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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR: "MAKIBAHAGI SA ENHANCED NATIONAL GREENING PROGRAM"

NAGLABAS ng bagong "guidelines" ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) upang mahikayat ang private sector na makibahagi sa Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP).

Ang ENGP ay isang programa ng gobyerno para sa reforestation sa ilalim ng Executive Order (EO) 193 na inilabas noong 2015. Layunin nito na malaniman ang nalilitira pang 7.1 milyong hektaryang lupa ng bansa na nanatiling "degraded" at nangangailangan ng rehabilitasyon, silmula 2016 hanggang 2028.

Kamakailan ay nilagdaan ni DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 2019-03 na nagbibigay ng ilang pagbabago sa EO 193 upang makahikayat ng mas maraming individual or kompanya sa pribadong sector na sumali sa programa.

Ang DAO ay tumutukoy sa mga paraan kung paano makalalahok ang mga private sector sa implementasyon ng ENGP sa malalabing tatlóng taon ng Duterte administration.

Nakasaad sa bagong "guidelines", ang private sector ay maaaring pumasok sa "private-public partnership scheme" sa pamamagitan ng mga sumusunod: establishment of new ENGP plantations; maintenance and protection of existing plantations; and protection of existing forest outside ENGP areas.

Ang private sector ay maaaring magkaroon ng ka-

sunduan sa mga benepisaryo ng Community-Based Forestry Management (CBFM) program depende na rin sa layunin ng "establishment" at sa nakasaad sa DENR Memorandum Circular 1998-08.

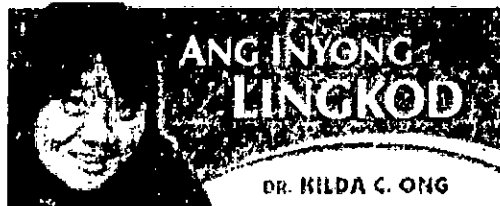
Maaari namang paunlarin ng mga private entities ang mga napabayaang lugar na nasa ilalim ng ENGP sa pamamagitan ng memorandum of agreement (MOA) sa DENR.

Pinahaba rin ng DENR sa limang taon, mula sa dating tatlóng taon, ang kontrata ng partner-organizations. Sa pamamagitan nito ay mas makatitilyak na mabubuhay ang mga puno na itinanim sa mga nakalipas na taon at mapalaki ang benipisyo ng mga ENGP partners.

Ang ENGP ay bahagi ng National Greening Program na binuo sa pamamagitan ng EO 26 na inimplementa noong 2011 hanggang 2016. Sa anim na taong implementasyon ng nasabing programa ay nakapagtanim na ng 1.3 bilyong seedlings sa 1.7 milyong hektarya ng lupa.

Nakapagtala na rin ng mahigit sa apat na milyong trabaho ang NGP mula sa 558,000 katao sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan sa iba't ibang people's organizations (POs) partikular na ang nasa ilalim ng CBFM program ng DENR.

Target naman ng Duterte administration na makapag-reforest ng 1.2 milyong hektarya ng kagubatan mula 2017



DR. KILDA C. ONG

hanggang 2022 base na rin sa nakasaad sa Philippine Development Plan.

Simula noong 2017 hanggang 2018, ang ENGP ay nakakumpleto na ng 335,185 hektarya, nakapagtanim ng 299.2 milyong seedlings at nakapagtala ng kabuuang 715,118 trabaho na napakinabangan ng 112,166 katao.

Para naman sa "long term development", maaaring mamuhunan ang mga private sectors sa mga sumusunod: establishment of new plantation and/or maintenance and protection of existing NGP plantations through appropriate management arrangement.

Maaari ding mamuhunan ang mga private sectors sa pagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa mga kagubatan bukod pa sa NGP areas sa pamamagitan ng MOA sa DENR kung saan ay mabibigyan sila ng kaukulang technical assistance mula sa departamento.

Kabilang din sa pagbabago sa ENGP guidelines ay ang linalawag na Reforestation by Administration (RA), kung saan ay maaaring tumanggap ng mga magtatrabaho na hindi bahagi ng anumang POs ngunit kayang pumasok sa mga lugar na walang POs.

Ang RA scheme ay ipatutupad sa mga "proclaimed areas" at critical watersheds" na hindi sakop ng "tenurial instrument".

Ayon kay DENR-Forest Management Bureau Director Nonito Tamayo, ang bagong guidelines ay bahagi na rin ng direktiba ni Cimatu na i-audit ang lahat ng ENGP sites upang matukoy kung anong mga lugar ang magkakaroon ng replanting, maintenance at protection.

"The Reforestation by Administration, for example is seen to address the gap in many reforestation schemes that seedlings die within the immediate period because they were planted in areas where there are no organized stakeholders engaged," paliwanag ni Tamayo.

Tirirawag din nilong "very balanced" ang bagong ENGP guidelines dahil parehong makikinabang dito ang lahat ng stakeholders mula sa industriya, civil society, environmental NGOs, local government units and indigenous peoples.

Idinagdag pa ni Tamayo, layunin ng bagong guidelines na mapalaganap ang pagtanim ng "indigenous species" partikular na sa mga protektadong lugar at watersheds bukod pa sa mga "high-value crops" at mga puno na mabilis tumubo sa kagubatan.

"We will also enhance production forest-part of the forest set aside as timber sources for our local wood requirements," sabi pa nito.



