

DATE: AUGUST 09, 2020

DAY: SUNDAY

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

Capitol's COVID-19 response impresses Sec. Cimatu

[Le Phyllis F. Antojado](#) (The Freeman) - August 8, 2020 - 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) chief implementer for the Visayas Secretary Roy Cimatu was impressed by the COVID-19 response of Cebu province.

Cimatu admitted he was worried at first because the number was rising, but assuaged by the comprehensive presentation made by Governor Gwendolyn Garcia during a meeting last Tuesday.

Garcia presented to Cimatu the overall picture of the infections in the province vis-à-vis the active cases and its ratio to the actual population of 3.2 million. The governor also presented the mitigating measures currently undertaken by the provincial government and the various local government units under it.

Garcia assured Cimatu that the province's health care facilities are far from being overwhelmed. In fact, the occupancy rate of the provincial hospitals is only 24 percent.

Based on the governor's presentation, the cumulative cases in the province, excluding Talisay City, Minglanilla, and Consolacion which are still under general community quarantine, is 1,971 with only 719 active cases. There are also 1,137 recoveries and 115 deaths as of August 6.

"Honestly, I was worried about the Province of Cebu but after this presentation, Governor, nawala na yung worry ko," Cimatu told Garcia during the meeting with the mayors.

Cimatu said he felt at ease after Garcia's presentation, especially on the assurance that there are enough health care facilities in the province.

"I hope this presentation has given you a picture of how we have been working in the Province of Cebu. We would wish to invite you to visit our beautiful towns and cities; someday you might want to go to Camotes and Bantayan and see for yourself how our mayors have been working very, very hard," Garcia told Cimatu.

Cimatu urged the LGUs to continue its mitigating measures to stop the spread of the virus.

"This is the reason why I asked the President for this meeting kasi hindi ko gusto na magaya ang Cebu Province sa Metro Manila. Hindi ko gusto na mag-suffer ang ating tourism," Cimatu said. — **FPL (FREEMAN)**

DENR leads demolition of illegal structures in protected areas

Published August 8, 2020, 3:17 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Saturday vowed not to tolerate illegal occupation of lands within protected areas after the agency discovered illegal occupants inside the Upper Marikina Watershed and Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary in Baras, Rizal.

“Occupying or dwelling in any public land within a protected area without clearance from the concerned Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) is strictly prohibited under Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018,” DENR Undersecretary Jim Sampulna explained.

He said the law also prohibits construction and maintenance of any structure, fence or enclosure within a protected area without prior clearance from the PAMB and permit from the DENR.

“Violators of these ENIPAS law provisions could face a fine ranging from P200,000 to P1 million or imprisonment from one year but not more than six years, or both,” he warned.

Sampulna, along with Rizal Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Isidro Mercado and Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force Executive Director Nilo Tamoria, led the demolition of illegal structures and barbed wire fences built by members of the Guardians International 19th Quarters Inc. last July 31.

Protected areas like the Upper Marikina Watershed and Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary are environmentally critical areas and are main sources of biodiversity, maintaining the ecosystem and providing natural processes of the land.

Disturbances to such conservation areas threaten flora and fauna and water resources, which could affect the food and water supply in the country.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu has been pushing for the creation of an Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) within the DENR to pursue strict implementation of environmental laws, policies, rules and regulations, wherein law enforcement agencies such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, National Bureau of Investigation, and government prosecutors will be involved.

“The creation of EPEB will help fill the gap in the implementation of environmental laws and it will allow the DENR to focus both on environmental conservation and protection,” Sampulna said.

He noted that House Bill 6973, which seeks the creation of EPEB, was already filed by Antique Rep. Loren Legarda with the House of Representatives last month.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/08/denr-leads-demolition-of-illegal-structures-in-protected-areas/>

Iligal na pag-okupa sa protected areas haharangin ng DENR



August 8, 2020 @ 4:47 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Hindi papayagan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang iligal na pag-okupa sa mga lupa na nasasakupan ng protected areas.

Ito ang tiniyak sa publiko ng DENR matapos na ang ahensya ay matagumpay na napaalis ang mga iligal na umokupa sa loob ng Upper Marikina Watershed at Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary sa Baras, Rizal noong Hulyo 30, 2020.

Pinangunahan ni DENR Undersecretary Jim Sampulna, kasama sina Rizal Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Isidro Mercado at Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force (EPETF) Executive Director Nilo Tamorina ang pag-demolish sa mga iligal na istraktura at barbed wire na bakod na itinayo ng mga miyembro ng Guardians International 19th Quarters, Inc.

“Occupying or dwelling in any public land within a protected area without clearance from the concerned Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) is strictly prohibited under Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018,” pinunto ni Sampulna.

Ayon kay Sampulna mahigpit na ipinagbabawal rin sa batas ang pagtatayo at pagmementina ng kahit na anong istraktura, bakod, o enclosure sa nasasakupan ng protected areas nang walang kaukulang clearance sa PAMB at permit sa DENR.

“Violators of these ENIPAS law provisions could face a fine ranging from P200,000 to P1 million or imprisonment from one year but not more than six years, or both,” babala ni Sampulna.

Ang protected areas tulad ng Upper Marikina Watershed at Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary ay itinuturing na mga kritikal na lugar at pangunahing pinanggagalingan ng biodiversity na siyang nagpapanatili ng ecosystem at nagkakaloob ng mga natural process sa kalupaan. Anumang pagkabalam sa mga conservation areas ay banta sa flora at fauna at water resources na maaari namang makaaapekto sa suplay ng pagkain at tubig sa bansa,” paliwanag niya.

“This is the reason our Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu is pushing to establish an Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) within the DENR,” dagdag pa ni Sampulna.

Iligal na pag-okupa sa protected areas haharangin ng

August 09, 2020

TITLE: DENR

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Nais ng Kalihim na magkaroon ng isang line bureau na siya tututok sa mahigpit na pagpapatupad ng mga batas pang-kalikasan, polisiya, panuntunan at regulasyon; kung saan magiging bahagi sa pagpapatupad ang Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, National Bureau of Investigation at mga government prosecutors.

Ang House Bill 6973 na naglalayon sa pagbuo ng EPEB ay naihain na ni Deputy Speaker at Antique Representative Loren Legarda noong isang buwan pa.

Sinabi sa ulat ang pagkakaroon ng EPEB ay makatutulong para punuin ang kakulangan sa pagpapatupad ng mga batas pang-kalikasan, nang sa gayon ay ang mapagtuunan na lang ng pansin ng DENR ay ang pangangalaga at protekta ng kapaligiran at likas-yaman, ayon kay Sampulna. **Santi Celario**

DENR-EMB goes online to monitor LGU compliance with solid waste law

posted August 08, 2020 at 02:55 pm

by [Maricel Cruz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) has rolled out its enhanced online monitoring system to track compliance of local government units (LGUs) to the country's solid waste management law.

EMB Director William Cuñado said the agency tapped 307 environmental monitoring and enforcement officers (ENMOs) assigned nationwide to use the new system of reporting which, he said, was "simpler and faster than the previous method."

"This pandemic allowed us to focus our efforts in upgrading our online systems to continuously serve our clients and perform our mandated tasks despite the lockdowns," Cuñado said in a statement.

Unlike the previous system where monitoring reports reached EMB offices days after the incident, Cuñado said the new online system would provide real-time reporting, allowing for quick response by concerned local government units (LGUs), primarily responsible for the enforcement of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

"With the newly improved system, we can quickly post, share and keep track of reports and complaints more efficiently," Cuñado explained.

"Our counterparts in LGUs can immediately view the report and act on it."

Since 2017, ENMOs have been deployed to provide assistance to LGUs, particularly barangays, in establishing an effective solid waste management program and strengthen the enforcement of other environmental laws and regulations.

This is in line with the implementation of the Solid Waste Enforcement and Education Program or SWEEP, which supports DENR's strategy to develop systems and mechanisms for improved monitoring and enforcement of environmental laws through strengthened partnership with LGUs and other stakeholders.

Meanwhile, Cuñado said the ongoing community quarantine had allowed EMB to fully shift to online processing of clearances and permits.

"The system, which was originally developed as an internal document tracking system, has now largely evolved and will include in the loop, LGUs and other stakeholders to better serve its clients and the public, especially in these uncertain times," Cuñado said.

One of two ostriches that ran loose in QC dies of stress

Published August 8, 2020, 3:14 PM

by [Joseph Pedrajas](#)

One of two ostriches that ran loose in Quezon City early this week died of stress, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Usec. Benny Antiporda said Saturday, citing the statement made by the birds' owner.



One of the two ostriches that ran loose in QC was already turned over to DENR. The other one reportedly died due to stress. (Photo courtesy of DENR/ MANILA BULLETIN)

Despite this development, Antiporda said DENR would still launch an investigation on the matter.

“Pero di po agad agad maniniwala ang DENR, unless makita natin yung bangkay noong ostrich (DENR will not entirely believe the news unless we see the dead ostrich),” he said.

The DENR official disclosed that the other ostrich has already been turned over to the department's Wildlife Rescue Center Friday afternoon.

Antiporda said in a video message that they would invite the birds' owner, Jonathan Cruz, for a technical conference and investigation because DENR is still clueless why the ostriches were running loose inside Mapayapa Village on Tuesday when the birds' owner resides in Barangay Balingasa which is about 13 kilometers away.

He added DENR is also wondering why the ostriches were in Quezon City if they should be in Nueva Ecija, based on their permit to transport.

“But since there's a show of good faith through surrendering the remaining ostrich, we would be giving them opportunity to explain... so they could say what they want to tell. Rest assured that the welfare of the bird will be given value,” Antiporda said in mixed English and Filipino.

He said appropriate charges will be filed against the owner if they find negligence on his part. On Tuesday, the two ostriches caught the attention of social media users after they were seen in several videos running loose around 9 a.m.

