

13 FEB 2019

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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



# Coordinated bay actions ordered

By Korinah Saromines

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Tuesday ordered local government units (LGU) to coordinate with national agencies in issuing permits to commercial establishments fronting the Manila Bay, which is undergoing a massive clean-up.

DILG Undersecretary Epimaco Densing III said there should be coordination between the national government and the local government in issuing the necessary permits.

"We need to coordinate what the national government does with the local," said Densing. "We know that sometimes the application for mayor and business permits is not tied with national government permits. We will harmonize that."

The undersecretary also noted that synchronization in issuing permits is needed for



DENSING

uniformity and to address problems of red tape and corruption.

**Densing said the DILG on Monday had met with over 100 local government heads and representatives to coordinate their actions for Manila Bay's rehabilitation.**

"For example, if they do not have national government permits from the LLDA or any other government agency, they shouldn't have local permits, too," he said. "If the permit from national government agencies is

suspended, the local permit should be suspended automatically also."

Densing said the DILG on Monday had met with over 100 local government heads and representatives to coordinate their actions for Manila Bay's rehabilitation and sent a show cause order to some 57 LGU that lack a 10-year solid waste management plan.



## UN issues call to action

By Elmer N. Manuel

United Nations (UN) Secretary General António Guterres reiterated his call to governments of the world to take the necessary action anent the worsening climate conditions around the globe ahead of the climate summit in September.

Guterres cited the data released by the United Nations World Meteorological Organization (WMO) showing the past four years were officially the "four warmest on record," confirming the report that 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 were the four warmest years recorded to date.

According to the UN secretary general, the analysis based on the monitoring of five leading international organizations showed that the global average surface temperature in 2018 was approximately one degree Celsius above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) baseline.

**Many of the extreme weather events are consistent with what we expect from a changing climate.**

Noting "with concern" this data – which was first released in November 2018 – Guterres said it confirms "the urgency of addressing climate action" and echoes the science presented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its October 2018 special report on the impacts of a global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas, on the other hand, said the long-term temperature trend is far more important than the ranking of individual years and that trend is an upward one.

"The 20 warmest years on record have been in the past 22 years. The degree of warming during the past four years has been exceptional, both on land and in the ocean," Taalas said.

"Temperatures are only part of the story. Extreme and high impact weather affected many countries and millions of people, with devastating repercussions for economies and ecosystems in 2018."





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## SHIPMENT FROM CANADA

# 10 MORE GROUPS ASK TRUDEAU TO TAKE BACK SMUGGLED TRASH

By Jhesset O. Enano  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Ten Canadian and international organizations have joined a local environmental watchdog in urging Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to take back the 103 containers of mixed garbage that have been illegally shipped into the country more than five years ago.

In a letter to Trudeau on Monday, groups including Greenpeace Canada, Canadian Environmental Law Association and Toronto Environmental Alliance echoed the appeal of EcoWaste Coalition to immediately resolve the garbage scandal, which involved 2,500 tons of household trash, used adult diapers and electronic wastes wrongly declared scrap plastics for recycling.

"[The dumping] is a viola-

tion of Canada's obligations under the UN Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal," said the signatories, which also included several members of the academe and scientists.

"Despite making promises, Canada has failed to take action," the letter read.

It also called for the ratification of the Basel Ban Amendment, which would prohibit the export of hazardous waste from more developed to less developed nations.

The groups said Canada was one of only 24 eligible countries that had not supported the amendment.

Kathleen Ruff, director of human rights group RightOn-Canada, said Trudeau's past promises to act in an environmentally responsible manner were not enough. INQ

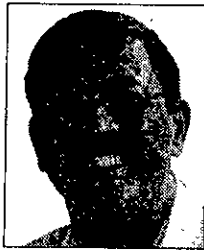


## CTALK CITO BELTRAN

### Physically present but mentally absent

**T**hey would have been fired – they should have been fired.

New reports indicate that when DILG Secretary Año called for a general meeting of local government officials to discuss the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, some mayors did not attend while others sent proxies or representatives. If anything this already tells us what many local officials think or feel about the rehabilitation plans for Manila Bay or of Secretary Año. Sorry for this analogy but its like calling a gang of rapists to a meeting to discuss how they can restore the dignity or virginity of their victim.



Was the meeting simply a heads up where the DILG Chief was going to tell the LGU officials that henceforth all laws related to environmental protection and conservation would be and should be enforced by LGUs?

Was Secretary Año planning to solicit the cooperation of co-conspirators to the rape of Manila Bay? Was the DILG Chief going to make an appeal to mayors to relocate their estero pooping and garbage dumping illegal settlers and sacrifice thousands of lost votes in just a few months? Or was he going to call for further shut down of tax-paying, bribe-giving business establishments that flush their chemical, commercial, and residential waste on LGU constructed and funded drainage canals that are a rich source of kickbacks from contractors year after year?

If this was or is the case, I am reminded of what the character Mabini said in the movie "Heneral Luna": "*Nasubukan mo na bang hulihin ang hangin?*" or *have you ever tried catching the wind?* I admire how Secretary Año goes by the book and by protocol but I fear that he could be setting himself up for great disappointment, a big fight, or an even bigger mess than he started with. While those local officials are not likely to band together against him or the President, they will most likely come down to the point where they pretend to be doing something, will buy time to get past elections then stall on the program, or let their affected constituents go to court so the official can wash his or her hands.

History teaches us that the best way to deal with uncooperative or too big for their britches kind of politicians is simply hauling them off to court, to jail, or slapping them with suspensions that render them powerless!

In relation to Manila Bay the odds are all in Año's favor that many if not most governors, mayors and barangay captains are guilty of multiple violations in relation to environmental law enforcement and governance. Instead of fantasizing of building commonality and cooperation with the guilty, Secretary Año should instead work with lawyers, law enforcers and NGOs to pinpoint violations and start filing cases against city officials all around Manila Bay. Only when several officials end up in court, in the papers, in the news, only then will the rest of "the gang" take Secretary Año seriously.

As it is, several mayors have set the tone. Either the meeting was not important enough for the local royalties to attend or they have more important business and businessmen to meet with than Secretary Año.