DENR eyes cleanup of Palawan bay

By **RHODINA VILLANUEVA**

After Boracay and Manila Bay, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is planning to clean and improve the water quality in Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan.

Henry Adornado, executive director of the DENR-Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), yesterday expressed confidence they could make the bay safe for swimming by May.

The Bacuit Bay has been placed under water quality management area (WQMA) by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu through Administrative Order No. 2016-08 issued on May 24, 2016.

The WQMA is an integrated water quality management system designed to protect and save bodies of water through the collaborative

efforts of stakeholders and government agencies.

"Water quality management is one of the priorities of Secretary Cimatu. The declaration of Bacuit Bay as a WQMA was part of the administration's thrust to achieve clean water for all. We look forward to having a sustained and collective action toward saving Bacuit Bay and the rest of our natural resources here in El Nido," DENR Assistant Secretary Reynulfo Juan said during a recent forum in El Nido.

Last year, the DENR created Task Force El Nido to handle the cleanup of coastal areas and ensure implementation of environmental rules and regulations in the area.

This year, the DENR will establish a one-stop shop to assist concerned stakeholders in complying with government requirements and permits.



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DENR eyes rehab of Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan

By Rio N. Araja

AS GOVERNMENT start the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, plans are also under way to transform the waters of Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan swimmable by May, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu tasked DENR's Mimaropa regional executive director Henry Adornado to lead the rehabilitation of Bacuit Bay.

"We are confident we can present to the public an improved Bacuit Bay—safe and

fit for bathing and swimming," Adornado said.

During the first environmental forum held recently in El Nido, at least 200 participants—commercial establishment owners, business operators and representatives of local and national government agencies—were in attendance.

The DENR and other government agencies want to declare Bacuit Bay as a water quality management area pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

"Water quality management is one

of the priorities of Secretary Cimatu. The establishment of Bacuit Bay as a WQMA adheres to the thrust of his administration for clean water. We look forward to having a sustained and collective action towards saving Bacuit Bay and the rest of our natural resources here in El Nido," Assistant Secretary for Field Operations for Southern Luzon Reynulfo Juan said.

Meanwhile, the DENR, in cooperation with the Bureau of Customs, had arrested a passenger for attempting to smuggle into the Philippines over 50 heads of different reptile species from Thailand.



DENR targets El Nido's Bacuit Bay for cleanup by May

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said that it hopes to make the waters of Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan safe for swimming by May.

"We are confident we can present to the public an improved Bacuit Bay — safe and fit for bathing and swimming," Executive Director Henry A. Adornado of DENR Region IV-B said in a statement on Tuesday.

The DENR is currently looking at the possibility of declaring Bacuit Bay a Water Quality Management Area (WQMA), which authorizes the implementation of an integrated water quality management system to protect and save bodies of water.

The DENR is currently rehabilitating Manila Bay, with the goal of making its waters safe for swimming this year by reducing its fecal coliform level, after the agency mounted a 6-month cleanup of Boracay Island.

Establishments found to be contributing to the pollution of Manila Bay are currently being issued cease and desist and exparte orders, and notices of violation, forcing them to comply with environmental laws particularly the Clean Water Act.

"Water quality management is one of the priorities of Secretary (Roy A.) Cimatu. The establishment of Bacuit Bay as a WQMA adheres to the thrust of his administration for clean water," Reynulfo A. Juan, DENR Assistant Secretary, said in a statement.

"We look forward to having a sustained and collective action toward saving Bacuit Bay and the rest of our natural resources here in El Nido," Mr. Juan added.

The DENR said that it is working on building an additional office in El Nido, as well as a bacteriology laboratory to help the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) evaluate water samples. — **Reicelene Joy N. Ignacio**



Bacuit Bay in Palawan could be next on DENR's rehabilitation list

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jontmayuga

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing to rehabilitate El Nido's Bacuit Bay.

The target is to get the job done in two months, or by May this year,

DENR Region 4A Executive Director Henry Adornado told participants of a recent forum in El Nido, Palawan.

Bacuit Bay pales in comparison to Palawan's surrounding waters that are generally rated "healthy." The bay has deteriorated over the years because of unsustainable tourism activities in the El Nido Resorts, ironi-

cally, the country's first supposedly sustainable ecotourism site.

The surrounding waters in Bacuit Bay has been reported to be contaminated and was found to have high fecal coliform level because of direct discharge of untreated wastewater into the water body.

The DENR, as part of its effort

to rehabilitate tourist spots around the country, last year completed the rehabilitation of Boracay Island after six months of shutting down the country's top tourist destination to local and foreign and tourists last year.

"We are confident we can present to the public an improved Bacuit

Bay—safe and fit for bathing and swimming," Adornado said in a news statement.

Around 200 participants attended the forum, which included commercial establishment owners, business operators and representatives of local and national government agencies.



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Bacuit Bay malalanguyan na sa Mayo - DENR

INAASAHANG malalanguyan na sa darating na Mayo ang Bacuit Bay sa El Nido, Palawan dahil sa patuloy na pagsusumikap ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na mabago ang anyo ng tubig dito.

"We are confident we can present to the public an improved Bacuit Bay — safe and fit for bathing and swimming," sabi ni Regional Director Henry Adornado ng DENR MIMAROPA sa ginanap na First Environmental Forum kamakailan sa El Nido.