One of them was seen chasing a car and tried to go out of the village but was refused exit by the security guard, who said in jest that it had no gate pass. The ostriches were eventually turned over to their owner when they were caught two hours after they slipped away.

The word “Jumanji” trended on Twitter following the incident, referring to an American fantasy comedy adventure film where animals came alive through a board game.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/08/one-of-two-ostriches-that-ran-loose-in-qc-dies-of-stress/>

Ostrich that ran carefree in QC subdivision dies of stress

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:50 PM August 08, 2020



This is one of two ostriches that ran carefree inside a Quezon City subdivision was handed over to the DENR. The bird is currently at the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Wildlife Rescue Center. Image: Courtesy of DENR.

MANILA, Philippines — One of the two ostriches that ran carefree inside a Quezon City subdivision has died of stress, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Saturday.

In a text message to [INQUIRER.net](#), DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said that this was the information given to them by the ostrich's owner named Jonathan Cruz.

“As per [the] statement of the alleged owner Jonathan Cruz na stress daw ang ostrich then namatay (the ostrich died due to stress),” he said.

“We are asking for the evidence na talagang namatay (if it really died,” Antiporda added.

Antiporda also said that the DENR was “puzzled” as to how did the ostrich end up in Mapayapa Village III in Diliman, when the address of the owner was registered in Balingasa, Quezon City.

He added that the DENR is also set to find out how did the ostrich end up in Quezon City when the permit for it was supposed to be for Misamis and it was supposed to be transferred to Nueva Ecija.

The other ostrich, meanwhile, was handed over by Cruz, and was brought to the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Wildlife Rescue Center on Friday.

The [ostriches](#) became a spectacle on social media after they ran loose inside the Quezon City private village.

A security guard and several construction workers in the area caught the birds an hour after they were spotted.

/MUF

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1318621/ostrich-that-ran-carefree-in-qc-subdivision-dies-of-stress>



A screengrab of a video showing an ostrich running along a residential street in Mapayapa Village III in Quezon City.

Screengrab from Dino Rivera via Facebook

One of the ostriches that ran loose in Quezon City dies

[Jan Milo Severo](#) (Philstar.com) - August 8, 2020 - 2:07pm

MANILA, Philippines — After becoming viral on different social media sites, one of the ostriches seen running in a Quezon City subdivision has died.

In a report by dzBB, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the ostrich died due to stress according to its owner Jonathan Cruz.

Antiporda, however, said that Cruz would still be summoned to the DENR's office to explain why the two ostriches were seen running amok in a public place.

The DENR undersecretary also wanted to know the real cause of the ostrich's death by gathering evidence.

Antiporda said the ostriches came from Misamis and will be brought to Nueva Ecija based on the papers provided by its owner. The government agency still had no idea why the animals were kept in Quezon City.

Antiporda also said that the owner voluntarily surrendered the other ostrich, which is now under the care of DENR's biodiversity management bureau.

Videos of the ostriches running around in Mapayapa Village 3 in Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City on Wednesday captivated the netizens.

The term “Jumanji,” referring to social media posts showing the ostriches and other animals on the loose trended online. The film featured a supernatural board game that unleashes jungle elements on its players.

Source: https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/on-the-radar/2020/08/08/2033829/one-ostriches-ran-loose-quezon-city-dies?fbclid=IwAR1Jt9R5HCaN0fBEbtLQ000vagy_tlDS0DVxptE4-HcBUZniDaWxLdoZ3Sk

Ostrich na nag-viral namatay sa stress



August 8, 2020 @ 2:00 PM 16 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Pumanaw na ang isa sa dalawang ostrich na nag-viral na nakuhanang tumatakbo sa Quezon City dahil sa stress, ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Spokesperson Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

Batay kay Antiporda, sinabi ng nagpakilalang may-ari ng ostrich na si Jonathan Cruz na nasawi na umano ang isang ostrich.

Siniguro naman ni Antiporda na hindi titigil ang DENR sa pag-iimbestiga hanggat hindi naipakikita ang bangkay ng nasabing ostrich.

Kahapon, Agosto 7 ay isinurender ni Cruz sa DENR ang isang ostrich at inalagak sa DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau Wildlife Rescue Center para maalagaan.

Wala pa ring maipakitang permit si Cruz na binibigyan siya ng karapatan para mag-alaga ng kahit anong uri ng wildlife animal.

Tiniyak ni Antiporda na magkakasa ang DENR sa Lunes ng imbestigasyon sa nagpakilalang may-ari.

Nais alamin ng kagawaran kung paano napunta sa Mapayapa Village ang mga hayop, gayong ang address ni Cruz ay sa Balingasa, Quezon City.

Nakatakda ring alamin ng DENR kung paano napunta ang mga hayop sa Quezon City dahil ang permit to transport nito ay mula Misamis papuntang Nueva Ecija lamang.

Tiniyak din ni Antiporda ang patuloy na imbestigasyon at pananagutin ang sinomang may pagkakamali rito. **RNT/FGDC**

Ostrich na 'naggala' sa loob ng subdibisyon, namatay dahil sa stress

By [Angie dela Cruz](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)

- August 9, 2020 - 12:00am



Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, ang impormasyong ito ay ipinaabot sa kanila ng may-ari ng ostrich na si Jonathan Cruz.

STAR/ File

MANILA, Philippines — Dahil sa stress, kaya nasawi ang isa sa dalawang ostrich na nag-viral sa social media kamakailan matapos na maggala sa loob ng isang subdibisyon sa Quezon City.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, ang impormasyong ito ay ipinaabot sa kanila ng may-ari ng ostrich na si Jonathan Cruz.

Sinabi ni Antiporda na batay sa pahayag ni Cruz, stress ang ikinamatay ng ostrich dahil sa mga humabol dito.

Humihingi naman na aniya sila ng ebidensiya na namatay nga ang ostrich.

Hindi pa rin naman aniya malinaw sa kanila kung paano nakarating sa Mapayapa Village III sa Diliman, Quezon City ang ostrich, gayung ang may-ari Nito ay taga- Balingasa, Quezon City.

Aalamin din aniya ng DENR kung paano nakarating ng Quezon City ang ostrich, gayung ang permit nito ay mula sa Misamis at nakatakda sanang ilipat sa Nueva Ecija.

Kaugnay nito, nabatid na ang isa pang ostrich ay itinurn-over na ni Cruz at dinala na sa DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Wildlife Rescue Center noong Biyernes.

Matatandaang nag-viral sa social media ang naturang dalawang ostrich matapos na makuhanan ng video na nagpapagala-gala sa loob ng isang subdibisyon, sa unang araw ng modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) sa Metro Manila noong Agosto 4.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2020/08/09/2033934/ostrich-na-naggala-sa-loob-ng-subdibisyon-namatay-dahil-sa-stress/amp/>

Isa sa nag-viral na ostrich sa QC, pumanaw na dahil sa stress

ni [Ronalyne Seminiano Reonico](#) | August 8, 2020



Pumanaw na ngayong Sabado, August 8, ang isa sa dalawang ostrich na nag-viral kamakailan matapos makawala sa isang subdivision sa Quezon City ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, *“As per [the] statement of the alleged owner Jonathan Cruz, na-stress daw ang ostrich then namatay.*

“We are asking for the evidence na talagang namatay.”

Samantala, ang isa pang ostrich ay ipinagkatiwala na diumano ni Cruz sa DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Wildlife Rescue Center.

Viral ostrich ng QC pumanaw

By Abante News Online — Last updated Aug 8, 2020

METRO



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Matapos gumawa ng ingay sa social media nang makitang pagala-gala sa isang private subdivision sa Quezon City, nasawi na ang isa sa dalawang viral ostrich dahil sa stress ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

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Pinabatid Ad Asia Banner umano ng may-ari ng ostrich na si Jonathan Cruz na namatay na ang kanilang alaga. Gayunpaman, nais pa ring humingi ng pruweba ng DENR kung saan nakalibing ang nasabing ibon para mapatunayan ang pagkamatay nito.

Mula umano sa Misamis ang dalawang ostrich na dadalhin dapat sa Nueva Ecija. Tuloy ang imbestigasyon ng DENR sa

insidente. Samantala, dinala na sa Biodiversity Management Bureau rescue center ang isa pang ostrich matapos itong boluntaryong ibigay ng may-ari. (RP)



Ostrich caught in viral incident dies of stress

Published August 8, 2020 12:39pm

One of the two ostriches that went viral after they were spotted running amok in Quezon City has been reported to pass away due to stress.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Spokesperson Undersecretary Benny Antiporda shared the news in Luisito Santos' report on dzBB Super Radyo, Saturday.

DZBB Super Radyo @dzbb

FLASH REPORT: Isa sa mga nagviral na ostrich sa Quezon City, namatay na dahil sa stress, ayon kay DENR Spokesperson Usec. Benny Antiporda. | via @luisitosantos03

ULAT NI:
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MAG-TWEET SA AMING OFFICIAL TWITTER @DZBB *** PARA SA INYONG MGA KAT...

12:05 PM · Aug 8, 2020

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According to Antiporda, the owner of the ostrich, Jonathan Cruz, sent them a report stating the death of the ostrich.

DENR shared that it will still call on the owner to explain the incident and will conduct an investigation to know where the ostrich was buried and look for proof that it has indeed died.

Based on DENR's initial investigation, the ostriches came from Misamis and were supposed to be sent to Nueva Ecija. The DENR continues to be in the dark as to why the animals were held in Quezon City and were seen running loose in Mapayapa Village, a private subdivision in the same city.

The other ostrich who survived was voluntarily handed over to DENR and has been brought to a Biodiversity Management Bureau rescue center.

Antiporda emphasized that they will continue to investigate and will make people account for the ostrich's death.