If these jokers were working in the private sector, they would have been suspended or fired. In the world of governance and leadership the principal issue at hand is "Respect" and that is something these local officials in absentia did not give to Secretary Año.



# DENR orders 178 mayors: Clean up Manila Bay waterways

Mayors of 178 cities and municipalities surrounding Manila Bay should do their share in its rehabilitation by cleaning up its rivers and estuaries, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu said yesterday.

"We have to clean all 47 *esteros* and all the rivers that contribute to the pollution of Manila Bay," he said.

"Once we clean the *esteros* and rivers, garbage will not go out to Manila Bay. We'll make it a point that the water that reaches Manila Bay is clean," Cimatu added.

Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 provides that local government units (LGUs) are primarily responsible for waste segregation and disposal.

Cimatu also called on LGUs to identify the sources of water pollution in their localities and do something about it.

He cited Tullahan River, the longest river that drains into Manila Bay; Vitas in Tondo, Manila; and Pasig and Parañaque rivers as among those that need to be cleaned.

Mayors should make sure garbage collection contractors in their localities comply with conditions in their contract, including adherence to environmental



Alfredo Lim poses with volunteers helping gather garbage at the Baywalk along Roxas Boulevard on Saturday. On his left is National Parks Development Committee executive director Penelope Belmonte, who led a cleanup activity for NPDC personnel.

laws, he said.

Meanwhile, DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said he will meet with Cavite City Mayor Bernardo Paredes to discuss how the city's transfer station – a processing site for the temporary deposition of waste can be developed to ensure that 17 tons of garbage unloaded there each day will not affect the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

He said it is possible that much of the garbage that end up in the bay come from the transfer station.

If Paredes does not do anything about the issue, the DENR may file charges of violation of the solid waste management law against him.

– Rhodina Villanueva

## Lim lauds bay rehabilitation

Former Manila mayor Alfredo Lim, who is seeking to reclaim his post, has lauded President Duterte for launching the Manila Bay rehabilitation program and doing what initially seemed impossible – restoring the shoreline along Roxas Boulevard into a clean promenade area.

In a statement sent to **The STAR**, Lim said he recently went jogging in Baywalk and saw for himself the result of the cleanup done by 5,000 volunteers last Jan. 27 and continued efforts by the government and private sector to maintain the clean-

liness of the shoreline.

"Not only did President Duterte succeed in making the Manila Bay clean again. He was also able to stir among the public volunteerism and awareness about how important it is to keep our surroundings and waters clean and safe," said Lim, the mayoral bet of Duterte's Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan.

Lim said that during his previous terms as mayor, he ensured that there was a weekly cleanup of Manila Bay and that it was kept free of all kinds of obstruction.



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## Cimatu chides 178 mayors for esteros neglect

**ENVIRONMENT** Secretary Roy Cimatu on Tuesday urged mayors to contribute to the rehabilitation of Manila Bay by cleaning up their rivers and esteros.

"Cleanup may take one to three years, but relocation will take political will," Cimatu said.

There are at least 220,000 squatters along the canals leading to Manila Bay, but only about 10,000 of them could be relocated in a year, Cimatu said.

He said the 178 mayors of the cities and municipalities surrounding Manila Bay must do their share in the bay's rehabilitation.

"We have to clean all 47 esteros and all the rivers that contribute to the pollution of Manila

Bay. Nobody should be left alone, we will one by one ask them [to help]," he said.

During last Monday's Local Executives' Forum on the Manila Bay Cleanup, Rehabilitation and Preservation Program, Cimatu reminded local officials to implement environmental laws and clear the waterways of squatters.

## Cimatu...

From A1

He urged the local governments to identify the sources of water pollution in their areas and do something about it.

"Once we clean the esteros and rivers, garbage will not go out to Manila Bay. We'll make it a point that the water that reaches Manila Bay is clean," he said.

"Even if it takes us one, two or three years to clean these rivers, we have to do it."

Cimatu cited Tullahan River, the longest river that drains into Manila Bay, and Vitas in Tondo, Manila.

The Pasig and Paranaque rivers must also be cleaned, Cimatu said, adding garbage is one of the culprits in the pollution of the esteros and rivers.

He appealed to the local executives to ensure that their garbage collection contractors comply with conditions in their contracts, including adherence to environmental laws.



## Sec. Cimatú sa 178 mayors: Tumulóng sa Manila Bay rehab

UPANG maging matagumpay ang isinasagawang rehabilitasyon ng pamahalaan sa Manila Bay, hiniling ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatú sa 178 alkalde ng mga siyudad at munisipyo na nakapaligid sa Manila Bay na tumulong sa rehabilitasyon ng baybayin sa pamaagitan ng paglilinis ng mga ilog at estero sa kanilang mga nasasakupan.

"We have to clean all 47 esteros and all the rivers that contribute to the pollution of Manila Bay. Walang maiwan, isa-isahin natin," sabi ni Cimatú sa ginanap na Local Executives' Forum on Manila Bay Cleanup, Rehabilitation and Preservation Program sa Maynila kamakalawa.

Ang forum na inorganisa ng Department of the Interior and Local Government ay dinaluhan ng mga opisyal at kinatawan ng mga local government units.

Pinaalalahanan sila ni Cimatú na tungkulin nilang ipatupad ang environmental laws at linisin ang waterways ng informal settlers na nagiging sanhi ng water pollution.

Nakasaad sa Republic Act 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 na responsibilidad ng mga LGUs ang paghihiwalay at pagtatapon ng basura ng kanilang mga nasasakupang lugar.

Kaugnay nito, hinikayat ni Cimatú ang LGUs na tukuyin ang pinagmumulan ng water pollution sa kanilang lugar at gumawa ng hakbang upang masuluyunan ito.

Tinukoy rin ng secretary na ang Tullahan River na pinakamahabang ilog na dumadaloy sa Manila Bay, ang Vitas sa Tondo, Maynila at Pasig at Parañaque Rivers ay kabilang sa mga ilog na kinakailangang linisin.

Pinaalalahanan din ng DENR chief ang lahat ng alkalde na tiyaking sinusunod ng garbage collection contractors sa kanilang lugar ang mga nakasaad sa kanilang kontrata partikular na ang pagsunod sa environmental laws.