Umbot sa 200 katao ang dumalo sa ginanap na forum kabilang na rito ang commercial establishment owners, business operators at kinatawan ng local at national government agencies. Malatandaan na idineklara ang Bacuit Bay na Water Quality Management Area ni DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa pamamagitan ng DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-08 na inilabas noong Mayo 24, 2016.

Ang WQMA ay ang "integrated water quality management system" na idinisenyo upang maprotektahan ang mga anyo ng tubig sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulongan ng stakeholders at government agencies.

"Water quality management is one of the priorities of Secretary Cimatu. The establishment of Bacuit Bay as a WQMA adheres to the thrust of his administration for clean water. We look forward to having a sustained and collective action towards saving Bacuit Bay and the rest of our natural resources here in El Nido," sabi naman ni DENR Assistant Sec. for Field Operation for Southern Luzon Reynulfo Juan sa ginanap na forum.



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'No total closure of Baguio'

BAGUIO CITY: Mayor Mauricio Domogan expressed appreciation to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat for saying that they have not issued any order for the total closure of the Summer Capital even as the city needs to undergo rehabilitation.

"We are grateful to the two Cabinet officials for clarifying the much publicized closure of Baguio City to help put things in their proper perspective. We appreciate the support of the national government in helping to correct the problems of the city at the soonest time without totally closing it to visitors," Domogan said.

Domogan said there were areas in the city where there were rampant violations of environmental laws, rules and regulations so that whatever rehabilitation to be done would be confined to these places.

Earlier, Cimatu said there was no order to close Baguio City, but there was a need to conduct an inventory of the pine trees and to sustain their propagation, so that the ones that maintain the city's cool weather will not be wiped out.

Puyat added that rehabilitation of tourist destinations in Baguio City would be dealt with differently.

She said the situation of Boracay was different from Baguio City, that whatever rehabilitation would be recommended for some parts of the city would not result in its total closure considering that the area was landlocked and total closure was not actually applicable.

Meanwhile, Domogan called on Baguio establishments that continue to directly discharge their wastewater into the river systems to start correcting their deficiencies and not wait for government agencies and the local government to cite them for violations and slap them with penalties.

He added there should be a close coordination between government agencies and the local government in identifying violators of environmental laws, rules and regulations, so there would be synchronized issuance of the notices of violations.

GABY B. KEITH



Govt allots 5-hectare lot for Isla Puting Bato squatters affected by bay rehab

BY JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ [@joveemarie](#)
& LORENZ S. MARASIGAN [@lorenzmarasigan](#)

THE leadership of the House of Representatives announced on Tuesday that the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) had agreed to donate a parcel of land to squatter residents who are expected to be affected by the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

During an oversight committee hearing at the Rosauro Arboleda Elementary School in Zaragoza, Tondo, House Committee on Housing and Urban Development Chairman Alfredo Benitez said a memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed between the PPA and the National Housing Authority (NHA).

Under the MOU, Benitez said, a 5-hectare PPA property in Tondo has been allotted for the occupancy of more than 2,000 squatter families

that inhabit the Isla Puting Bato off Manila Bay.

The PPA, through its General Manager Jay Daniel R. Santiago, confirmed the signing of the MOU not only with the NHA but also with the local government of Manila for the turnover of the relocation site, an area near the country's premier seaport, the Manila International Container Terminal.

"We will concretize the agreement and arrangement for the relocation

of approximately 2,086 informal settler families situated at Isla Puting Bato," Santiago said.

He added that the PPA will work with the NHA, the Manila North Harbor Container Port Inc. and the International Container Terminal Services Inc. to "construct housing facilities on that 5-hectare property."

Santiago was referring to a government-owned property near the North Harbor in Manila.

Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade lauded the PPA's move to free up space in the port. However, the move might present some challenges since part of the 5-hectare land is a portion owned by the Philippine National Railways (PNR).

"The beauty behind this announcement is that I will be talking to the management of the PNR to resolve the 1,000-square-meter issue and balance it out," he said.

For his part, PNR General Manager Junn Magno had "committed to donate 1,064 square meters of land for the informal settlers."

The MOU likewise justified the need to remove, relocate and resettle



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Govt allots 5-hectare lot for Isla Puting Bato squatters affected by bay rehab

squatter dwellers not only within the Isla Puting Bato area but also its surrounding areas.

Benitez added the NHA will identify the qualified recipients, while the City of Manila will help in the implementation of the project.

The NHA, he said, will conduct tagging and census activities to identify the qualified structure owners and non-structure owners at Isla Puting Bato and peripheral areas.

The MOU also provides a budget for the clearing operations of the occupied areas and the site, as well as for the construction of low-rise buildings.

According to Benitez, the PPA has donated some P1 billion for the relocation project.

Under the agreement, the City of Manila will provide support and assistance in the implementation of the clearing operations, relocation and resettlement of the informal settlers.

The housing allocation came after House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo called for a hearing of the Oversight Committee on Housing to address the delay in the release of titles to the recipients of urban

poor housing proclamations she issued when she was president.

During her term, Arroyo issued Proclamations 96, 518 and 825 and Executive Order 108 for the purpose of providing socialized housing sites to actual occupants in Parola, Tondo, and Binondo, both in Manila.

During the hearing it was revealed that more than 2,000 families living in a property owned by PPA will be displaced because of the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Isla Puting Bato Barangay Chairman Bryan Mondejar said the thousands of residents are worried about their condition for years, especially with the Manila Bay cleanup and had decided to come to the hearing to bring to the attention to Arroyo about their condition.