On Tuesday morning, [two ostriches went viral online](#) and caught netizens by surprise after they were seen running loose inside the village.

—JCB, GMA News

Ostrich in viral video dies, owner says as DENR probes permits

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Aug 8, 2020 2:03:02 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, August 8) — One of two ostriches spotted running around a Quezon City village early this week and went viral died due to stress, the owner said upon surrendering the other animal to the government.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said on Saturday that a certain Jonathan Cruz handed over one ostrich to the Wildlife Rescue Center Friday afternoon.

“Sad to say, *‘yung isa raw namatay dahil sa stress* (he said the other ostrich died due to stress),” Antiporda said.

Authorities asked the owner to attend a technical conference at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Monday.

“[This is] to prove *kung talagang namatay ‘yung isa, una, pangalawa* (first, if one ostrich really died and second), how did they end up in Mapayapa Village,” Antiporda said.

CNN Philippines @cnnphilippines · Aug 8, 2020
Replying to @cnnphilippines
.@DENROfficial will look into how the ostriches ended up in a village in Quezon City, and if one of the wild animals really died, Antiporda says | @CarolynBonquin

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WATCH: One of the ostriches surrendered to the Wildlife Rescue Center.

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1:58 PM · Aug 8, 2020

98 See CNN Philippines's other Tweets

Ostrich in viral video dies, owner says as DENR

August 09, 2020

TITLE: probes permits

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Antiporda said the owner presented a permit to transport the flightless birds from a province in Mindanao all the way to Nueva Ecija, but it remains unclear why they were brought to Quezon City "without securing the proper documents."

The owner lives in Barangay Balingasa in Quezon City, Antiporda said, [while the ostriches were seen Tuesday in a private subdivision in Barangay Pasong Tamo](#), some 13 kilometers away. DENR personnel went to the village that day but they were denied entry as the guards insisted that the ostriches were captured and returned to the owner.

As videos of the ostriches circulated on social media, netizens poked fun at the unusual sight, but some also raised concerns over the welfare of the wild animals and if it's legal to keep them.

Ostriches can be kept as pets, said Dr. Rona Rose Sinaon of the Biodiversity Management Bureau, but owners should secure a Certificate of Wildlife Registration from the department.

Republic Act 9147 states that possession of wildlife is illegal unless the person can prove "financial and technical capability and facility" to take care of the animal.

CNN Philippines' Carolyn Bonquin contributed to this report.

Protectors of Philippine tamaraw in peril

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

August 9, 2020



A Taw'buid tribesman is armed with a tulag (spear) inside the Iglit-Baco Mountain Range. Indigenous tribesmen are employed as porters, scouts and trackers and serve to educate their fellow tribesfolk about the merits of protecting the land.

The Philippine tamaraw, also known as the Mindoro dwarf buffalo, is the country's most iconic land mammal.

Its population's earlier decline was widely believed due to a deadly disease that continued until the 1960s, and hunting for food and trophy until not more than 100 of them were left in the wild.

In the 1970s, recognizing the importance of conserving and protecting the tamaraw, the Philippine government launched the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) anchored on captive-breeding program. Its known habitat, the hinterlands of Mindoro that includes vast portions of Mount Iglit and Mount Baco, were declared as sanctuary and conservation area.

The program has produced but one tamaraw—Kalibasib—short for kalikasan bagong sibol, or newly sprung nature, and would perhaps be the first and the last tamaraw bred in captivity.

Fortunately, a small population of the smaller but more aggressive cousin of the Philippine carabao has seen a slight but steady increase in the last decade—a sign of hope that the iconic animal will continue to roam the grasslands of Mindoro for years and years to come.

A keystone species

Experts believe that the tamaraw is a keystone species.

Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim said protecting and conserving the tamaraw in its sanctuary and natural habitat is unique and iconic.

“First, the tamaraw is found only in Mindoro. It is iconic, one of the smallest buffalos in the world, and therefore, should be a source of national pride and pride for the people of Mindoro as well,” Lim told the BusinessMirror in an interview via Messenger on August 6.

A former director of the DENR-BMB, Lim said more importantly, the tamaraw is attached to the culture and traditions of the Mangyans and can be considered a keystone species.

“Its habitat is associated with other unique plants and animals found only in Mindoro. Its survival, therefore, can be an indication of the health of other species it is associated with, as well as the effective functioning of the ecosystem, where they are naturally found, and one of their known habitats is Mounts Iglit-Baco,” she explained.

Asean Heritage Park

Straddling adjacent mountain range territories from which it got its name, Mounts Iglit-Baco National Park (MIBNP) is covered under the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act.

Considered to be a conservation area of great value not only to the Philippines but to the Southeast Asian region, it is fitting of the designation as an Asean Heritage Park (AHP).

Home to some of the island's endemic species like the tamaraw, the area is a gene pool of threatened flora and fauna, including some that cannot be found anywhere else in the world, except on Mindoro Island.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), other important species can be found on Mounts Iglit-Baco.

These are the Philippine deer, wild pig and Mindoro cloud rat.

Endemic bird species there include the Mindoro imperial pigeon, Mindoro scops owl, black-hooped coucal, scarlet-collared flowerpecker and heart pigeon.

ACB priority area

According to Lim, Mounts Iglit-Baco National Park, being an AHP—a title bestowed upon national parks that are considered “best of the best” in Southeast Asia—receives priority attention from the ACB for capacity building of the park staff.

The ACB has provided assistance to the national park's law enforcement and monitoring program, through equipment, such as Global Positioning Satellite, camera body and lens, laptops, hand-held radio and binoculars.

It supported training on law enforcement and protected area management.

ACB's livelihood support is consistent with the management plan, including the establishment of model sustainable communal and agro-forestry farms.

The interventions of ACB in Mounts Iglit-Baco, Lim said, is largely through its Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in the Asean Project, which is a partnership with the European Union.

“We are allocating some amount this year to support possible livelihood programs for selected communities as part of our economic stimulus for AHPs, whose revenue from tourism have been affected by the [coronavirus disease] Covid-19 lockdown. We hope that this should help them to continue to be our partners in protecting AHPs,” Lim said.

Expanding territories

DENR Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon said despite funding problems, efforts to protect and conserve the Philippine tamaraw is paying off.

“Over the years, there's a steady increase in the number of tamaraws. We have also received sightings outside Mounts Iglit-Baco,” Calderon told the BusinessMirror in a telephone interview on August 5.

He said sightings in the nearby Mount Calavite National Park, a game refuge and bird sanctuary in Occidental Mindoro, was welcome news.

“We are considering the inclusion of some areas outside Mounts Iglit-Baco in the annual tamaraw count,” said Calderon, concurrent director of the DENR-BMB.

Protectors in peril

A forestry expert, Calderon said the tamaraw going beyond its known habitat is expected and is encouraged by the fact that the forest on the island is expanding, thanks to the protectors of Mounts Iglit-Baco and tamaraw.

The park's wardens serve as guides and porters for tourism and research expeditions, while both the TCP and park rangers keep poachers at bay in case the Covid-19 quarantine entices some to illegally enter the park and hunt animals.

However, only 23 TCP rangers and three MIBNP wardens are currently patrolling a core area of 2,500 hectares inside the 106,655-hectare MIBNP, which hosts at least 480 of the estimated 600 remaining tamaraws on Mindoro.

Covid-19 impact

Faced with funding woes, which were aggravated by lockdown in many areas in the country to prevent the spread of Covid-19 pandemic since last March, the protectors of the tamaraw and their habitat are in danger of losing their jobs.

Actually even before the pandemic, the national park was already experiencing a funding problem. This was the reason for the launching of the #TogetherforTamaraws campaign last month.

Calderon said the pandemic caused the stop of the income generated through ecotourism. Many of the national park and tamaraw protectors were laid off just last month.

He said before the lockdown, the income from ecotourism, through the entrance fees collected from visitors to Mounts Iglit-Baco are fueling the operation of the protected area.

Wanted: More conservation partner

"Unlike the Philippine eagle, the tamaraw conservation is not getting much support from the private sector," Calderon said.

He said the adopt-a-species program of the DENR-BMB has fetched benefactors for the Philippine eagle. Multinational corporations allocate funding from their various corporate social responsibility units that make the conservation of the iconic bird of prey more successful.

"If you noticed, more and more eagles are being discovered and rescued because of successful campaigns to protect and conserve the Philippine eagle with the support of the private sector," Calderon said.

According to Biodiversity Finance Initiative (Biofin) Philippines, one of the 24 TCP rangers, together with 32 of the 35 Taw'buid, Buid and Iraya tribal wardens who patrol the area to deter tamaraw hunters and poachers, have lost their jobs due to the MIBNP's closure following community quarantine measures.

Tamaraw Society

On July 31, as part of the celebration of the World Ranger Day, the Philippine Parks and Biodiversity, a not-for-profit nongovernment organization, launched the Tamaraw Society in an effort to unite 20 champions of the tamaraw and their protectors, the group said in a news release.

There are currently nine champions that have committed to the group's cause.

They are the World Wildlife Fund for Nature-Philippines, Masungi Georeserve, Eco Explorations, D'Aboville Foundation, Planet Cora, Fund the Forest, Echoheroes, Kids for Kids and Oscar Lopez Jr.

Each of the initial 20 champions were called to commit a financial aid of P20,000 in support of #TogetherforTamaraws campaign of Biofin Philippines project under the United Nations Development Programme, the DENR-BMB and Mimaropa Regional Office.

The fund campaign aims to raise at least P1 million to cover for the half a year's worth of salaries for the wardens and rangers whose livelihood is affected by the pandemic, the news release said.

The fund campaign's proceeds will be disbursed through the TCP under the DENR.

'Bayanihan' for tamaraw

"Our campaign is a Covid-19 emergency response to unite concerned groups by securing the much-needed salaries and allowances for the retrenched [tamaraw] frontliners who protect them," PH Parks and Biodiversity representatives Nella Lomotan and Ann Dumaliang said in a joint statement.

