also cited the “Hidden Beach” in El Nido, Palawan, as one of the 30 Best Beaches in the World.

Currently, the DOT is ramping up its efforts to revive the heavily distressed industry by prioritizing the gradual reopening of the domestic tourism economy.



Palawan reclaims title as ‘best island in the world’

Published July 9, 2020 9:19pm By MA. ANGELICA GARCIA, GMA News

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/travel/746254/palawan-reclaims-title-as-best-island-in-the-world/story/>



Palawan has just reclaimed its title as the "Best Island in the World," according to Travel+Leisure. JESSIE VILLABRILLE

Palawan has reclaimed its title as the “Best Island in the World,” according to a survey conducted by renowned travel magazine Travel + Leisure.

In an [article](#) on Wednesday, Travel + Leisure writer Sara Clemence described Palawan, one of the Philippines’ top tourist spots, as “dramatic at sea level, with mountains rising directly from the

ocean palm-edged beaches.”

Palawan scored 94.83 in the survey of the magazine to regain the “Best Island in the World” title. [Palawan placed second last year](#) after registering 90.87 points.

“Though it’s difficult to reach from many parts of the world, once travelers get there they can dive in World War II wrecks, explore old-growth rain forests, and paddle one of the world’s longest subterranean rivers at Puerto Princesa,” Clemence wrote.

According to the magazine, the survey closed on March 2, just before widespread stay-at-home orders were implemented as a result of COVID-19.

"The results reflect our readers’ experiences before the pandemic, but we hope that this year’s honorees will inspire your trips to come — whenever they may be," it said.

Meanwhile, the Department of Tourism on Thursday celebrated the recognition.

“Palawan reclaimed its rightful place in the World’s Best Awards. The citation as the Best Island in the World is all the more important because this is voted upon by the readers of the prominent Travel + Leisure (T+L) magazine,” Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said in a statement.

“It’s wonderful to see that our rehabilitation and sustainable development efforts last year, especially in El Nido and Coron, were well-received by tourists everywhere,” she added.

The DOT also underscored that Palawan has so far topped the World’s Best Islands list four times already.

Apart from Palawan, Boracay, world famous for its white sand beaches, also made it to the list, placing 14th with a score of 88.22.

Palawan edged out other famous tourist destinations, including islands in Greece (Páros, Milos, Crete), Italy (Sicily), Thailand (Koh Lanta), and Indonesia (Bali). -MDM, GMA News



UN: World could hit 1.5-degree warming threshold by 2024

[Associated Press](#) / 09:12 PM July 09, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1304647/un-world-could-hit-1-5-degree-warming-threshold-by-2024>



In this June 27, 2019 file photo a man runs on a small path as the sun rises in Frankfurt, Germany. The world could see average global temperatures 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above the pre-industrial average for the first time in the coming five years, the U.N. weather agency said Thursday. The 1.5-C mark is a key threshold that countries have agreed to limit global warming to, if possible. Scientists say average temperatures around the world are already at least 1 C higher now than during the period from 1850-1900 because of man-made greenhouse emissions. (AP Photo/Michael Probst, file)

GENEVA — The world could see annual global temperatures break a key threshold for the first time in the coming five years, the U.N. weather agency said Thursday.

The World Meteorological Organization said forecasts suggest there's a 20% chance that global temperatures will be 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) higher than the pre-industrial average in at least one year between 2020 and 2024.

The 1.5 C mark is the level countries agreed to cap global warming at in 2015. While a new annual high might be followed by several years with lower average temperatures, breaking that threshold would be seen as further evidence that international efforts to curb climate change aren't working.

Scientists say average temperatures around the world are already at least 1 C higher now than from 1850-1900 because of man-made greenhouse emissions.

The Geneva-based WMO said there's a 70% chance that the 1.5-degree mark will be exceeded in a single month between 2020 and 2024. The five-year period is expected to see annual average temperatures that are 0.91 C to 1.59 C higher than pre-industrial averages, it said.



Strategic Communication
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10 July 2020
Date

UN: World could hit 1.5-degree warming threshold by 2024

The forecast is contained in an annual climate outlook based on several long-term computer models compiled under the leadership of the United Kingdom's Met Office.

WMO chief Petteri Taalas said the study shows “the enormous challenge” countries face in meeting the goals of the 2015 Paris accord. The agreement sets a goal of keeping global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit), ideally no more than 1.5 C.