The hearing was attended by Tugade, Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, former President and Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada, Manila Rep. Manuel Lopez and heads of the NHA, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and PPA.



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Families affected by bay rehab to get own homes

BY GLEE JALEA

AROUND 2,000 families affected by the rehabilitation of Manila Bay will soon have their own homes.

The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), the National Housing Authority (NHA), and the city of Manila on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to relocate and resettle the informal settlers of Isla Puting Bato and its surrounding areas situated

at Barangay 20, Zone 2, District 1 in Tondo, Manila.

Speaker Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada witnessed the signing of the MoU.

Under the MoU, the PPA will set aside 5 hectares of its property in Tondo, Manila and construct hous-

ing units for the affected families in coordination with port operators International Container Terminal Services Inc. and Manila North Harbor Port Inc. (MNHPI). The NHA will identify the recipients, while the local government will help oversee the delivery of basic services.

Around P1 billion would be allotted as initial fund for the housing project. Selected beneficiaries can pay for the units for P1,000 a month for a maximum of 25 years, Benitez told reporters.

"We have one model which was

already provided by the NHA...for low-rise buildings, the NHA collects around P600 to P1,000 monthly. It's 25 years, and renewable for another 25 years," Benitez said.

Apart from Arroyo and Estrada, Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Chairman Cynthia Villar, Rep. Alfredo Benitez, Rep. Manuel Lopez, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, and other stakeholders attended the event.

Estrada thanked Arroyo for spearheading the project.



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Shanties over bay demolished soon

By Hananeel Bordey

The Department of Transportation (DoTr) formalized yesterday the donation by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) of a five-hectare property and P1 billion in funding for the construction of socialized housing for displaced families in Tondo, Manila.

The PPA signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Housing Authority (NHA) for the houses to be awarded to residents of Barangay Isla Puting Bato who will be affected by the ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation.

Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Sen. Cynthia Villar and House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo were among those who witnessed the MoU signing, along with Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada.

Tugade, who also chairs the PPA Board, commended the collaborative efforts of all parties and vowed to increase the capacity to benefit more informal settlers.

"This is a very good news provided

us by PPA in donating five hectares for the relocation of our countrymen away from the waters. It will accommodate around 2,400 families," Tugade said in Filipino.

PPA will also help in the construction of the houses in coordination with the International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) and Manila North Harbour Point Inc. (MNHPI).

They are also required to ensure the clearing of occupied areas and, if necessary, enter into alternative agreements or amend the existing contracts for the development, management, operation and maintenance with ICTSI and MNHPI.

DoTr thru PPA formalizes housing project for Isla Puting Bato residents.

PPA general manager Jay Santiago assured the public the beneficiaries will receive legal protection for ownership of the housing units, as documents are being prepared to prevent their eviction.





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ANONG MGA BAHAY ANG ITATAYO SA ISLA PUTING BATO?

IBIBIGAY na ng Philippine Ports Authority ang limang ektarya nitong lupain sa Isla Puting Bato sa mahigit 2,000 pamilya na nakatira sa lugar.

Isa itong solusyon laban sa buhay iskwatér na matagal nang kinapapalooban ng mga residente sa lugar.

Patatayuan ang lugar ng mga bahay na may kasamang maayos na pwesto para sa kalsáda, pampublikong espasyo, madaling pasukin sa oras ng mga emergency at iba pa.

Epektibong solusyon din ito sa laban sa madirarang pagtatapon ng basura lalo't lantad sa lahat ang diretsong pagtatapon ng lahat ng basura sa Manila Bay ng mga residente.

Mawawala rin ang mga pangamba ng mga residente ukol sa pag-aaral ng mga bata at hanapbuhay kung ire-relocate sana sila sa malalayong lugar.

Kasama ng PPA ang National Housing Authority, Department of Transportation, Kamara, pamahalaang lokal ng Maynila at iba pa para sa maayos na housing program.

Batay sa karanasan, napakaganda sana kung gumawa ang pamahalaan ng mga gusaling kahit hanggang apat na palapag upang hindi masayang ang espasyo at mas marami ang makakatang mamamayan ang lugar.

Isa pa, bentahe rin ang mga matataas na gusali sa lugar na panlaban sa pagtaas ng tubig dahil sa climate change, pagdating ng mga bagyo at habagát na lumilikha ng mga alon na sumasampa sa lugar at nagiging mapanira sa buhay at arisan.

Panahon nang ganito ang dapat na pabahay ng pamahalaan at hindi maliitan at bungalow type na lumalamon ng malaking espasyo at madaling daluhungin ng mga kalamidad.

Medyo mas malaki man ang gastos sa pagtatayo ng mas matataas na gusali, mas makabubuti naman ito sa mga mamamayan at sa ekonomiya ng bansa na hindi palaging gumagastos ng malaki tuwing may mga dumarating na kalamidad at disgrasya mula sa karagatan, bagyo at habagát.

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Restoring Manila Bay is like unclogging Manila's traffic

The restoration of Manila Bay's pristine quality the way it was before, or how we want it to be, is a long-term project. It will require large private and public investment in resources.

Solving the problem is almost identical toward unknotting the major economic development issues that the nation faces.

If only we can dedicate the program of development of the country toward solving the immense problems implied by the restoration of Manila Bay, or of addressing the megacity's costly traffic gridlock, we will have solved a large part

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GERARDO P. SICAT

of the nation's major economic problems!