For his part, Onno van den Heuvel, Biofin Global Project manager, said: "Exotic places like the Iglit-Baco mountain range might seem distant to most people, but they must be conserved. Rangers and wardens need and deserve our support to keep doing good conservation work."

"This pandemic should bring forth empathy and not drive us to apathy," Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato said. "Let us all show the spirit of *bayanihan* by helping our rangers and wardens in saving the tamaraw."

Image Credits: [Gregg Yan/National Geographic Channel](#)

Protected areas idedeklara sa Masbate, Negros Oriental, Pampanga – Villar



August 8, 2020 @ 2:47 PM 17 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Isinusulong ni Sen. Cynthia Villar na mas marami pang lugar ang isailalim sa pangangalaga ng pamahalaan sa paghahain ng ilang panukalang batas na nagdedeklara bilang protected areas ang ilang lupain sa lalawigan ng Masbate, Negros Oriental at Pampanga.

Ayon kay Villar, kailangang amyendahan ang Republic Act 11038 o ang Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act para maisama sa protected areas ang tatlo pang lugar sa Pilpinas.

“We have to put in place adequate conservation measures and appropriate management schemes to safeguard the biodiversity of ecologically rich and biologically important areas in our country so that present and future generations will continue to benefit from it,” sabi ni Villar, chairperson ng Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

Inihain ni Villar ang Senate Bill 1712 na magdedeklara sa Hinakpan Mystical Hills sa Negros Oriental na protected area sa kategoryang natural monument.

Ang Hinakpan Mystical Hills ay isang grupo ng may 237 conical limestone peaks na kakaiba ang hugis at laki na makikita sa highland ng Guihulngan City. Sakop nito ang 1,331 ektarya na nakakalat sa ilang komunidad sa Hinakpan at kahalintulad din ng Chocolate Hills ng Bohol.

May katulad din na panukala ang isinampa ni 1st District of Negros Oriental Rep. Jocelyn Sy Limkaichong sa Mababang Kapulungan ng Kongreso.

Inihain din ni Villar ang Senate Bill 1711 upang isama ang Tugbo Watershed Forest Reserve sa Masbate bilang E-NIPAS protected site.

Nagsisilbi itong watershed na pangunahaing pinagkukunan ng tubig sa Masbate City at Mobo. Ito ay isang moderate hanggang intensive forest cover sa mountainous topography.

Binigyan-diin ni Villar na ang mga hamon sa conservation efforts sa watershed ay kinabibilangan ng deforestation, illegal logging, hunting ng wildlife at iba pang nakakasirang gawain ng mga tao gaya ng quarrying.

Naghain din si 2nd District of Masbate Rep. Elisa T. Kho ng counterpart measure nito, ang House Bill 462.

Sa SB 1713, isinusulong din ni Villar ang deklarasyon ng Mount Arayat sa Pampanga bilang isang protected area.

Protected areas idedeklara sa Masbate, Negros

August 09, 2020

TITLE: _ Oriental, Pampanga – Villar

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Isang “fabled mountain” ang Mt. Arayat na dating kilala sa tawag na “Bunduk Alaya” o “Eastern Mountain” na matatagpuan sa Arayat and Magalang. May taas itong 1,026 meters mula sea level at kinokonsiderang “extinct stratovolcano.”

Ilan sa mga katangian nito ay ang pagiging natural habitats ng endemic at endangered flora at fauna, mahalagang kukunan ng tubig na gamit sa bahay at agrikultura ng mga nakapaligid na komunidad, malinis na tubig mula sa waterfalls at nakabibighaning rock formations.

Tirahan ito ng may 49 species ng mga puno, 86 species ng wild birds, 14 species ng mammals at 11 species ng reptiles. Makikita rin dito ang threatened tree species gaya ng Kamagong gubat, Tindalo, Kupang at Bangkal at endangered species gaya ng Arayat Pitogo, Bitag at Teak. Tirahan din ang bundok ng monkey species na tinatawag na Philippine macaque.

Inihain ni 3rd District Pampanga Rep. Aurelio D. Gonzales Jr. ang katulad na panukala sa Kamara.

Sa kasakukuyan, may 107 protected areas na sumasakop sa tatlong milyong ektarya sa Pilipinas na nadeklarang protected areas sa pamamagitan ng legislation.

Base sa records at suitability assessments ng Biodiversity Management Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, sinabi ni Villar na marami pang lugar sa bansa na kailangang bigyan ng ‘protected area’ status sa pamamagitan ng legislative action upang matiyak ang pagpapanatili sa mga ito.

Si Villar ang principal author ng E-NIPAS Act na nagpalawig sa listahan ng protected areas mula 13 hanggang 107. Kabilang dito ang mga sikat na tourism destinations kabilang na rin ang internationally-recognized critical zones. Nilagdaan ang batas noong June 22, 2018. **Ernie Reyes**

Study shows troubling surge in pangolin trafficking in PH

Published August 8, 2020, 9:42 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Around 6,894 pangolins were seized from illegal wildlife trade in the Philippines from 2018-2019 pointing to a “troubling” nine-fold increase in the confiscation of the critically endangered animal over the last two decades, according to international non-government organization, Traffic.



(AFP/Sam Yeh / MANILA BULLETIN)

In its study titled “Endangered by Trade: The Ongoing Illegal Pangolin Trade in the Philippines,” Traffic pointed out the seizure of some 1,154.31 kilograms of pangolin scales in Palawan in September 2019 alone.

It also included a series of unusual rescues called “retrievals” in which individual live pangolins were found wandering the streets of Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

“There were 18 retrieval incidents, all occurring approximately 600 kilometers away from the natural range of the Philippine pangolin, *Manis culionensis*, which is found only in the Palawan faunal region and has the smallest range among the world’s eight pangolin species,” the study found.

During the period, Traffic also made further discoveries of pangolin meat and medicines being offered in some cities.

From January until March this year alone, 20 Philippine pangolins have been confiscated from a trafficker in Palawan and three more retrieval incidents of smuggled pangolins took place in Luzon, it said.

“While the rise in pangolin seizures speaks to successful enforcement action, it is also deeply alarming news for this rare animal,” Traffic senior communications officer Elizabeth John said in a statement.

“With pressure continuing to mount, the only hope for the Philippine Pangolin is by stamping out the illegal trade through thorough investigations into poaching and trafficking cases, more prosecutions and solid convictions of traffickers,” John added.

Authorities also confiscated over 10 tons of frozen Sunda Pangolins *Manis javanica* from a vessel that crashed into the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park in 2013.

The authors of the study cited the lack of investigations, few successful arrests and prosecutions, and low penalties as among the greatest challenges in efforts to curb pangolin trafficking in the Philippines.



The first conviction of pangolin traffickers outside Palawan occurred only in July 2019 when a court in Cavite sentenced three traffickers to three months in jail and a P20,000 or US\$394 fine each for illegally transporting 10 pangolins.

Last month, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) called for the amendment of the Republic Act 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001 as culprits appear undeterred by the punishments provided under the law.

Currently, the highest penalties are imposed on those guilty of killing critically endangered wildlife—jail term of six years and one day to 12 years and/or payment of fine ranging from ₱100,000 to ₱1 million.

For hunting and trading, the penalty ranges from two to four years of imprisonment and/or fine of ₱30,000 to ₱300,000 for hunting and ₱5,000 to ₱300,000 for trading wildlife.

For the mere transport of wildlife, the penalty is six months to one-year imprisonment and/or ₱50,000 to ₱100,000 fine.

P6.2M worth of illegal timber seized in Caraga region in first half of year

By: [Jigger J. Jerusalem](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 09:08 PM August 08, 2020

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Around P6.2 million worth of illegal timber have been confiscated and 178 alleged poachers arrested in the Caraga region in the first half of the year, the regional police command said.

According to Brig. Gen. Joselito Esquivel Jr., regional police director, the confiscations and arrests were the result of 236 operations against illegal logging in the region, jointly done with personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Esquivel added that some 160,000 board feet of lumber and logs, and 5,115 fitches and 10 rattan poles were seized during these operations.

“We ensure the protection and conservation of our natural resources so our strict enforcement of environmental laws remains relentless,” Esquivel said.

He said he wants to “send a strong message to illegal loggers” that if they persist in their activities, they will eventually “be caught by the long arm of the law.”

Last July, three persons were arrested for illegally transporting over 1,000 board feet of bay-ang and lauan wood from Trento town in Agusan del Sur.

CFC

DAR awards lands to 31 CARP beneficiaries in Boracay

Published August 8, 2020, 4:28 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Thirty-one beneficiaries from Boracay Island in Malay, Aklan have successfully claimed the lands awarded to them under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) said on Saturday.

Tension initially gripped the area as the installation team headed by DAR-Western Visayas regional legal chief Geony Licera-Gregorio, sheriff Chaddy Maday, and Aklan provincial agrarian reform program OIC Ma. Teresa Valencia found a group of watchmen from a private security agency manning the landholdings located in Barangay Manoc-manoc.

Licera-Gregorio showed them the writ of installation prompting a representative of the security agency to order the watchmen to let the installation team and beneficiaries enter the area.

The beneficiaries belonging to the Boracay Tumandok Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (BTARBA) held a ceremonial tree planting to establish full possession and control of the farmland, with a combined area of 1.9858 hectares, that was awarded to them last March 12.

Licera-Gregorio said the installation of the beneficiaries came just in time as their homes in the so-called "Wetland No. 6," also known as "Dead Forest," had been demolished to give way for the rehabilitation of the area.

Wetlands are considered to be one of the world's most biologically diverse ecosystems as they are home to a wide variety of plant and animal species.