The agency noted that the models used for the forecast don't consider the impact that the coronavirus pandemic might have on reducing emissions of planet-warming gases such as carbon dioxide.

“The industrial and economic slowdown from COVID-19 is not a substitute for sustained and coordinated climate action,” Taalas said.

“Due to the very long lifetime of CO₂ in the atmosphere, the impact of the drop in emissions this year is not expected to lead to a reduction of CO₂ atmospheric concentrations which are driving global temperature increases,” he said.



UN forecasts even warmer temperatures over next 5 years

posted July 09, 2020 at 05:30 pm by [AFP and Robin Millard](#)
<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/328156>

The annual mean global temperature is likely to be at least one degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels in each of the next five years, the World Meteorological Organization said Thursday.

The WMO said there was a 20 percent chance that it will exceed 1.5 C above 1850 to 1900 average levels in at least one year, according to its annual climate predictions for the coming five years.

The last five-year period has been the warmest five years on record, said the Geneva-based United Nations agency, which counts 193 member states.

Temperatures over the next five years, 2020 to 2024, are very likely to be within the range of 0.91 C to 1.59 C above pre-industrial levels.

Almost all regions, except parts of the southern oceans, are likely to be warmer than the recent past, which is defined as 1981 to 2010.

"This study shows -- with a high level of scientific skill -- the enormous challenge ahead in meeting the Paris Agreement on Climate Change target of keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 C," said WMO secretary-general Petteri Taalas.

The 2015 Paris accord seeks to limit global temperature rises through sweeping cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

Wetter Sahel

The WMO forecasts do not take into account changes in greenhouse gas and aerosol emissions due to the shutdown of economic and industrial activity triggered by the coronavirus crisis.

"Due to the very long lifetime of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the impact of the drop in emissions this year is not expected to lead to a reduction of CO₂ atmospheric concentrations which are driving global temperature increases," Taalas said.

The planet's average temperature is already more than 1.0 C warmer than the pre-industrial period, the WMO said.



UN forecasts even warmer temperatures over next 5 years

Looking at the five-year period 2020 to 2024, the organisation said there was a 70 percent chance that at least one month would be 1.5 C warmer than pre-industrial levels.

However, there is only a three percent chance that the entire period would be 1.5 C warmer than that baseline level.

The northern North Atlantic region could have stronger westerly winds, leading to more storms in western Europe over the next five years.

High latitude regions and the Sahel are likely to be wetter than the recent past, the organisation predicted.

The WMO also said that in 2020 alone, many parts of South America, southern Africa and Australia are likely to be drier than the recent past.

Meanwhile, the Arctic is likely to have warmed by more than twice as much as the global mean.

It said the smallest temperature change was expected in the tropics and in the mid-latitudes of the Southern Hemisphere.



Drought-hit forests may worsen climate change

By Tim Radford, Climate News Network July 9, 2020

<https://www.eco-business.com/news/drought-hit-forests-may-worsen-climate-change/>

Forests help to slow the challenge of climate change, don't they? Only if climate change doesn't fell the forests first.



An aerial view of the Amazon rainforest near Manaus, the capital and largest city of the Brazilian state of Amazonas. Image: [CIFOR, CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

There could be big problems with national and international plans to plant forests to deal with climate change. One of them is uncertainty about how climate change is going to deal with the forests.

In six new studies of what might be called the plantation carbon conundrum, independent groups of researchers warn that:

As land surfaces warm rapidly, would-be foresters might see their investments [literally going up in smoke](#)

Poorly-designed policies could deliver plantations that end up [absorbing far less carbon than anyone hoped for](#), and at a cost to natural wilderness and biodiversity

In temperate zones, [rising temperatures and extended drought](#) could mean that many trees will die

How effectively newly planted forests absorb atmospheric carbon [depends on a suite of factors](#): among them tree species, the history of the land newly-planted, and the type of soil around the roots

Because natural forests directly or indirectly support four out of every five species living on land, [the loss of tree canopy is already changing the numbers and variety of global wildlife](#)



Drought-hit forests may worsen climate change

And finally, as temperatures go up, [the appetite of the most prolific species for atmospheric carbon](#) could dwindle – meaning that forests planted to slow climate change will be increasingly ineffective.

That the loss of natural forests worldwide is a driver of global heating and climate change has never been in doubt. And climate scientists continue [to count tomorrow's forests as part of the answer](#) to [the threat of catastrophic climate change](#).