A giant cleanup challenge. Some see the cleanup of the bay as simply the removal of floating plastic and garbage and the removal of ugly structures on the seashore and on the beach.

The problem is beyond the things that were undertaken in the so-called cleanup of Boracay. Much that is unseen – and beyond the measures taken in the small-scale problem that is Boracay's – have to

be put right.

It is almost like the gargantuan effort of unclogging Manila's traffic. The good news is that, to some extent, a proper solution of that traffic problem is partly related to that of the cleanup of the bay.

The bad news is this. President Duterte only this week admitted that he has failed to solve the traffic problem.

Mega proportions for a megacity. The current unhappiness over the state of Manila Bay embodies the imbalance of economic expansion with environmental carrying capacity of the physical space in which the population lives.

Metro Manila today is a megacity of 12.8 million residents (per the 2015 census). There are 16 chartered cities and municipalities that compose the metropolitan area. Manila City itself has a population of 1.8 million. (Thus, the population of Metro Manila is seven times the population of Manila itself!)

Actually, the population of Greater Metro Manila is much larger on a given workday. It is estimated that the urban area of the city supports some 21.8 million people. (Multiply this number by five and we have 109 million, which is the estimated total population of the country today!)

A bird's eye perspective of the megacity, as when one flies over Manila, would show any trained city planner or any economist the immensity of the problem: both the ones we perceive easily and the ones that are hidden from view, beyond the naked eye and from the short-view of local problems as they press themselves for attention.

The development implications are immense. They include the following:

(1) Providing decent housing for the population. A large part of the populace live in squatter shacks and temporary, hardly stable residences.

(2) Generating jobs for the nation's many unemployed and underemployed, which means reforming our employment policies;

(3) Undertaking an orderly setup of transport networks alongside that of waterways and flood control systems, both above, on, and below the surface – supra-, on-level-ground and infra-structures – so that we can rationalize the byways of people and commerce, and of waterways and allow them to flow more freely and smoothly.

(4) Creating a reasonable system of public investments and policy incentives so that the nation's many regions can become attractive in themselves to provide effective competition to the growth and sustenance of the country's main urban center – Greater Manila.

The scale of effort. The immensity of the problem of restoring Manila Bay should, therefore, be appreciated as an integral part of the country's long-term national development plans.

It is like achieving the landmark efforts required that have helped to build some of the world's major urban cities located by similar bay areas, for instance, that of Tokyo Bay or San Francisco Bay.

The wide gap in inadequacy of Metro Manila's urban services to a large and still growing city has to be properly attended to by undertaking a comprehensive program of public and private investments.

In the past, much of the growth of this large metropolis was undertaken with little attention to the social costs of development. Economic development often leads to higher social costs that are borne by society. To cure them, the nation has to accept higher level of taxation to finance public investments.

The problem of pollution sums this up. This can also be said about the traffic mess that is our urban daily experience. Solving both is required, not only one of them. They are both long-term problems that mandate attention.

As an example, take the case of providing drinking water for the resident population. This requires massive investments in channeling water into collection points and into centers where the water could be cleaned for human consumption. High dams have to be built to amass water reserves and waste water used must be treated and not thrown away.

Building sewage treatment plants also requires complementary investments in expanding and distributing the provision of potable water.

Investments in proper garbage disposal is related to the improvement of water supply, improper garbage disposal dirties the environment from which water is also collected.

The dependence on road and transport construction of proper water collection cannot be neglected either. The network of waterways – canals, sewer and drainage lines – with transport networks – both those on the ground, above the ground or subterranean – are part of the intricate engineering problems of cities.

BSP Governor Nestor Espenilla

The untimely demise of Gov. Nestor Espenilla of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deprives the nation of an experienced central banker. He has not yet been fully tested by extreme problems of financial pressures. His short tenure at the central bank has shown us the quality and preparedness of his talents for the task of being the nation's central bank.

The UP School of Economics mourns his passing as one of its important alumni. He learned his early economics at the school and was one of its brilliant products. His career from the time of graduation was spent in central banking.

Not only did he graduate with high honors in his economics course. His undergraduate paper, *Traffic Congestion Taxes for Metro Manila* was adjudged the best paper for the graduating class. For that, he was awarded the G. P. Sicat best paper award for 1981. He was also trained to help solve the city's traffic problems.

My email is: gpsicat@gmail.com. For archives of previous Crossroads essays, go to: <https://www.philstar.com/authors/1336383/gerardo-p-sicat>. Visit this site for more information, feedback and commentary: <http://econ.upd.edu.ph/gpsicat/>



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Mga Chinese makikinabang sa Manila Bay reclamation

NAGPAHAYAG ng matinding pag-aalala ang mga mangingisda dahil sa diumano'y pagbenta sa Pilipinas sa mga Chinese, partikular ang Manila Bay.

Ayon sa Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), ang mga reclamation project sa Manila Bay ay pinopondohan at pinatatakbo ng mga Chinese developer at ito na ang panibagong pananakop ng China sa bansa.

Nilinaw din ng grupo na ang 407-hektaryang reclamation na tinatawag na City of Pearl ay

pinopondohan ng UAA Kinming Group Development Corporation na binubuo ng mga Pinoy at Chinese developer.

Ang Manila Solar City na 148-hektarya ang tatabon sa Manila Bay ay pinopondohan naman ng Filipino-Chinese businessman na si Wilson Tieng.