They also help reduce soil erosion, retain sediments, absorb nutrients, store water to minimize the impacts of floods and droughts, and help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The CARP beneficiaries also received confiscated lumber from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources which they could use for the construction of their new homes.

ABS-CBN commemorates Gina Lopez' death anniversary, launches book on her life and works

August 07, 2020

People's Journal



ABS-CBN Corporation and ABS-CBN Foundation (AFI) commemorate the first death anniversary of Gina Lopez with a month-long celebration of her legacy, which will be showcased on their various cable TV programs and digital platforms.

The celebration will be capped by the launch of the book, "I Am Gina," written by Jenie Chan. The book reveals many untold stories of her life as a missionary in Africa and India, and her struggles and victories when she implemented landmark humanitarian programs in the Philippines.

A known environmentalist and philanthropist, Gina Lopez served the Philippine government as Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. She was the managing director of ABS-CBN Foundation who pioneered important projects in the Philippines like Educational Television (ETV), Bantay Bata 163, the reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed, and the cleanup of the Pasig River.

"The encompassing message of Gina's life and works is about love -- love for children, love for the environment and love for country and humankind. Hence, the theme of this month-long celebration is Genuine Love Forever," said Susan Afan, managing director of ABS-CBN Foundation.

In these difficult times brought about by the pandemic, it is the hope of the Foundation, that the lessons shared by the life of Gina Lopez would inspire people to never lose hope and to "trust in the Divine".

Noon-time variety show, ASAP, will showcase a tribute for Gina Lopez through music and book readings on 30 August 2020. This will be streamed live on iWant, YouTube, and Facebook pages of ABS-CBN.

Watch out for G Diaries on iWant on August 16, 23, and 30 as it will showcase a compilation of their memorable stories and video clips with Lopez when she was hosting the program in 2017 to 2019.

"There's just so much love going around and it's because of love, she put up Bantay Bata 163, Bantay Kalikasan, Bantay Usok, and the I Love Foundation," said Ernie Lopez, Gina's younger brother who is now the host of G Diaries.

"She loves the environment so much. She does. But the reason she loves the environment is because of what it can do for us, what it can do for our country. She loves people and she loves the environment because of what it can do for people."

The Healing Eucharist will stream on iWant.ph, a live mass celebration dedicated to Lopez on August 19, the exact date of her death anniversary.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/lifestyle/people-and-places/abs-cbn-commemorates-gina-lopez-death-anniversary-launches-book-her>

Manila embarks on cleaner, safer air

By [BusinessMirror](#)

August 9, 2020



The City of Manila has embarked on the landmark Asia Blue Skies Program to bring science-based air quality solutions to the Philippine capital.

Dubbed as “Hinga Maynila” (Breathe Manila) by the local government unit of Manila, the initiative has a vision of a cleaner air and a healthier, more livable urban environment.

Under the stewardship of Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso, and in alignment with the city’s Bagong Maynila (New Manila) initiative, the 449-year-old city is partnering with international nongovernment organization Clean Air Asia and science company 3M on the five-year program that kicked off in November 2019, a 3M news release said.

The initiative aims to improve the air quality in the second most-populous city in Metropolitan Manila, and advance the Clean Air Initiative announced by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in July 2019.

Over the next five years, 3M will assist Clean Air Asia in its efforts to assess baseline air quality conditions, design capacity-building programs for air quality management, implement awareness and education campaigns, develop Clean Air Action Plans with selected city and district governments, and measure the resulting impact on air pollution levels.

According to a 2018 Clean Air Asia analysis on ambient air quality in Asia, 98 percent of Asian cities are still at risk of the health impacts of exposure to PM2.5—the particles that are 20 times smaller than the width of a human hair, the news release said.

Because of their size, the particles are able to pass directly into the bloodstream and lungs, and have been linked with respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, asthma, cancers and other serious health conditions.

PM2.5 in the air predominantly emanates from combustion processes from industries, powerplants, vehicles, and other burning activities.

The same report also found that the inadequate response of cities to this health threat was attributed to weak institutional capacity, gaps in policies, a lack of awareness of the health and environmental impacts, a lack of information about technology solutions, and the absence of financial support for clean air measures.

In response to this, the historic City of Manila, home to nearly 1.8 million residents, has committed to achieving safer air quality and to meeting the World Health Organization’s air quality targets by 2030.

“As one of the densest cities in the region, the City of Manila recognizes the need to improve air quality. We are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of our people by eliminating the imminent risks that air pollution poses,” Domagoso said.

“By doing so, we are not only preserving the rich culture and strong heritage of the city, but also ensuring that it will thrive for the generations to come,” he added.

“With the data and expertise provided by Clean Air Asia and the genuine commitment of 3M to sustainability, I’m convinced that in five years’ time, residents will be able to enjoy safer and cleaner air, and I’m hopeful that other cities will follow suit.”

To achieve these goals, Clean Air Asia and 3M will spend the next five years assessing baseline air quality conditions, designing capacity-building programs for air quality management, undertaking awareness-raising and education campaigns, developing a Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP), and measuring the resulting impact on air pollution levels, 3M said.

The first year will involve the development of the CAAP, while the second and third years are focused on implementation of the CAAP.

The fourth and fifth years will deal on scaling up the air quality solutions to other cities.

“We advocate for an evidence-based and participatory approach to addressing air pollution,” said Clean Air Asia Deputy Executive Director Glynda Bathan-Baterina. “This is demonstrated by the Asia Blue Skies Program, wherein the development and implementation of science-based clean air action is at the very core of a sound air quality management system.”

“3M has accelerated its long-standing commitment to sustainability over the past year, in both strategy and action. Science is in everything we do, and the ultimate goal is to make lives better through it,” said 3M Philippines’s Country Leader Bettina Luz.

With air pollution being one of the more pressing health and environmental threats in urbanized areas around the world, “we are actively seeking ways to support cities where it is critical,” Luz said.

“Working with the Philippines and the City of Manila gives us an opportunity to help where we can to improve the lives of Filipinos. And working together with the local government of Manila alongside Clean Air Asia is a great example of collaboration crucial to nation-building,” she explained.

Earlier this year, three air quality sensors were installed in Manila City to gather baseline data that, together with an emissions inventory and health mapping, will form the basis of the city’s CAAP, to be mapped out by the end of the year, the news release said.

Ekonomiya sa Itogon, Benguet, baka bumigay kung ihihinto ang pagmimina – mayor

By [Bombo Radyo Baguio](#)

-August 9, 2020 | 4:13 AM

BAGUIO CITY – Posible umanong mag-collapse o humina ang ekonomiya ng bayan ng Itogon, Benguet kung permanenteng isasara at ihihinto ang pagmimina sa nasabing bayan.

Sa panayam ng Bombo Radyo Baguio kay Itogon Mayor Victorio Palangdan, sinabi niya na 80% ng mga residente sa naturang bayan ay mga minero na inaasa ang kabuhayan sa pagmimina.

Maliban dito, iginiit ng alkalde na pagmimina ang pangunahing ikinabubuhay ng mga residente sa kanilang bayan.

Sa kabila nito, mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ang pagpunta sa mga mining spot doon lalo na kung ito ay iligal.

Sinabi pa ng alkalde na habang hinihintay nila ang aplikasyon ng mga ito para sa Minahang Bayan ay kinakailangan umanong higgitan ang pagbabantay sa mga minahan doon.

Dagdag pa ng opisyal na ginagawa nila ang lahat para matulongan ang mga residente doon lalo na at marami sa mga minero ang apketado ng nararanasang global pandemic dahil pa rin sa COVID-19.

Endangered mission

Sponsorship cuts threaten Philippine Eagle Foundation's programs, but partners such as Energy Development Corp. remain committed

By: [Tina Arceo-Dumlao](#) - Business Features Editor / [@tinaarceodumlao](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:20 AM August 09, 2020



Makilala-Hiraya is now free to roam the watersheds of Mount Apo Geothermal Project

It is as if the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) had gone back in time to its early days in the late 1980s, when funds to bankroll its primary mission of saving the majestic Philippine Eagle and protecting what remains of the country's forests were difficult to come by.

The raging COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be an effective time machine, as its widespread damage on the economy has constricted the flow of corporate donations sorely needed to implement PEF's various programs, such as the breeding of the critically endangered Philippine Eagle and other birds of prey.

Reduced contributions

PEF executive director Dennis Salvador told the Inquirer in an interview that while there has been no outright withdrawals of pledged donations from both local and multinational corporations, a number have asked for more time to hand over their funds while others have reduced their commitments.

As a result of the belt-tightening measures that corporations have employed to conserve cash and keep their own core operations up and running, Salvador said overall collection of corporate sponsorships had been cut by a hefty 60 percent from last year.

And to add to PEF's woes, quarantine measures that have prohibited entry to its 8.4-hectare Philippine Eagle Center at the foothills of Mount Apo in Malagos, Baguio District, Davao City—home to 31 Philippine Eagles—meant the loss of 40 percent of its operating revenues, which come from gate receipts from visitors eager to know more about the Philippine Eagle and to see them up close and personal.

The adverse impact of the sudden financial challenges of PEF, which is at the forefront of the conservation mission to save the Philippine Eagle from extinction and restore their denuded forest habitat, has been painful, indeed.

“This adversely impacts our logistics requirements, especially since we've been working on strengthening our biosafety protocols to protect the eagles against more emerging diseases,” Salvador said.

“Other impacts include letting go of some of our staff; reduced support and engagement of community-based forest guards; reduced ability and resources for rescuing Philippine Eagles,” he added.

Despite these daunting challenges caused by the pandemic, Salvador remained resolute, saying PEF would work with what it has and would not waver from its mission to save and protect the Philippine Eagle, a giant three-foot-tall bird of prey that can only be found in the Philippines and known the world over for being one of the rarest eagles with its unique blue-grey eyes, broad seven-foot wingspan and powerful talons that can easily cut through prey.