Ayon kay Cimatú, aabot sa 220,000 informal settlers ang nakatira sa mga esteros na dumadaloy patungong Manila Bay at tinatayang 10,000 lang sa mga ito ang kayang i-relocate sa toob ng isang taon.

SANTI CELARIO





# Long-delayed cleanup

Finally, 11 years after the Supreme Court ordered a comprehensive cleanup of Manila Bay, the government is doing something about it.

President Duterte wants the waters of Manila Bay rehabilitated to a level fit for swimming as directed by the SC in its 2008 ruling, even as he threatened to close establishments dumping their untreated wastes into the bay.

The High Court initially gave the Executive Branch, led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), 10 years to rehabilitate the bay, but nothing happened. Another order was issued by the SC on Feb. 15, 2011 mandating the completion of the cleanup by June 30, 2011. But again nothing happened: A revised plan was drawn up in 2014 by the previous administration, and guess what? Nothing significant emerged from its so-called "Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy."

## HIDDEN AGENDA



MARY ANN LL. REYES

Things are different now. In Bulacan, the DENR has closed down 41 smelting firms, tanneries, packaging plants and fishponds in the province as part of the cleanup campaign. In the Pasay and Manila areas alone, the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), which has jurisdiction over Manila Bay, has found out that at least 120 establishments are without sewage treatment plants and are dumping wastewater directly into the bay.

No wonder that environment lawyer Tony Oposa, who was among the original petitioners in the complaint compelling the government to clean up Manila Bay, described the bay as an "unflushed toilet bowl."

The coliform level in Manila Bay tests as high as 330 million most probable number per 100 milliliters. President Duterte wants to bring this down to at least 100 MPN per 100 ml, which is fit for swimming, skin diving, and other forms of contact recreation activities.

There are those who blame the two water concessionaires, Manila Water Co. and Maynilad, for supposedly turning Manila Bay into a giant septic tank without even bothering to check the facts. Maynilad, for one, has 20 ISO-certified operational wastewater facilities with a combined capacity to treat 542,000 cubic meters per day (CMD). The company also offers services to desludge septic tanks in residential households in areas not yet covered by the sewerage network to help prevent clogging and leaks, and to ease the discharge process. Its septage treatment facilities treat the sludge collected for conversion to fertilizer.

Maynilad collects and treats wastewater to meet the effluent quality standards of the DENR before being released to water bodies.

Meanwhile, Manila Water offers desludging services and has several sewage treatment plants to ensure that wastewater from its customers are treated and cleaned in compliance with DENR effluent quality standards before being discharged back into Metro Manila's waterways.

Since 2007, or a year before the Supreme Court issued the cleanup order, Maynilad has already invested P23.3 billion in wastewater treatment projects to service its customers in Metro Manila's west zone.

Maynilad is on track to completing 100 percent sewerage coverage for the west zone by the end of its 25-year concession in 2037.

It has so far completed 20 percent, a significant improvement from six percent in 2006 before Maynilad's re-privatization.

More likely, Maynilad, and perhaps even Manila Water, is spending more for wastewater treatment projects than they are collecting in environmental fees from customers, considering that increasing sewerage coverage by one percent alone requires an investment of at least P1.6 billion.

Maynilad just recently inaugurated its P1.7 billion Parañaque Water Reclamation Facility, which is its 22nd wastewater treatment facility. Last year, it inaugurated a sewage treatment plant in Pasay. Maynilad continues to build new sewage treatment plants (STPs) in Valenzuela City, Cavite City, and at Barangays Tunasan and Cupang in Muntinlupa City.

No less than Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) administrator Reynaldo Velasco has lauded the completion of the Parañaque facility, which is Maynilad's largest in terms of sewage processing capacity, saying the success story of the Maynilad Water Reclamation Facility completion and the 92 percent compliance rate of Parañaque City to sewer connectivity, including its firm resolve to clear more than 5,000 out of the 8,000 informal settlers living along esteros and rivers in the city should now become the template for all other local government units covered by our concessionaires.

According to Maynilad president and CEO Ramoncito Fernandez, the company intends to invest P26.4 billion in the next five years to build new STPs and lay sewer lines in the cities of Caloocan, Las Piñas and Muntinlupa, and in Kawit, Cavite. This year alone, Maynilad will shell out about P11.4 billion for wastewater treatment projects.

Once the new and planned facilities are completed in 2020, Maynilad's sewerage coverage will increase to 26 percent.

Maynilad has announced it will set aside P100 billion as capital expenditures from 2017 to 2022. Of this amount, roughly P40 billion will be invested in wastewater plant and conveyance, according to Fernandez.

It is wrong to say that the environmental charge reflected in our water bills, as claimed by one lawmaker, is not being used by the water concessionaires for sewerage projects. Officials have explained that the fee is not allocated for a specific sewerage or environmental protection project, but rather form part of the overall tariff intended to reimburse Maynilad for its expenditures, whether for water service or wastewater treatment.

Saving Manila Bay does not only involve building STPs. It requires implementation and enforcement of solid waste management plans, resettlement of informal settlers and removal of illegal structures, greening projects and restoration of mangrove areas, among other tasks.

Aside from Metro Manila, effluents from as far as Central and South Luzon all end up in Manila Bay. Hence, the rehabilitation of the bay is not as simple as it looks, as some politicians would want the public to believe.