"Funding reclamation projects in Manila Bay could be another form of Beijing's tactic to occupy our marine waters anew, like how it continuously occupies and grabs the almost entire West Philippine Sea," sabi ni Pamala-

kaya national chair Fernando Hicap.

Noon pa nagbababala ang Pamalakaya na ang Manila Bay rehabilitation ay gimik lang para mapaalis ang mga mangingisda sa kanilang mga tirahan para mapadali ang mga reclamation project.

Nanawagan ang Pamalakaya sa mga Pili-pinong ipaglaban ang karapatan ng Pinoy sa sarili nitong teritoryo at huwag dedmahin ang pagsakop nito sa ating karagatan sa pamamagitan ng reclamation. **(Eileen Mencias)**



SPECIAL REPORT

Reclamation in the Phl: Good, bad or ugly?

(Part 1)

By IRIS GONZALES

The Philippines may not be the most populated country in Southeast Asia, but its capital, Manila, is now the most densely populated city in the world.

Manila has over 42,000 inhabitants per square kilometer with the city's population estimated at 21.3 million, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority in an October 2018 report.

It's no wonder that many private companies – local and foreign – are offering reclamation as a viable solution to decongest the metropolis.

But Manila is just one. There are so many other dense cities in the country and in many of these places, reclamation is also actively being pursued by various proponents.

Reclamation 101

Reclamation is the process of creating new land from oceans, riverbeds, lakebeds, or other bodies of water.

It's also happening in many parts of the world, including dense places such as Hong Kong and Singapore.

In the Philippines, there are at least 19 reclamation projects in various stages of permitting, development and implementation, according to the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA).

These include the Horizon Manila Reclamation, a 419-hectare joint venture project between the local government of Manila and JBros Construction Corp.

Turn to B6

Reclamation... From B1

The City of Pearl Reclamation Project, a 407-hectare project, is another reclamation development, also by the local government of Manila and UAA Kinming Group Development Corp.

The Manila Waterfront City Reclamation Project is another project. It is a 318-hectare reclamation venture by the local government of Manila and its private sector partner, Waterfront Manila Premier Development Corp.

Another reclamation venture is the Tieng family's Manila Goldcoast Development Corp. (MGDC), called the Solar City, which is a 148-hectare project. It is also joint venture with the Manila local government unit.

The Sy family's SM Prime Holdings Inc., meanwhile, is the private sector partner of the local government of Pasay for the "SM Project" which covers 360 hectares.

Another project is Davao-based businessman Dennis Uy's Pasay Harbor City reclamation which covers 265 hectares. It is also a joint venture with the Pasay local government.

The project is being developed by Uy's Udena and the China Harbor Engineering Co.

There are several other reclamation projects in the pipeline not just in the city of Manila, but in other parts of the country as well including Cavite and Cebu.

Tasked to regulate reclamation is the PRA, which was formerly the Philippine Estates Authority (PEA). It acts as the primary regulatory agency of the government to assess the technical, environmental, financial, and socio-economic merits of such projects.

Proponents of reclamation projects are the local government units (LGUs) and their private sector partners.

The PRA, in advocating for reclamation, believes that adding land area to Metro Manila will address the problem of "urban sprawl" and provide agglomerative effects that will eventually boost economic growth.

"Thousands of Filipinos have benefited from completed reclamation projects that include the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Philippine International Convention Center, the financial center area – which includes the Philippine National Bank, Government Service Insurance System, the Senate and the Department of Foreign Affairs – the Mall of Asia complex, Cavite, the South Road Project (SRP) in Cebu and numerous ports and causeways nationwide," PRA general manager and CEO Janilo Rubiato said.

He said LGUs bordering Manila Bay are all in need of additional space because

of rapid growth.

They cannot encroach on the areas of their neighboring LGUs.

"The natural tendency, therefore, is to explore the possibility of a seaward extension within the area of the LGU's territorial jurisdiction," Rubiato said.

He noted that it is the waterfront that has attracted settlements and economic activity for generations all over the world.

"Most developed countries have responsibly utilized their waterfronts for coastal development, while at the same time protecting the environment and the welfare of their people," he said.

Target

The PRA's target, based on its 2016 annual report, is to contribute and promote economic and social progress through environmentally sustainable land reclamation of approximately 700 hectares and effective public estates development and management by 2020.

Despite trumpeting the benefits of reclamation, however, the PRA and reclamation proponents have constantly faced stumbling blocks for the different projects.

The issues are varied as they are endless – environmental issues, livelihood and disaster risks; among others.

EO 146 vs EO 74

Because of the controversies, the administration of former president Benigno Simeon Aquino III issued EO 146, a law that tightened the noose on reclamation projects.

The order designated the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board as the final approving authority on reclamation projects.

At that time, business groups such as the Makati Business Club (MBC) and the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) lauded the measure, saying that "it is a prudent response to public apprehension over the risks posed by proposed reclamation projects, most extensively along Manila Bay."

The EO essentially limited the PRA's regulatory role to evaluating and recommending to the NEDA Board the approval of all proposed reclamation projects.

The business groups said "EO 146 sends an encouraging signal that the national government is more conscious of pursuing a holistic approach to progress, one that balances the need to generate government revenue streams and employment with the protection of the environment and public safety."

However, reclamation proponents did not like the EO, as their unsolicited proposals had to be subjected to a second round of bidding.