It is considered one of the largest and most powerful among forest raptors and listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature with an estimated number of just 400 pairs left in the wild.

Makilala-Hiraya Providing PEF a shot in the arm are corporate partners such as the Energy Development Corp. (EDC). The PEF partnered with EDC recently to rehabilitate and eventually release a female Philippine Eagle named Makilala-Hiraya. She was rescued in June from being mobbed by a flock of crows in Barangay Kisante in Makilala, Cotabato, near the Mount Apo Natural Park where EDC operates.

Fortunately, no serious injuries were found on the bird and she was eventually released on July 28 with EDC pledging to help monitor Makilala-Hiraya for the next six months.

The PEF said securing her release and ensuring her safety in the wild was important so that she could find a mate, nest and contribute to the survival of the Philippine Eagle.

“Releasing this eagle is important in keeping the wild population thriving. Protecting the existing wild population is as significant as breeding the eagle in captivity to add new birds in our forests,” PEF director of research and conservation Jayson Ibanez said in a statement.

Protected reservation At EDC’s 108-megawatt Mount Apo Geothermal Project (MAGP), watersheds are well-maintained and forests are lush. The 701-hectare protected geothermal reservation surrounding MAGP is home to 39 species of mammals and 165 species of birds, including the Philippine Eagle.

EDC has been partners with PEF for nearly two decades, and it adopted Geothermica in 2012, through PEF’s “Adopt-an-Eagle” program.

The protection of the iconic national bird remains a priority for the company’s biodiversity conservation and monitoring program. EDC accepted PEF’s proposal to release Makilala in a target site within its Mount Apo geothermal reservation, and committed to support monitoring activities that will ensure the bird reaches sexual maturity and has the chance to nest.

EDC employees even gave Makilala a second name, “Hiraya,” a Filipino word that translates to “fruit of one’s hopes, dreams and aspirations.”

EDC corporate social responsibility and public relations head Allan Barcena said: “EDC fully supports the protection and conservation of the Philippine Eagle. We continue to work with the Philippine Eagle Foundation and our local governments toward protecting them and their natural habitat by increasing and maintaining forest cover.”

As PEF always says, the fate of the eagles, the forests and Filipino children’s future are inextricably linked. Saving the Philippine Eagle thus means protecting the next generation of Filipinos.

BFAR bans harvesting, trading of 3 sea cucumber species

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:04 AM August 08, 2020



LAB GROWN Sea cucumbers are bred in a Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources center in Alaminos City. — CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SAN FERNANDO CITY — Starting Aug. 28, catching and trading of three species of sea cucumber will be prohibited, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said on Wednesday.

The species, which are collectively known as teatfish, are the *Holothuria (Microthele) fuscogilva*, *Holothuria nobilis* and *Holothuria whitmaei*.

Teatfish are slow-moving, benthic species living on tropical reefs, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

BFAR Director Eduardo Gongona said the three species were included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites).

As an international agreement between governments, Cites aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival, according to its website.

Cites lists species that are not necessarily threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is closely controlled.

Banned species

Gongona asked the BFAR regional directors to issue warnings against trading and exporting both live and dried forms of the three sea cucumber species.

He said the ban would include fishing, taking, catching, gathering, selling, purchasing, processing, transporting, exporting, forwarding or shipping out.

BFAR bans harvesting, trading of 3 sea cucumber

August 09, 2020

TITLE: species

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Other aquatic species included in the Cites list are mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus* and *Isurus paucus*), guitarfishes (*Glaucostegus* spp) and wedgefishes (*Rhinidae* spp).

The BFAR's regional mariculture technodemo center in Alaminos City is currently breeding and getting stocks of *Holothuria scabra* sea cucumber species from Anda and Bolinao towns in Pangasinan province and from Zambales province.

Precy Galilling, BFAR technical staff, said sea cucumbers harvested in the country were usually exported to China and Korea.

A kilo of dried sea cucumber can fetch between P3,000 and P8,000, depending on the quality of drying and the species, Galilling said.

Most countries in East and Southeast Asia consider sea cucumber as a delicacy. "It is also used for medicine as it is said to be antiarthritis, antifungal, antibacterial, antioxidant and antiaging because it is rich in collagen," Galilling said.—YOLANDA SOTELO



ABS-CBN News

7h ·

100-YEAR-OLD PAWIKAN. Isang green sea turtle ang nalambat ng ilang mangingisda sa Barangay Saud sa Badoc, Ilocos Norte Biyernes.

Higit 100 taong gulang na ang lalaking pawikan, ayon kay Provincial Fisheries Coordinator and Regulation Officer Arthur Valente.

May bigat itong 100 kilo; may habang 102 sentimetro; at lapad na 92 sentimetro. Wala namang nakitang sugat sa pawikan at agad din itong pinakawalan sa dagat. (📍: Badoc Municipal Police Station) | ulat ni Grace Alba, ABS-CBN News



Alvin Ringgo C. Reyes and 21K others

1K Comments 1.2K Shares

MECQ in Metro Manila working – UP expert

August 8, 2020 | Filed under: Headlines, News | Posted by: Tempo Desk

BY NOREEN JAZUL

The implementation of the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) is showing “positive trend” in the number of daily COVID-19 cases in the National Capital Region (NCR), an expert from the University of the Philippines (UP) said Friday.

“So far, nakikita natin medyo positive ‘yung trend sa NCR, medyo bumababa siya. We will see next week kung bababa pa siya na mas mabilis na pace,” Dr. Guido David, a member of the UP-OCTA Research, told DZMM Teleradyo.

David said they have lowered their initial case projections from 220,000 by end of August to 190,000 due to the return of NCR to MECQ.

“We’ve actually seen some positive indicators,” David said.

David said the effectivity of stricter quarantine measures can also be seen in Cebu City which he said has already flattened the curve.

“Dati 300 cases sila per day, ngayon 100 cases na lang ‘yung average nila per day, so nag work talaga sa Cebu City,” David said.

When asked if the government is taking the right approach to COVID-19, David said: “I think naging tama ‘yung approach.”

David said that while it’s “too early to say” whether the Philippines is winning the COVID battle, he said the trend of cases in the country is already in the “right direction.”

“Kasi nung July, nakaka-frustrate, kasi lumobo talaga. Ngayon medyo nag stabilize. I think we’re trending in the right direction, medyo bumababa ‘yung mga cases,” he said.

“Ayoko pa masabi na nananalo tayo, medyo premature para sabihin ‘yon kasi (the) trend can reverse,” he added.

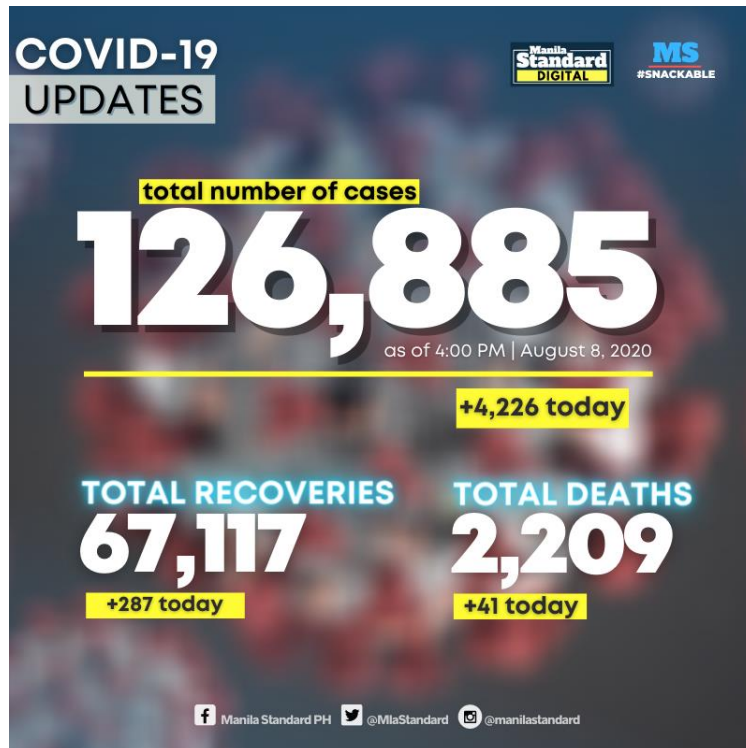
David also said once NCR reverts back to GCQ, the government must be “careful” in implementing protocols and choosing which business to re-open.

PH posts over 4,000 new COVID-19 cases

posted August 08, 2020 at 04:35 pm

by [Willie Casas](#)

The Philippines recorded on Saturday 4,226 new cases of COVID-19, bringing the total to 126,885 cases in the country.



This marks the tenth consecutive day where over 3,000 new cases were reported.

Meanwhile, the five provinces or cities with the highest number of new cases are the National Capital Region with 2,669, Laguna with 285, Cavite with 154, Cebu with 125, and Rizal with 118.

Of the 4,226 reported cases, 2,964 (70 percent) occurred within the recent 14 days (July 26-August 8, 2020).

DOH likewise announced 287 recoveries, bringing the total to 66,117, and 41 new fatalities, raising the death toll to 2,209.

Continuous rains boost Angat water level

Published August 8, 2020, 1:20 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Friday afternoon's bout of intense monsoon rains has boosted the water level of Angat Dam in Bulacan.

The rainfall accumulation was measured at 89.2 millimeters from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, based on the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) data at its Science Garden station in Quezon City.

The highest accumulated rainfall was observed between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. at 75.2 meters.

In comparison, the total rainfall from "Ondoy" in the first six hours of the tropical storm in 2009 was measured at 341 millimeters, and reached 455 millimeters during its 24-hour rainfall.

In August 2012, the southwest monsoon or "habagat" enhanced by a typhoon with international name "Haikui" brought 222.6 millimeters of rainfall in nine hours.