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TIME EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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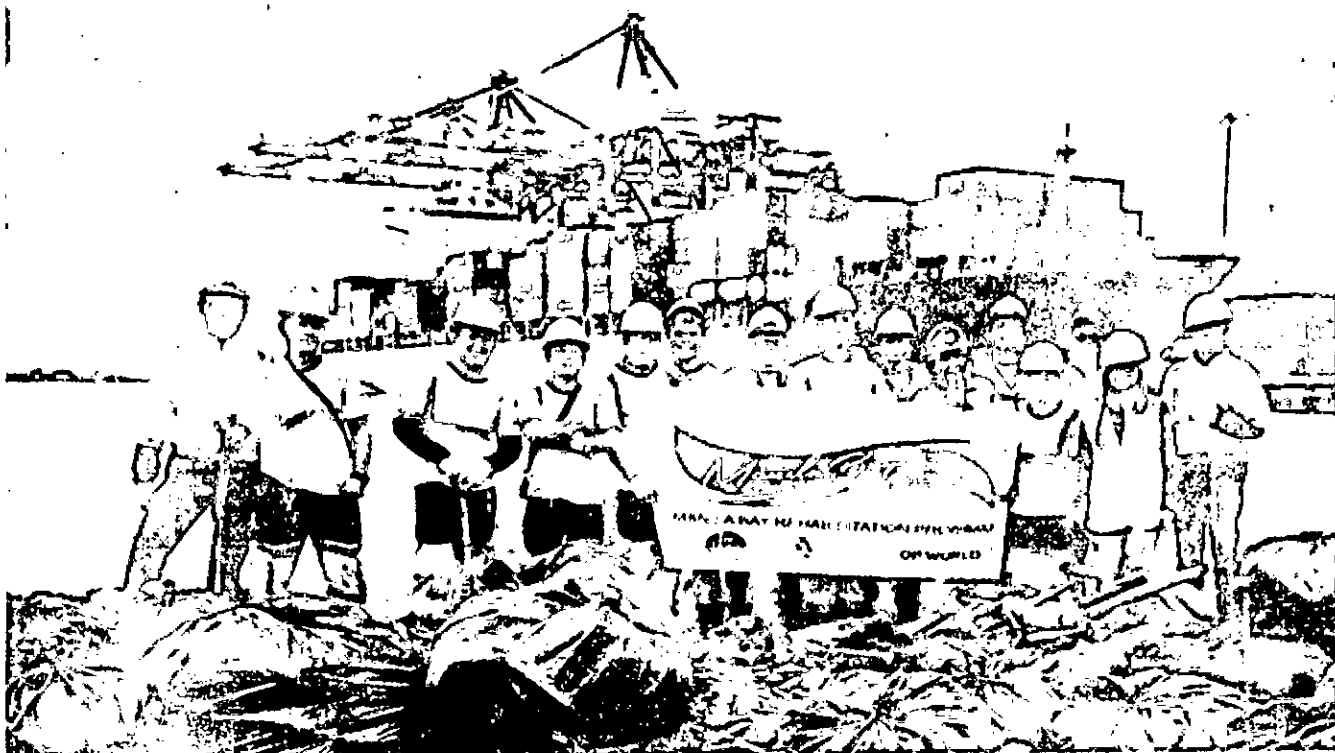
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ATI employee volunteers take part in DENR's 'Manila Bay-anihan' Program kick-off on Sunday, a multisectoral campaign to resuscitate the Manila Bay.

## Asian Terminal supports Manila Bay rehabilitation efforts

Listed Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), operator of international gateway port Manila South Harbor, expressed readiness to support multi-sectoral efforts, led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), to bring Manila Bay back to its glory days.

"Protecting the sea is of paramount importance to ATI. Ensuring the sustainability of Manila Bay, a major livelihood source for the community and a vital trade waterway for the country, is key to a vibrant economy," ATI executive vice president William Khoury, said.

"We are ready to support government in this gargantuan effort, on top of initiatives we have already institutionalized in our own private capacity for the bay's preservation," he added.

As part of its comprehensive Environment Management System, ATI has

long been using two wastewater treatment facilities, including oil and water separators, to cure effluents generated during cleaning of port equipment and facilities. Treated water are then reused for other purposes. A third wastewater treatment facility is set to be completed within the year.

In 2017, ATI invested in its own inflatable oil spill boom system, ready for deployment in case of a maritime spill. The port's Emergency Response Team is on-duty 24/7 to immediately contain spills, while an accredited third-party responder in on-call should incidents so require.

ATI's other infrastructure and initiatives include the provision of emergency shut-off valves at the terminal drains, partnership with Bantay Kalikasan (Nature Watch) for recycling and disposal of

used vehicle batteries and tapping of solid waste haulers accredited by the DENR.

The port company also uses its own resources in regularly clearing flotsam washed along the port's shores, while sending hundreds of employee volunteers to coastal clean-up drives.

"We are working closely with DENR, port authorities and stakeholders to extend ATI's assistance in this undertaking which will benefit present and future generations," Khoury said.

ATI is the first international port operator in the Philippines to secure an ISO 45001:2018 certification for occupational health and safety. Its is also certified for global standards on Environment Management (ISO 14001:2005), Quality Management (ISO 9001:2015) and Supply Chain Security Management (ISO 28000:2007).



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## Calabarzon MGB, groups back Manila Bay rehab

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources' massive plan to rehabilitate the Manila Bay found thousands of supporters in different places sharing the same goal—to clean up the polluted waterway.

In full support of the program, officials and employees of Mines and Geosciences Bureau-IV in Calabarzon and members of the Eastern Rizal Miners Association and Rizal Quarry Academy Inc. trooped to Angono to put up a trash-trap curtain to address the source of rubbish that contributes to the pollution of Manila Bay.

Spearheaded by the MGB, a bureau

under the DENR, the 50-meter trash-trap curtain captures trash before it flows downstream.

"Manila Bay pollutants come from different sources, and aside from the cleanup of its coastline, we believe it is crucial to directly fix the source of pollution, which are in various areas all over the country," says MGB IV Calabarzon Regional Director Samuel Paragas.

The trash trap is just one of the many ways to capture wastes from the source, and the one at the Antipolo-Angono River is a pilot program for MGB Calabarzon.

"The success of our Manila Bay rehabilitation program, as well as all other policies and measures with regard to waste management remains in the firm resolve of each of us to truly clean up and live up to having a clean environment," Paragas added.

The Manila Bay Rehabilitation program was approved by President Rodrigo Duterte with an allocated budget of P42.95 billion that will include cleanup activities, relocation of illegal settlers, and apprehension of establishments that violate the Philippine Clean Water Act and other environmental laws.



MGB IV Calabarzon, Mines Safety and Health Environment Social Development Division Chief Dondie Sarmiento (5th from left) leads the the laying of a trash-trap curtain at Antipolo-Angono River, then stands with Gil Castro, administrative manager of Gozon Devt. Corp.; Teofilo Salcedo, NGO Representative Rizal; Ariel Yson, Solid Cement Corp. community relations officer; Angelita Lee, VP Rapid City Realty & Dev. Corp.; and Luisa Noche, plant manager, Monte Rock and Development Corp.