But researchers have already warned that a vow to plant one trillion trees is not of itself a readymade answer, and that [national plans to conserve existing forest are less than effective](#).

So the challenge for foresters and ecologists is to decide what works best – and what would not. Researchers in the US argue in the journal [Science](#) that governments and policymakers need a masterplan to confront the risks forests face from the consequences of rising temperatures: drought, fire and insect disturbance.

Flying blind

[Forests and other natural ecosystems absorb about one-third](#) of all the greenhouse gas emissions that human actions release each year. New forests must be part of the answer, but only if the new timber goes on and on absorbing carbon.

“There’s a very real chance that many of those forest projects could go up in flames or to bugs or drought stress or hurricanes in the coming decades,” said [William Anderegg of the University of Utah](#), who led the study. “Without good science to tell us what the risks are, we’re flying blind and not making the best policy decisions.”

The other papers look at aspects of the hazard, and of well-intentioned policies to combat climate change. [The Bonn Challenge](#) aims to restore an area of forest eight times the size of California, but 80 per cent of the commitments so far involve plantations of single species or of exploitable species: fruit, for instance, and rubber on what might have been natural forest land, grassland or savannahs that support biodiversity.

[Californian and Chilean researchers](#) report in the journal [Nature Sustainability](#) that they looked at the role of long-running Chilean government subsidies in



Drought-hit forests may worsen climate change

afforestation and found an uncomfortable result: exotic species flourished at the expense of native wilderness.

“Chile’s forest subsidies probably decreased biodiversity without increasing total carbon stored in aboveground biomass,” they conclude, bluntly. And one of the paper’s authors, [Eric Lambin of Stanford University](#), spelled it out: “That’s the exact opposite of what these policies are aiming for.”

“

Up until now, forests have stabilised the climate, but as they become more drought-stressed, they could become a destabilising carbon source.

Margaret Evans, assistant research professor of forest ecology, University of Arizona

German scientists report in the journal [Basic and Applied Ecology](#) that a warmer world has already delivered dramatic consequences for the forests of Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The past five years have been the warmest in the region since records began, and 2018’s summer was the most extreme – 3.3°C above the long-term average. For spruce and other species that was the limit, and by 2019 even beech trees had died.

Since extreme drought and heat will become ever more likely, researchers need to decide what mix of species is going to survive and provide cover for threatened species. “This is going to take some time,” said [Bernhard Schuldt, of the University of Würzburg](#).

Chinese and US researchers report in [Nature Sustainability](#) that they examined the same problems using a ground-up approach. They looked at 11,000 soil samples taken across 163 control and forested plots in northern China, to find that the carbon capture potential of afforestation schemes may have been overestimated. In soils low in carbon, plantation did increase the density of organic carbon. In those soils already rich in organic carbon, the planting seemed to lower carbon density.

European researchers, too, report in [Science](#) that they looked at data collected over 150 years at 6,000 locations to work out what happened to plants and animals as climate change and human intrusion transformed the world’s forests. Again, the answers are not simple.



Drought-hit forests may worsen climate change

No guarantee

“Surprisingly, we found that forest loss doesn’t always lead to biodiversity declines,” said [Gergana Daskalova of the University of Edinburgh](#) in Scotland. “Instead, when we lose forest cover, this can amplify the ongoing biodiversity change. For example, if a plant or animal species was declining before forest loss, its decline becomes even more severe.” Species already doing well, however, seemed to do better.

But there’s little guarantee that what works now will go on working, according to Arizona scientists writing in the journal [Global Change Biology](#). So far, forests have helped contain climate change. But they found that North America’s most prolific tree, the Douglas fir, will absorb less carbon in future and do less to slow climate change.

They based their finding on examination of 2.7 million tree rings from 2,700 sites in the fir’s enormous ecological range. At the southern and warmest and driest end of this range, the decline in annual growth could be as high as 30 per cent.

“More warming for trees could mean more stress, more tree death and less capacity to slow global warming,” said [Margaret Evans, of the University of Arizona](#).

“Up until now, forests have stabilised the climate, but as they become more drought-stressed, they could become a destabilising carbon source.”

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Back clean energy post-virus, UN chief urges leaders

Agence France-Presse Posted at Jul 09 2020 08:58 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/07/09/20/back-clean-energy-post-virus-un-chief-urges-leaders>

PARIS — United Nations chief Antonio Guterres on Thursday urged world leaders to favor clean energy solutions as they pour money into their economies to save them from a coronavirus-induced meltdown.