While the rainfall last Friday was lesser than Ondoy and the 2012 habagat rains, it could have spelled disaster for many people especially those living in areas that are at high-risk for floods and landslides if it continued for a few more hours.

It should be noted, however, the rains also helped increase the level of water in Angat Dam.

Based on PAGASA's monitoring, Angat Dam's water level increased by 0.35 meters from 181.67 Friday to 182.02 on Saturday.

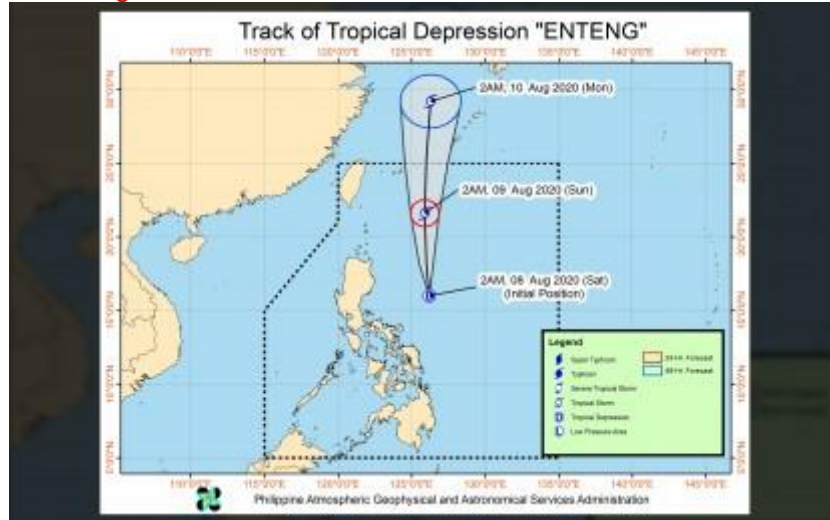
PAGASA weather specialist Joey Figuracion said rains may persist within the next 48 hours due to the monsoon trough, a part of the intertropical convergence zone that is attached to the southwest monsoon system.

The trough is also a breeding ground for potential low pressure areas and tropical cyclones.

Figuracion said the habagat will also be partly enhanced by tropical depression "Enteng" spotted east of Luzon, which may bring monsoon rains over the western section of Luzon, particularly Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Palawan, Romblon, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Metro Manila, Zambales, and Bataan.

'Enteng' to bring rains over parts of PH, won't make landfall

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz August 8, 2020, 9:50 am



TD ENTENG. The track of Tropical Depression (TD) Enteng as forecast by the weather bureau on Saturday (Aug. 8, 2020). PAGASA said while “Enteng” brings scattered to at times heavy rains to some parts of the country, it will remain far from the landmass until it leaves the Philippine area of responsibility. (Graphics from PAGASA)

MANILA – The low-pressure area last spotted east of Casiguran, Aurora developed into Tropical Depression Enteng early Saturday, bringing rains in some parts of the country.

In its severe weather bulletin, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the center of “Enteng” was last estimated at 445 km. east of Casiguran, Aurora and will move generally northward at 10 kph.

However, “Enteng” is not likely to directly hit any part of the country as it moves away from the Philippine landmass.

“It is forecast to move near or over the southern islands of the Ryukyu archipelago and exit the Philippine area of responsibility tomorrow (Sunday) afternoon,” PAGASA said.

“Enteng” is forecast to intensify and turn into a tropical storm by Sunday morning.

The tropical depression will bring scattered light to moderate with, at times, heavy rains over the Bicol and Eastern Visayas regions.

Enhanced by “Enteng”, the southwest monsoon will bring rains over Zambales, Bataan, the Mindoro provinces, Romblon, and northern Palawan, including the Calamian, Cuyo, and Kalayaan Islands.

Pangasinan, the rest of Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Calabarzon, the rest of Mimaropa, and the rest of the Visayas will have occasional rains brought by the southwest monsoon.

Meanwhile, PAGASA said moderate to strong winds headed southwest to south will blow over central and southern Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao, causing moderate to rough coastal waters at 1.2 meters to 2.8 meters.

Northern Luzon will have slight to moderate winds headed south to southeast, resulting in slight to moderate coastal waters at 0.6 to 2.1 meters.

The temperature in Metro Manila will range from 24°C to 31°C; Baguio City, 17°C to 24°C; Lipa City, 24°C to 31°C; Metro Cebu, 25°C to 31°C; and Metro Davao, 25°C to 32°C. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1111585>

Plastic pollution: It's not what you think!

AFP Relaxnews / 04:04 PM August 08, 2020



The oceans are polluted with 8 million tons of plastic a year. Image: Placebo365/ISTock.com via AFP Relaxnews

Eight million tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year. The fight against plastic pollution is essential, but certain false impressions about it are persistent. Surfrider, a European non-governmental organization, and Qu'est-ce qu'on fait, a French media outlet, have teamed up to fight this misinformation.

It is impossible to recycle all existing plastic

Recycling is an essential part of sustainable development goals, but it will not by itself resolve our plastics problem. The reality is that the multitude of compounds present in the six types of plastic used for packaging prevents their full recycling. This is because of the lack of appropriate technology to do so and the complexity of the problem of installing the various treatments required for each plastic.

What's more, it's currently not profitable to recycle plastic. There are numerous costly steps in recycling plastic, and the end product is of less quality. With the drop in the price of oil, and the wide availability of "virgin" plastic (making it cheaper), its use is far more attractive to businesses. Out of the 14% of the plastic waste that is recycled in the world, only 10% is truly recycled and 2% is recycled a second time.

There are multiple solutions for this problem: continue to sort and recycle plastic, of course, but also choose not to purchase packaged products, and pressure industry to reduce its reliance on plastic. This is the focus of Break Free From Plastic, a non-profit organization.

Bioplastics aren't a good idea

Bioplastics are on the rise. Companies see them as a solution to win back consumers who are increasingly demanding ecological commitments from them. The problem is that bioplastics, which denotes both plastics made from biologically sourced components and biodegradable plastic, are far from being a cure-all. The former category often contains petroleum byproducts, sometimes up to 75%; in order to attain the label, only 25% is required to be from biomass. The latter category indeed disintegrates through the action of certain microorganisms, but these are only present in industrial composting processes that involve high humidity levels, a temperature above 50 degrees Celsius, etc.

As an example of this, British researchers buried several types of biodegradable plastic. Three years later, they were still in perfect condition. As such, the marketing of biodegradable plastic can bring about another disastrous consequence: consumers may believe that plastic waste naturally degrades in the ground, increasing the likelihood that plastic waste will be left lying around.

It's just not possible to remove all the plastic from the oceans

It's a dream solution... However, only 1% of plastic waste floats on the surface of the water; the rest, unfortunately, sinks to the bottom. Worse, all plastics eventually break down into microparticles, meaning that it's just impossible to rid the oceans of their accumulated plastic waste. *CL*

Canada's last intact ice shelf collapses due to warming

Associated Press / 06:50 AM August 08, 2020

Much of Canada's remaining intact ice shelf has broken apart into hulking iceberg islands thanks to a hot summer and global warming, scientists said.



ELLESMERE ISLAND, CANADA – MARCH 30: A section of an ice field is seen from NASA's Operation IceBridge research aircraft on March 30, 2017 above Ellesmere Island, Canada. The ice fields of Ellesmere Island are retreating due to warming temperatures. NASA's Operation IceBridge has been studying how polar ice has evolved over the past nine years and is currently flying a set of eight-hour research flights over ice sheets and the Arctic Ocean to monitor Arctic ice loss aboard a retrofitted 1966 Lockheed P-3 aircraft. According to NASA scientists and the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), sea ice in the Arctic appears to have reached its lowest maximum wintertime extent ever recorded on March 7. Scientists have said the Arctic has been one of the regions hardest hit by climate change. Mario Tama/Getty Images/AFP

Canada's 4,000-year-old Milne Ice Shelf on the northwestern edge of Ellesmere Island had been the country's last intact ice shelf until the end of July when ice analyst Adrienne White of the Canadian Ice Service noticed that satellite photos showed that about 43% of it had broken off. She said it happened around July 30 or 31.

Two giant icebergs formed along with lots of smaller ones, and they have already started drifting away, White said. The biggest is nearly the size of Manhattan — 21 square miles (55 square kilometers) and 7 miles long (11.5 kilometers). They are 230 to 260 feet (70 to 80 meters) thick.

"This is a huge, huge block of ice," White said. "If one of these is moving toward an oil rig, there's nothing you can really do aside from move your oil rig."

The 72-square mile (187 square kilometer) undulating white ice shelf of ridges and troughs dotted with blue meltwater had been larger than the District of Columbia but now is down to 41 square miles (106 square kilometers).

Temperatures from May to early August in the region have been 9 degrees (5 degrees Celsius) warmer than the 1980 to 2010 average, University of Ottawa glaciology professor Luke Copland said. This is on top of an Arctic that already had been warming much faster than the rest of globe, with this region warming even faster.

"Without a doubt, it's climate change," Copland said, noting the ice shelf is melting from both hotter air above and warmer water below.

"The Milne was very special," he added. "It's an amazingly pretty location." Ice shelves are hundreds to thousands of years old, thicker than long-term sea ice, but not as big and old as glaciers, Copland said.

Canada used to have a large continuous ice shelf across the northern coast of Ellesmere Island in the Canadian territory of Nunavut, but it has been breaking apart over the last decades because of man-made global warming, White said. By 2005 it was down to six remaining ice shelves but “the Milne was really the last complete ice shelf,” she said.

“There aren’t very many ice shelves around the Arctic anymore,” Copland said. “It seems we’ve lost pretty much all of them from northern Greenland and the Russian Arctic. There may be a few in a few protected fjords.”

gsg

Amazon deforestation grows by 34.5%

By [Xinhua](#) August 9, 2020

RIO DE JANEIRO: Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon increased 34.5 percent between August 2019 and July 2020 compared to the same period the previous year, with a total of 9,205 square kilometers of forest destroyed.