Some players said this was the reason many reclamation projects did not prog-



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ress during the Aquino administration.

Industry sources also believe that some sectors, including other property developers, were the ones who lobbied for the passage of EO 146.

"A certain property company felt threatened by the competition that reclamation developments would bring," one source noted.

The Duterte administration, in stark contrast to the Aquino government, issued EO 74 which effectively rescinded EO 146.

Under the EO, the authority to approve reclamation projects now rests with the Office of the President and no longer with the NEDA.

The real reason behind the EO is not clear.

Officially, the Duterte administration said it would pave the way for a more streamlined process, while at the same time ensuring better scrutiny of the projects.

Whatever the reasons are, industry players welcome EO 74. They said this would speed up the process instead of going through the NEDA which takes so much time.

"It will also remove corruption at the local government level," a chairman of a company involved in reclamation told **The STAR** in an interview last Feb. 18.

Dennis Uy's reclamation project

Meanwhile, in a society that loves gossip, sources said EO 74 may have been issued to benefit the Duterte administration's friends, including his long time pal from Davao, businessman Dennis Uy.

Some believe that Uy may be interested in doing other reclamation projects aside from the one he is already pursuing. An expedited process would thus benefit his group.

But Uy dismissed talks that he is interested in other projects. "No," he told **The STAR** when asked to comment on the rumors.

"Udenna is not looking into, or considering any land reclamation project at this point other than what's already publicly known," Udenna head of investor relations Leo Venezuela said.

A ranking official from his group also said that Uy is simply doing business and is not afraid to looking into different opportunities in different sectors.

The official said it was unfair to question Uy's actions just because he is from Davao.

Whatever the reasons are for changing the regulatory environment surrounding reclamation projects, industry players hope the new EO would, indeed finally, pave the way for the different developments to proceed.



50 reptile heads' smuggling foiled

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

A PASSENGER who arrived from Bangkok, Thailand has been arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) for attempting to smuggle into the country more than 50 heads of different reptile species.

The deputized wildlife officers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) together with agents of the Bureau of Customs (BoC) arrested the suspect identified as Neil Ryan Dysoco at around 11:30 last Feb. 21 at NAIA Terminal 2.

Arnel Matreo, head of the Wildlife Traffic Monitoring Unit of DENR-National Capital Region said the suspect will be charged with violation of Republic Act No. 9147, for which he

could be penalized with imprisonment and fines.

According to a report from the BoC, Dysoco arrived on board flight PR-737 from Bangkok, Thailand, when the agents discovered his baggage containing 48 heads of green iguana, two green basilisk lizards, three bearded dragons, and four chameleons.

Matreo said that Dysoco had attempted to smuggle the reptiles but, upon realizing that the BoC had detected the animals, immediately informed the customs agents of the contents of his baggage.

The BoC immediately arrested Dysoco and confiscated the animals after these were confirmed to be of different wildlife species.

The rescued animals would be turned over to the Wildlife Rescue Center of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau.



UN warns of decreasing biodiversity

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN-FAO) warned of the decreasing biodiversity in the planet, saying that there is a real risk of the plant and animal species that provide our food, fuel and fiber of disappearing for good.

In a recent report, the UN-FAO said with the biodiversity of plants cultivated for food slowly but surely shrinking, the global population's health, livelihoods and environment are under severe threat.

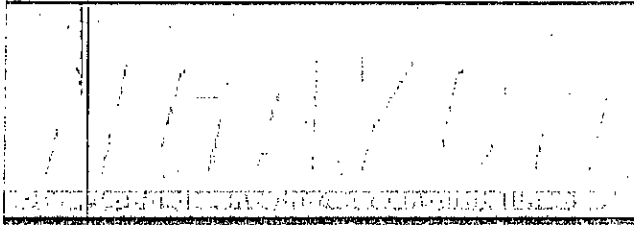
It explains biodiversity as the variety of life at genetic, species and ecosystem levels.

The UN report, regarded as the first of its kind, tackles the state of the world's biodiversity in food and agriculture. It explains biodiversity as the variety of life at genetic, species and ecosystem levels.

Biodiversity for food and agriculture, meantime, is the subset of biodiversity that contributes in one way or another to agriculture and food production which includes the domesticated plants and animals.

ENManuel





Tolentino pabor sa Dep't of Water Resources Management



Tolentino ang paglikha ng isang Department of Water Resources Management (DWRM) na makakatuwang ng MWSS at LWUA sa sandaling palarin siyang

Suportado ni Environmental Lawyer at PDP-Laban Senatorial bet Atty. Francis Tolentino makapasok sa Magic 12 sa darating na mid-term elections sa Mayo 13.

Ayon kay Tolentino, ang naturang departamento ang mangunguna sa tamang pagpapatakbo, proteksiyon at conversion ng water resources sa bansa, gayundin ang magpo-pondo sa kinakailangan sa pag-sasaliksik at pagbili ng mga kagamitan para sa

treatment at recycling ng tubig.

"I read a study that by 2025, there will be widespread water crises. That's only about six years from now. Water, like food, is essential to both human and non-human life. If we do not make good use of the water that we have left, there will be nothing left of us. The challenges of depleted and polluted water resources, and the global impacts of climate change, necessitate the establishment of a government agency that will concentrate efforts to mitigate the impacts of these challenges to the life and development of our communities," ayon kay Tolentino.