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## DENR urged to revoke ECCs issued to three Manila Bay reclamation projects

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

Three Manila Bay reclamation projects already issued with environment compliance certificates (ECCs) are located at the southern part of the bay which was already declared by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) as a conservation area for sardines.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) revealed this as it urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to immediately revoke the ECCs it issued to the 419-hectare Horizon Manila Project,

148-hectare Manila Solar City, and 318-hectare Manila Waterfront Project to prevent them from inflicting environmental damage to Manila Bay's marine ecosystem and biodiversity. All three projects will rise at the conservation area for sardines.

"Those projects that already acquired an ECC will be located in the part of Manila Bay where there is an existing conservation area for sardines as declared by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources," Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said.

"Allowing these reclamation projects to proceed will defeat the purpose of government's pro- ▶4

gram to conserve the depleting fisheries specie in the southeastern part of Manila Bay," he added.

The fisherfolk group cited a House Committee on Metro Manila Development hearing last Monday, in which the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) admitted that ECCs were already issued to the three reclamation projects and are now just waiting for a notice to proceed from the PRA.

The group also questioned the approval of ECCs to reclamation projects when many experts have long proven that such activity is one of the major causes of environmental degradation that could also result in natural disasters.

"Despite the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay, the DENR ironically has already given a go signal through an ECC to big-ticket projects that will further destroy our traditional and historic fishing water," Hicap said.

### LGU help sought

Meanwhile, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu called on local chief executives surrounding the Manila Bay to make active contribution to the bay's rehabilitation by

cleaning up rivers and other waterways within their respective jurisdiction.

"We have to clean all 47 esteros and all the rivers that contribute to the pollution of Manila Bay. Walang maiiwan, iisa-isahin natin," Cimatu told the 178 mayors of cities and municipalities surrounding Manila Bay.

He reminded the local governments of their duty to implement environmental laws and to clear waterways of informal settlers who contribute to water pollution.

Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 provides that local government units are primarily responsible for waste segregation and disposal.

Cimatu also urged the local government units (LGUs) to identify the sources of water pollution in their localities and do something about it.

"Once we clean the esteros and rivers, garbage will not go out to Manila Bay. We'll make it a point that the water that reaches Manila Bay is clean," Cimatu said.

"Even if it takes us one, two, or three years to clean these rivers, we have to do

it," he added.

The DENR chief cited Tullahan River, the longest river that drains into Manila Bay; Vitas in Tondo, Manila; and Pasig and Parañaque rivers as among those which need to be cleaned.

Garbage, he said, is one of the culprits in the pollution of esteros and rivers.

Cimatu also urged mayors to make sure garbage collection contractors in their localities comply with conditions in their contract, including adherence to environmental laws.

"It's the mayors and the LGUs who have the main authority over the signing of the contract with garbage collection contractors. I hope that after signing the contracts, the LGUs check that contractors follow what is stipulated in the contract," Cimatu said.

The rehabilitation of Manila Bay will have three phases: cleanup, relocation of illegal settlers and protection, preservation and sustainment of the gains.

"Cleanup may take one to three years, but relocation will take political will," Cimatu said.

He noted that there are 220,000 informal settlers along esteros that lead to Manila Bay, but only about 10,000 informal settlers can be relocated in a year.



**EDITORIAL**

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## Reclamation blues

**A** TOP official of the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) told a hearing of the House of Representatives that the agency is currently processing 22 reclamation projects in Manila Bay, three of which are nearing approval.

The representatives were told that once approved, the projects would cover 22,000 hectares or about 11 percent of Manila Bay's 1,994 square kilometer area.

The three proposed projects, which may be ahead of the others because their proponents have complied with requirements imposed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), are the 360-hectare Pasay reclamation project, the 140-hectare Solar City project in Manila, and the Navotas Boulevard Business Park.

In the city of Manila alone, we know of four other reclamation proposals submitted to Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada, on top of Solar City which was planned during the time of Mayor Lim before 2013.

**'What is not true is the "catastrophic" vision that Atienza has for all these reclamation projects'**

The years of vetting and study that go into each and every proposal for reclamation, especially in Manila Bay, sometimes discourage the proponents more than the usual rallies and protests from environmentalists and leftists, or plain anti-Duterte or anti-Erap groups.

Even Rep. Lito Atienza's line of questioning at the House hearing reveals his anti-reclamation bias, a position that he now takes, unlike when he was mayor of Manila, and thus in a position to benefit from the tremendous commercial and economic progress a modern reclamation would bring to the city.

Atienza pointed out that "if these projects are allowed to proceed, the effects will be catastrophic for all of us. There seems to be a reclamation craze sweeping across the country and you just keep approving each one of them."

That is somewhat true, for the PRA reported that there are 120 proposed reclamation projects all over the country.

What is not true is the "catastrophic" vision that Atienza has for all these reclamation projects. Years of study, engineering intervention, stringent rules and regulations, and legal and environmental issues have to be addressed, and addressed well, before a notice to proceed is issued by the government, especially now that the PRA is directly under the Office of the President. Shouldn't this assuage the fears of Congressman Atienza that reclamation is in essence bad?

China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and many others have improved their economies because of reclaiming land from the sea. Why not Metro Manila?



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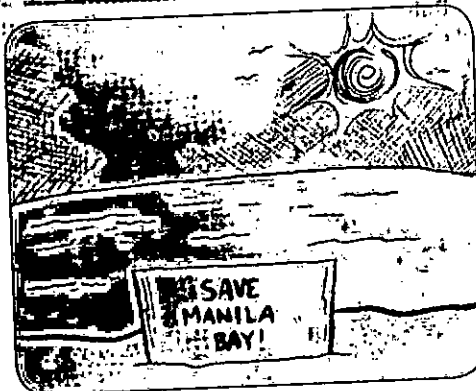
EDITORIAL

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*Ang aming pananaw...*



## RECLAMATION SA MANILA BAY IPAHINTO

**NAPAKAGANDA** na ng Manila Bay ngayon, malayo sa mga larawan at amoy na ating karaniwang namamasdan at nalalanghap kapag napapadako roon.