The National Institute for Space Research (INPE), a body connected to the Ministry of Science and Technology, calculates deforestation using the Real-Time Deforestation Detection System, which monitors the world's largest forest by satellite.

The INPE said 1,654 square kilometers of forest were destroyed in July, less than that in the same period last year. Meanwhile, the world's largest rainforest also witnessed 2,248 fires in June, the highest level for the month in 13 years.

Overall, there were 6,803 fires, a rise of 28 percent.

The figures came at a time when the Brazilian government is receiving harsh criticism from the international community for its alleged lack of commitment in combating the destruction of the Amazon.

In response, the Brazilian government promised to tighten enforcement to limit environmental crime in the region. Deforestation in the region has soared since President Jair Bolsonaro took office last year, according to conservation groups.

Pollution lessens life by 2 years – study

By [Xinhua](#) August 9, 2020

CHICAGO: An analysis of data from the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) conducted by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC) finds that particulate pollution cuts global life expectancy by nearly two years, relative to what it would be if air quality met the World Health Organization (WHO) guideline.

Particulate pollution was the greatest risk to human health before Covid-19, said the analysis posted on the website of the University of Chicago on Thursday.

Working unseen inside the human body, particulate pollution has a more devastating impact on life expectancy than communicable diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, behavioral killers like cigarette smoking and even war.

Nearly a quarter of the global population lives in four countries in South Asia that are among the world's most polluted: Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. People living in these countries could see their lives cut short by five years on average, after being exposed to pollution levels that are now 44 percent higher than they were two decades ago.

Particulate pollution is also a significant concern in Southeast Asia, where traditional pollution sources such as vehicles, power plants and industry combine with forest and cropland fires to produce deadly concentrations.

As a result, 89 percent of Southeast Asia's 650 million people live in areas where particulate pollution exceeds the WHO guideline. China started a "war against pollution" in 2013. Since then, three-quarters of the world's reductions in pollution have come from China. It has reduced particulate pollution by nearly 40 percent.

If these reductions are sustained, Chinese citizens can expect to live about two years longer than they would have prior to the reforms. The United States, Europe and Japan have likewise experienced success in reducing pollution thanks to strong policies that came on the heels of public calls for change.

The progression of their success, however, further highlights the scale and speed of China's progress. It took several decades and recessions for the US and Europe to achieve the same pollution reductions that China accomplished in five years while continuing to grow its economy.

Mauritius, nagdeklara ng emergency kasunod ng oil spill mula sa sumadsad na barko

By [Bombo Bam Orpilla](#)

-August 9, 2020 | 3:39 AM

Nagdeklara na ang bansang Mauritius ng “state of environmental emergency” makaraang tumagas sa karagatan ang langis mula sa isang sea vessel.

Una rito, sumadsad ang MV Wakashio sa isang coral reef sa isang isla sa Indian Ocean noong Hulyo at agad na nailikas ang mga tripulante nito.

Ngunit naging problema naman ng mga otoridad ang pagtagas ng tone-toneladang langis mula sa carrier patungo sa karagatan.

Ayon kay Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth, may dalang panganib ang spill para sa bansa na nakadepende nang husto sa turismo at apektado rin ng coronavirus pandemic.

“Our country doesn’t have the skills and expertise to refloat stranded ships,” wika ni Jugnauth.

Sa hiwalay namang pahayag, sinabi ni French President Emmanuel Macron na magpapadala sila sa Mauritius ng isang pollution control equipment na bitbit ng isang military aircraft mula sa Reunion.

“When biodiversity is in danger, there is an urgent need to act,” wika ni Macron. “You can count on our support.” (BBC/ Al Jazeera)

Endangered Brazilian monkeys get a bridge to
themselves

PAGE 1/ 1/2

August 09, 2020
DATE

Endangered Brazilian monkeys get a bridge to themselves

[Associated Press](#) / 06:57 AM August 08, 2020

RIO DE JANEIRO — The overpass juts from a forest over a four-lane highway in a rural area outside Rio de Janeiro. It's meant for a very special sort of pedestrian: golden lion tamarins, small orange primates that for decades have been at risk of extinction.



A Golden Lion Tamarin holds on to a tree in the Atlantic Forest region of Silva Jardim in Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2020. A recently built eco-corridor will allow these primates to safely cross a nearby busy interstate highway bisecting one of the last Atlantic coast rainforest reserves. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

The little primate, whose name derives from the shock of orange fur that frames its face like a mane, has watched its habitat shrink over decades — even centuries — of rampant deforestation. Animal traffickers have also targeted the brightly colored monkeys.

Bowing to pressure from an environmental association — and following a court order — the highway's administrator in late July finished construction of the overpass that's aimed at helping conserve the species.

About 20 meters (65 feet) wide and twice as long, the bridge connects the Poco de Dantas biological reserve in Rio state's Silva Jardim municipality with a farm that the Golden Lion Tamarin Association acquired to transform into an ecological park.



An eco-corridor for the endangered Golden Lion Tamarin crosses over an interstate highway in Silva Jardim, Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2020. Once recently planted trees grow on the bridge, it will allow the primates to safely cross the busy highway bisecting one of the last Atlantic coast rainforest reserves. (AP Photo/Mario Lobao)

Some of the monkeys, which about a half kilogram (a pound), can be seen clinging to the trees beyond in the forest beyond.

“Our objective is to consolidate a landscape of conservation for the monkey. The biggest problem is the fragmentation of the forests, which were already very deforested by the expansion of urban centers,” said Luiz Paulo Ferraz, a geographer and executive secretary of the association, known by its Portuguese initial as AMLD. Connecting the forests means more space for the primates to roam and reproduce, and so to sustain genetic diversity, he said.

Endangered Brazilian monkeys get a bridge to
themselves

PAGE 1/ 2/2

August 09, 2020
DATE

Before colonization, the Atlantic forest biome covered 330 million acres (more than 500,000 square miles) near and along Brazil's coast, of which more than 85% has been cleared, threatening plant and animal species, according to The Nature Conservancy.

More than 70% of Brazil's population lives in areas that are or once were Atlantic forest, according to Rafael Bitante, chief of forest restoration at SOS Atlantic Forest, another environmental organization. And while few Brazilians have seen a golden lion tamarin in person, virtually all have held one in their hands: It features on Brazil's 20 reais bill (less than \$4). The animal has become a symbol for wildlife preservation in Brazil and beyond.

In the 1970s, when scientists began conservation efforts, there were just 200 individuals of the species remaining, according to the AMLD. Creation of the government's Poco de Dantas reserve in 1974 was the jumping-off point for rebuilding the animal's population and habitat in Rio state's interior. In 2003, its international conservation status was upgraded to "endangered" from "critically endangered."

The number of golden lion tamarins reached 3,400 in 2014, the year of the most recent census by AMLD. A yellow fever outbreak in 2016 and 2017 caused the death of an estimated 900 animals – the biggest blow to the species since the start of conservation efforts.

They require more habitat to boost their numbers, according to Carlos Alvarenga Pereira, the coordinator of AMLD's forest restoration program.

"It's a local challenge, and requires the participation of rural communities, convincing farmers to replace unproductive farmland into recovered forest," Pereira said.

Public prosecutors had to go to court to get a judge's order requiring the highway operator to erect the bridge, which was a condition in the public tender for the highway's concession.

The association's Ferraz said it is a rare example in recent years of an infrastructure project aimed at encouraging conservation in Brazil's Atlantic forest.

gsg

Vietnam bans wildlife imports, markets amid new health fears

By [BusinessMirror](#)

August 9, 2020



HANOI, Vietnam—Vietnam announced recently that it was banning wildlife imports and would close wildlife markets in response to renewed concerns about the threat from diseases that can jump from animals to humans, such as the virus that causes Covid-19.

An order signed by Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc bans all imports of wildlife dead or alive that includes eggs and larvae.

It also merits tougher penalties for crimes involving the trade in wildlife.

Vietnam has been a popular destination for wildlife products—often from endangered species—that are used in traditional medicine or in preparing exotic cuisine.

The government's move comes amid increased scrutiny of the health risks of the wildlife trade as the world deals with the new coronavirus, which is thought to have jumped from animals to humans.

“The existence of wildlife markets in many locations has been a big problem in Vietnam for a long time,” said Phuong Tham, country director for the Humane Society International Vietnam.

“This rapacious appetite for wildlife is endangering not just these species's survival, but as we have seen with the coronavirus outbreak, it is endangering people's lives too. So this ban can't come soon enough,” Tham said.

The new directive includes recommendations that conservationists have been making for years, including cracking down on domestic markets, said Steve Galster, the director of Freeland, a group working on ending the wildlife trade.

“Covid-19 elevated the issue of wildlife trade, so Vietnamese lawmakers got involved with the issue in the past few months and helped push the directive forward,” he said.

The directive is not perfect as it still has exceptions that will allow some trade in wild animals to continue, but it is a good start and can hopefully made stronger over time, Galster said.

The Australian government welcomed the decision. Agriculture Minister David Littleproud said Vietnam's crackdown was a huge win for global public health.

“Vietnam is reducing the risk of future pandemics and showing the world how we can manage these markets into the future,” Littleproud said.

“All nations have a responsibility to keep people safe from harm and regulating the production and sale of wild animals that carry diseases is a critical part of that,” he added.

He said the Vietnamese government should be congratulated for their leadership in taking “evidence-based approach to reducing the risk of animal to human diseases being spread. Australia will also continue to pursue global reforms on this issue where other opportunities exist.” *AP*

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/08/09/vietnam-bans-wildlife-imports-markets-amid-new-health-fears/>