Governments should exit coal, stop subsidizing other fossil fuels, and pressure polluting industries to clean up their act in exchange for bailing them out, the UN Secretary-General told an International Energy Agency conference by video link.

"Today I would like to urge all leaders to choose the clean energy route for three vital reasons -- health, science and economics," Guterres said.

"Bailout support to sectors such as industry, aviation and shipping should be conditioned on alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement," he said, referring to the 2015 treaty that commits signatories to capping global warming at 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

"We need to stop wasting money on fossil fuel subsidies and place a price on carbon," Guterres said, adding that "coal has no place in COVID-19 recovery plans".

He also called on investors "to demand that companies reveal transition plans to reach net zero emissions" and said that renewables offered "three times more jobs than the fossil fuel industry".

Governments across the world have pledged unprecedented sums to support their economies to cope with the fallout from COVID-19, with many politicians and NGOs calling for green policies to become an integral part of the spending plans.

The European Parliament, for example, has urged EU governments to put "the green deal at the core" of their proposed 750-billion-euro recovery plan.

In Germany, where the government has agreed to rescue flagship airline Lufthansa, the environment minister said that climate-friendlier policies by the airline would be part of the deal.

In neighboring Austria, the government made "necessary measures in terms of climate protection" a condition for bailing out Austrian Airlines.



WHO issues new scientific brief on coronavirus transmission

By Jacqueline Howard, CNN Published Jul 10, 2020 2:15:01 AM

<https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/7/10/WHO-issues-new-scientific-brief-on-coronavirus-transmission.html?fbclid=IwAR2>

(CNN) - The World Health Organization on Thursday released a new scientific report detailing how coronavirus can pass from one person to the next — including through the air during certain medical procedures.

The report also notes that there are still many unanswered questions around airborne transmission and how exactly the virus spreads.

The report comes just days after the publication of a letter Monday signed by 239 scientists that urged the agency to be more forthcoming about the likelihood that people can catch the virus from droplets floating in the air.

"Airborne transmission of the virus can occur in health care settings where specific medical procedures, called aerosol generating procedures, generate very small droplets called aerosols. Some outbreak reports related to indoor crowded spaces have suggested the possibility of aerosol transmission, combined with droplet transmission, for example, during choir practice, in restaurants or in fitness classes," the new WHO report said about coronavirus, named SARS-CoV-2.

Still, "current evidence suggests that transmission of SARS-CoV-2 occurs primarily between people through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected people through infected secretions such as saliva and respiratory secretions, or through their respiratory droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or sings," the report said. "Respiratory droplets from infected individuals can also land on objects."

The report also said that "there have been reported outbreaks of COVID-19 reported in some closed settings, such as restaurants, nightclubs, places of worship or places of work where people may be shouting, talking, or singing. In these outbreaks, aerosol transmission, particularly in these indoor locations where there are crowded and inadequately ventilated spaces where infected persons spend long periods of time with others, cannot be ruled out. More studies are urgently needed to investigate such instances and assess their significance for transmission of COVID-19."

In general, according to WHO, airborne transmission refers to any time an infectious pathogen that causes illness disseminates in the air and remains infectious when suspended in the air over long distances and time.



WHO issues new scientific brief on coronavirus transmission

Dr. Benedetta Allegranzi, WHO's technical lead for Infection Prevention and Control, said during a briefing in Geneva on Tuesday that the agency has discussed and collaborated with many of the scientists who signed the letter claiming WHO hasn't been forthright about airborne transmission.

"We acknowledge that there is emerging evidence in this field, as in all other fields regarding the Covid-19 virus and pandemic, and therefore we believe that we have to be open to this evidence and understand its implications regarding the modes of transmission, and also regarding the precautions that need to be taken," Allegranzi said.

For some time, "we have been talking about the possibility of airborne transmission and aerosol transmission, as one of the modes of transmission of Covid-19," Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO's technical lead for coronavirus response and head of its emerging diseases and zoonoses unit, previously said during a briefing in Geneva on Tuesday.

"This is a respiratory pathogen and so it is important that what we know fits into the guidance that we have, which is why a comprehensive package of interventions are required to be able to stop transmission," Van Kerkhove said.

"This includes not only physical distancing. It includes the use of masks where appropriate in certain settings, specifically where you can't do physical distancing, and especially for health care workers."