Kaya naman palang malinis kapag may political will. Kaso mawawalang saysay lahat ng effort ng Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte kung magpapatuloy ang mga reclamation project diyan, masasayang lamang ang nasi-mulan nang pagbabago.

Palalalain lamang ng reclamation projects ang kondisyon ng Manila Bay na naghihingalo na, kung ang pagbabasehan ay ang kalidad ng tubig.

Ngayon na nagkaroon ng pag-asang ma-rehabilitate ang Manila Bay na sikat sa buong mundo ang tanawin ng sunset nito, ngayon pa ba tayo aatras?

Napapanahon nang bigyang-diin ang pagpapahinto sa mga reclamation project diyan na hindi naman kagustuhan ng taumbayan kundi ng iilan na kumikita ryan. Walang silbi sa taumbayan ang mga reclamation project diyan, 'yan pa ang pumapatay sa napakaganda sanang Manila Bay.



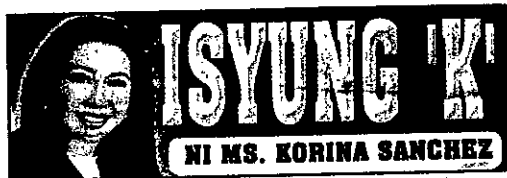
# BULGAR



13 FEB 2019

**BOSES ng PINOY, MATA ng BAYAN**

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## **Shocking: Manila Bay, nilinis para sa proyektong reklamasyon ng gobyerno?! Hmmm...**

INAMIN ni Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) Assistant General Manager for reclamation and regulation Joseph Literal na kasalukuyang pinoproseso ang 22 apikasyon para sa mga proyektong reklamasyon sa Manila Bay. Inamin din niya na kung sakaling matuloy ang mga proyektong ito, maaari itong maging sanhi ng polusyon sa nasabing karagatan. Ang mga proyekto ay sasakop ng dalawampu't dalawang libong ektarya o katumbas ng labing-isang porsiyento ng Manila Bay. Nangatwiran naman si Literal na hindi nila aaprubahan ang proyekto kung hindi sasangayon ang mga developer sa "sistema" para mabawasan ang masasamang epekto sa kalikasan.

Hindi ito ikinatuwa ng ilang mambabatas. Matapos ang malakas na sigaw para linisin ang Manila Bay, ito naman ang mga proyektong reklamasyon na sisira rin pala ng kalikasan, bukod sa polusyon na maaaring dala nito. Lilinisin ang Manila Bay para matabunan ng lupa ang higit sampung porsiyento ng kinasasakupang lugar. Kaya umalma ang ilang grupo sa isinapublikong paglilinis, dahil alam nila ang tungkol sa mga proyektong ito. Tatlong proyekto ang inaprubahan na ng PRA na hinihintay na lang ang pirma ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte. Depende kung sino ang malapit sa pangulo, tulad nina Calida at Diokno.



**Tempo**



**Of Trees and Forest**

**Senator Manny Villar**

**Volunteerism**

**I** have always believed that the Filipinos are good people. Despite the cynicism of some and our own penchant for "self-flagellation," the Filipino people have demonstrated that they have the passion and the will to do what is good for the country. We are a nation of patriots.

This was in full display last January 27, 2019, when around 5,000 volunteers joined the solidarity walk to Manila Bay pledging to volunteer hours and days for the eventual clean-up of the famous landmark.

There was a time when weekend getaways for Filipino families consisted of going to Luneta Park and strolling along Roxas Boulevard to see the magnificent Manila Bay and its world famous sunset. You would see families enjoying the view and the cool breeze, lovers oblivious to the crowd around them, and children running around. At that time, it was not unusual to see people take a dip in the cold waters of the bay.

But we failed to take care of Manila Bay. Over the years, the bay has experienced a deterioration of its water quality, coastal erosion and siltation, overexploitation of fishery resources, and loss of biodiversity.

As my wife Senator Cynthia Villar pointed out, even when the Supreme

Court intervened in 2008 by issuing an order that compelled the government to perform its duties to clean Manila Bay, the situation has just gotten worse. Cynthia noted that the bay is now five times dirtier compared to its condition in 2008 when the High Court ordered 13 national agencies to restore it to a state "fit for swimming and other forms of recreation."

Just like many of our national problem, rehabilitating Manila Bay is not a job for government alone. It requires the participation of citizens. In the first place, people are the main contributor to the problem so it makes sense that they should be part of the solution.

According to the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), most of the pollution is from "land-based human activities, including the discharge of municipal, industrial, and agricultural wastes, land runoff and atmospheric deposition." More importantly, they noted that "about 21 percent of the organic pollution load to Manila Bay come from the Pasig River basin, with 70 percent of this load derived from households".

Cleaning up Manila Bay requires the partnership of government, the private sector, and more importantly, our people. Government needs to

show political will in implementing environmental regulations and laws. In particular, it should regulate reclamation projects that tend to contribute to the problem. The private sector, aside from supporting initiatives to rehabilitate the bay, should also ensure that they do not contribute in the sewerage issues relating to the pollution of the bay.

More significantly, the people need to do their part. We need to get rid of bad habits in terms of solid waste management. People need to be educated in order to sustain the rehabilitation efforts. And more people should be allowed to volunteer in the clean-up drive.

Volunteerism is ideal in solving community problems because they have unadulterated motivations—save the environment. Moreover, volunteerism encourages unity and common purpose. It develops values such as solidarity, reciprocity, and mutual trust. At a time when people argue about everything on social media, we need something to demonstrate that we have something in common.

I hope the spirit of volunteerism that was displayed in the Manila Bay clean up drive will be sustained. I hope that very soon families will be able to swim in the bay again.





## OF TREES AND FOREST Volunteerism



By **MANNY VILLAR**

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13 FEB 2019

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**11-2 DECISION**

## **SC: BORACAY CLOSURE VALID**

The Supreme Court en banc upheld on Tuesday the validity of the government's decision to close and rehabilitate the world-famous resort island of Boracay for six months last year.

The high court voted 11-2 to dismiss for lack of merit the petition filed by three individuals who questioned the legality of President Duterte's Proclamation No. 475. —JEROME ANING  
INQ



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## SC affirms legality of Boracay six-month closure last year

By Rey E. Requejo

THE Supreme Court has affirmed the legality of the six-month closure of Boracay Island last year.

Voting 11-2, the SC resolved to dismiss the petition filed by three residents in the world-renowned tourist destination seeking to void President Rodrigo Duterte's Proclamation No. 475, which closed Boracay to tourists and non-residents for rehabilitation

from April 26 to Oct. 25 last year, an insider revealed.

The high court opted to rule on the merits of the petition and declare Proclamation No. 475 as constitutional despite the period of the assailed proclamation already lapsed, which could have made the case moot and academic.

The source, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak for the Court, said the Court dismissed the peti-

tion in April and supplemental petition filed in June last year by three Boracay residents—Mark Anthony Zabal, Thiting Estoso Jacosalem and Odeon Bandiola—for lack of merit.

The SC sustained the arguments of the Solicitor General that Proclamation No. 475 did not violate any provision of the 1987 Constitution as he rebutted the claims of petitioners that it violated the separation of powers as well as the rights to travel and due process.



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## Boracay closure constitutional – SC

THE Supreme Court (SC) has declared as legal and constitutional the order of President Rodrigo Duterte to close and rehabilitate Boracay Island.

Residents and workers in Boracay filed a petition to stop the closure of the island on April 26, 2018, after Duterte described it as a "cesspool" and ordered its rehabilitation.

During the deliberations on Tuesday, the Supreme Court en banc ruled that the closure was within the "police power of the state" under the 1987 Constitution.

The 11 justices who voted in favor of the rehab were led by Associate Justice Mariano del Castillo.

The two dissenters were Justices Mario Victor Leonen and Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, who said the closure order violated the right to travel under the 1987 Constitution.

Boracay was reopened on October 26, but Malacañang has ordered that there should be no more clubs and bars in the area.

In a petition for prohibition and mandamus, residents and tourists, accompanied by the National Union of People's Lawyers, asked the high court for the immediate issuance of a temporary restraining order, a preliminary injunction or a status quo ante order.

Named respondents in the petition were President Duterte, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, and Interior and Local Government chief Eduardo Año.

The petitioners claimed the closure was illegal in the absence of law or order calling for the closure of Boracay, calling it a "patent abuse of power and reckless disregard of the law."

**JOMAR CANLAS**



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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# Green groups write 'trash' letter to Trudeau

By **CHITO A. CHAVEZ**

International environmental, health, and human rights organizations including some Canadian groups took up the cudgel for the EcoWaste Coalition in its bid to have the garbage shipped back to Vancouver, Canada which was illegally dumped in the Philippines in 2013 and 2014.

Last Jan. 30, EcoWaste Coalition sent a letter to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Environment Minister Catherine McKenna urging their government to resolve the dumping scandal involving 103 containers of mixed garbage shipments, approximately 2,500 tons, which has dragged on for five years without resolution.

None of the officials have responded to the EcoWaste Coalition's letter.

"The dumping of Canadian wastes in the Philippines is immoral and illegal. We respectfully request that the Canadian government provide a clear and definite date by which it will repatriate its garbage so that this protracted ordeal can finally be promptly ended," said Aileen Lucero, national coordinator,

EcoWaste Coalition.

"Prime Minister Trudeau has promised that Canada will act in an environmentally responsible manner and fulfill its obligations under the Basel Convention, which forbids dumping wastes overseas. Words are not enough. South Korea has acted on the first part of its wastes and after five long years of delay, it is time for the Canadian government to demonstrate commitment to international environmental law and take back its wastes. Environmentalists in Canada and around the world are calling on PM Trudeau to take action now to end this shameful misconduct," said Kathleen Ruff, director of human rights group RightOnCanada.

Through a letter sent to Trudeau and leaders of Canada's Conservative Party, New Democratic Party, Bloc Québécois and Green Party, ten Canadian and international organizations, as well as a number of health and environmental experts, have expressed their strong support for the appeal made by the EcoWaste Coalition.

"We call on you to take the following actions - ensure the expeditious return to

Canada of the wastes illegally exported from Canada and dumped in the Philippines, as is required by the Basel Convention, and ratify the Basel Ban amendment, which would prohibit the export of hazardous waste for any reason from more developed countries to less developed countries," the signatories said.

"We call on you to demonstrate your commitment to the Basel Convention and fulfil the actions re-

quested by the EcoWaste Coalition," they added.

The group also stressed the treaty on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous waste and their disposal is an important UN agreement "to uphold environmental responsibility and environmental justice."

Among the groups that signed the letter sent to Trudeau on Feb. 11, were RightOnCanada, Canadian Environ-

mental Law Association, Basel Action Network, Citizens' Network on Waste Management, European Society for Environmental and Occupational Medicine, Greenpeace Canada, Health and Environmental Justice Support International, IPEN, Occupational Knowledge International, and the Toronto Environment Alliance.

EcoWaste Coalition also said noted academicians, medical doctors and scientists also endorsed the letter.



## Bioremediation para sa reforestation

**N**ANANAWAGAN ang National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) sa Kongreso ng suporta sa replikasyon ng bioremediation technology, na idine-develop ng University of the Philippines (UP).

Nagtungo sa Kamara kamakailan ang mga kinatawan ng NRCP, kasama ng miyembrong si Nelly Aggangan na siyang lumikha ng technology, upang ipakita ang research project.

Ang Bioremediation ay pagtatanggal ng mga heavy metals at iba pang nakalalasang kemikal mula sa mga kontaminadong lugar.

"We wanted to convince them (legislators) that this bioremediation technology is important for the bills that they will make. We want it to be replicated by other government agencies, like the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) and other agencies involved in reforestation," pagbabahagi ni NRCP Research Division chief, Rubie Raterta sa Philippine News Agency (PNA).

Dagdag pa niya, tumutulong ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Moggog, Marinduque, kay Aggangan sa kanyang pananaliksik na proyekto mula pa noong 2015, na tumatanggap sa teknolohiya.

Nakatuon ang proyekto sa pagsasaayos ng mga minahan o dumpsite ng mga dumi ng minahan.

Ipinaliwanag ni Aggangan na nagiging brown na ang mga mine tailings dahil sa kawalan ng mga halaman, na hindi nakatatagal sa mga acidic na lupa, walang nutrisyon, at naglalaman ng mga heavy metals tulad ng lead copper, cadmium, at zinc.

"Heavy metals are toxic to all living organisms," aniya.

Nakabase sa Marinduque ang proyekto ni Aggangan, na inilarawan niyang isang lugar na napalilibutan ng iba't ibang ecosystems, lamang dagat at komunidad.

Dahil dito, kinakailangan na mai-regreen ang mga minahan upang mapigilan na ma-expose ang mga komunidad sa mga nakalalasang metal.

"This technology will regreen the area, and also reduce exposure to cancer-causing metals," pahayag ni Aggangan sa isang video presentation.

Pagbabahagi pa niya, nakalikha na ang BIOTECH sa UP Los Baños ng microbial biofertilizers na magbibigay ng nutrisyon at tubig sa mga halaman.

Nabanggit din niya na sa naging bahagi ng kanyang proyekto na magtanim ng mga tree seedlings, katulad ng narra at acacia. "After a year, there was an impressive growth recorded, with 95 percent survival for the treated seedlings," aniya.

Samantala, ipinaliwanag ni Raterta na ito ang unang pagkakataon na humingi ng tulong sa Kongreso ang NRCP, na hangad ang kolaborasyon para sa mga proyekto.

"Dr. Aggangan's project started in 2015, and we had to wait for those seedlings to grow and see the results. The local government of Marinduque provided her the space for that project. It was an area that was abandoned for 30 years," aniya.

PNA



# Greening budget cut by half; forest expansion plan halted

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA [@jonlmayuga](#)

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will focus on a “care and maintenance” mode this year, halting any plan to expand the country’s forest cover under the Enhanced-National Greening Program (E-NGP), the budget of which was slashed by half.

Director Monito M. Tamayo of the DENR’s Forest Management Bureau (FMB) said this year’s budget is just down to P2.6 billion, from the P5.2-billion E-NGP budget approved last year.

Tamayo said the FMB had submitted a budget proposal of P5.1 billion for the implementation of the E-NGP for 2019. “Unfortunately, Congress approved only P2.6 billion for this year,” he said.

This means that any forest-expansion activity from now on would have to be funded or financed by various development partners of the DENR, he said.

Speaking in a mix of English

and Filipino, he said the P2.6-billion E-NGP budget for this year would be spent for maintaining the 1.9 million hectares of forest established under the NGP since 2011.

“What we will do is ensure a high survival rate to maintain the 1.9 million hectares of forest we established under the NGP since 2011. Based on our studies, there are some NGP areas with a survival rate of as low as 52 percent,” he told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an interview.

Tamayo said by focusing on a care and maintenance mode of these NGP areas, they hope to

## ₱2.6B

This year’s budget for the National Greening Program, just half of the P5.2-billion E-NGP budget approved last year

achieve at least an 80-percent survival rate or higher.

“Because of the budget cut, we may have to stop any forest-expansion activity and concentrate on forest protection and conservation programs,” he said.

### LGU, private-sector support

TAMAYO said the DENR would have to rely on the support of various local government units (LGUs) and the private sector to finance or fund reforestation activities.

According to Tamayo, the DENR-FMB is also eyeing the establishment of more industrial tree plantations to expand the country’s forest cover through various forest-management deals.

The establishment of industrial tree plantations will also help reduce the country’s dependence on

imported wood, he said.

Under Executive Order 193 signed by then-President Benigno S. Aquino III on November 12, 2015, the coverage of the NGP was expanded to cover all remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland pegged at 7.1 million hectares, and the period of implementation was extended from 2016 to 2028.

“All sectors, particularly the private sector, are encouraged to actively participate in the Expanded National Greening Program,” the order stated.

Despite the huge budget cut, Tamayo remains unfazed, confident that the DENR will receive financial support from various financing institutions that will boost the country’s reforestation program.

Tamayo also said it is about time that LGUs and their private-sector partners do their part in rehabilitating the country’s forest, with the DENR’s budget for E-NGP having been cut down drastically by Congress.

“In the next few weeks, we will hold a meeting to come up with a new plan on how to cope with our available budget,” he said.



## 'Bantay Danao' reactivated for Agusan Marsh Protected Area

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

**BUTUAN CITY** - In an effort to strictly protect the Agusan Marsh Protected Area (AMPA) and other protected areas within and along Agusan River, the Bantay Danao Conservation Group (BDCG) was reactivated in the marsh communities/municipalities of Bunawan, La Paz, Loreto, Rosarion, San Francisco and Talacogon, all in Agusan del Sur province, it was learned yesterday.

The provincial government of Agusan del Sur and the said municipal local government units (LGUs) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are closely coordinating for the reactivation of the BDCG.

The BDCG was organized in 2017 with 120 Bantay Danao volunteers deputized by the regional office of the DENR in that same year in an objective to protect the Agusan Marsh.

Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary is close to 15,000 hectares protected area in the Philippines declared by former President Fidel V. Ramos. The marshland acts like a sponge, as it is nestled in the midwaters of the Agusan River drainage basin.

The Agusan Marsh covers the municipalities of San Francisco, Rosario, Bunawan, Veruela, Loreto, Talacogon, and La Paz in the province of Agusan del Sur. The marsh was declared as a

Ramsar Wetland Site in 1999.

During the activation, an orientation on Bantay Danao Project was conducted again last week to renew the commitment of volunteers protecting the Agusan Marsh protected areas.

The orientation was spearheaded by the officials from DENR-Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-PENRO), (LGU-PENRO), Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (MENRO-LGU-La Paz), DENR-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-CENRO) and Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (AMWS) and Protected Area.

Topics during the orientation covered the Bantay Danao Project of the PENRO LGU, the Biophysical and Ecological features of Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, the institutional arrangement in Agusan Marsh, Republic Act 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991, Republic Act No. 7686 or the National Integrated Protected Area System, Republic Act No. 9147 of the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act and Presidential Decree 705 or the Forestry Code of the Philippines.

To support the advocacy of the project, Agusan del Sur Gov. Adolph Edward G. Plaza approved to provide the volunteers with trainings and accident insurances for the members as well as livelihood support to their communities.