Kasabay nito, pina-purihan ni Tolentino ang ginawang pagbabawas ng San Miguel Corporation ng kanilang konsumo sa tubig noong nakalipas na 2018 at ang kanilang ipinatupad na "Water for All" sustainability project.

Kidapawan turns to water rationing as wells dry up

KIDAPAWAN CITY —Water sources in at least 16 villages in this provincial capital of Cotabato, are starting to dry up, prompting the city government to ration water in a number of communities in four barangay severely affected by extreme weather. ||

Mayor Joseph Evangelista said deep wells, which supply water to the subvillages (sitio) of Nazareth, Quarry and Pua Inda in Barangay Amas; Andagkit in Barangay Kalaisan; Lika in Barangay Onica; and

Balite and Talisay in Barangay Malinan, were empty, following the dry spell that hit these areas starting Feb. 18.

Evangelista said residents needed to walk at least 2 kilometers before reaching the nearest sources of water.

"We need to supply potable water to them. It is sad to note that these areas suffering the effect of El Niño are where most of the indigenous peoples live," he said.

Psalmer Bernalte, city disaster risk reduction

and management officer, said three trucks carrying at least 10,000 liters of water were being sent to these areas every other day.

At least P31-million worth of crops had been destroyed in 16 of the city's 40 villages experiencing drought, said Marisa Aton, acting city agriculturist.

In Barangay Maceboleg alone, at least 90 percent of rice fields were parched, while 80 percent of vegetable farms were damaged.

At least 50 percent of

banana plantations in the eastern and western parts of Kidapawan were also damaged, Aton said.

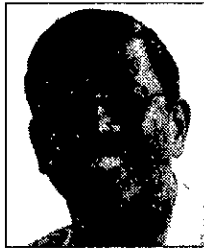
She said the amount of agricultural losses could still go up as the city agriculture office was still monitoring other areas hit by the dry spell.

Hundreds of farm workers have lost their jobs, Aton said. "They are [calling for] a declaration of state of calamity so they can get assistance from the government," she added. —*Inquirer*

CTALK CITO BELTRAN

SMC's 'a call to arms'

San Miguel Corp. recently announced how their company wide program to conserve and reduce water consumption had been achieved beyond target by reducing non-product water use by 23% or an estimated 7,762,061 liters of water in 2018. This figure is a very promising achievement that makes SMC's ultimate target to reduce non-product water use by 50 percent in the year 2025, a very realistic goal. But more than water conservation or an estimated savings of P302.841 million, what San Miguel Corp. is actually doing is calling everybody's attention to a serious concern and potential threat 10 to 20 years from now. While policy makers and the media have not seriously picked up on the matter, experts in environmental management and conservation have cautiously hinted that water shortage may become the single serious threat to all in terms of limited resources.



As we enter the year 2019, we have already been alerted about an impending El Niño weather situation and by May this year I believe it would be safe to predict that residents of Metro Manila will once again be confronted with water shortage or rationing as our dams all start to run dry. I can understand if decision makers tend to snub activists and NGOs as alarmists or tree hugging nut jobs but when a globally respected corporation such as SMC embarks on a serious water conservation program, exceeds their timetables and set targets, and save hundreds of millions, government officials and self-respecting business leaders should seriously pay attention to what can only be termed "a call to arms," not to mention how to save a finite resource and make money.

It is also worth noting that whenever SMC COO Ramon Ang starts up a discussion or a business plan, 9 times out of 10, the guy is right or makes a lot of sense. Most people used to dismiss his plans and ideas until most of them woke up left behind or not part of the AGENDA. Whether it's petro chemicals, power, roadways, airports, dams etc., Ramon Ang's ideas have always been backed by research and teams of experts behind him. While RSA has presented the water conservation as a corporate achievement, those responsible in terms of preserving this limited resource should move to follow his lead in drumming up awareness on how serious we need to be about cutting water consumption and insuring that our natural resources can be revitalized for our needs in the immediate future.

For starters the DENR which deserves all praises for having a breakthrough mindset, should immediately initiate an education campaign on the decreasing volumes and availability of water year round and the need for reduction in water consumption as well as water recycling or re-use. The department should likewise embark on a program that requires business establishments and communities to have water collection and/or treatment facilities that enable companies and households to maximize water usage. Even the DILG can jump in by embarking on a program that requires architects and planners to incorporate systems that separate gray water from wastewater. Last but not the least, if people won't reduce their use or waste of water, then the MWSS should make people pay the price for their wastefulness.

Water conservation is near and dear to me because I spent several years out on an island in Northern Palawan building a resort we named Club Paradise (now named and owned by Discovery Paradise). During my two years stint on the project, we had to draw water from a spring about 45 minutes away from the island and spent another 2 hours doing a slow crawl on a transport boat containing 20 drums of water. Some of the guys would do an "all-nighter" just to make sure we had enough water for human consumption. When you combine the cost of labor and transport, the price of the water was just so expensive. Because of the cost and challenge to get water, I incorporated special septic tanks for toilet bowls that used seawater since it was an abundant resource and the salt kills bacteria in the chambers. From there we progressed to Xeriscaping or using plants that required very little water.

Incidentally, if you love plants or having a garden, it is worthwhile to look into "how your garden grows" especially with helpers who think NAWASA water is "the" food for plants and gardens. We waste so much watering plants when what they need is correct potting material and fertilization and we also waste so much water washing cars especially SUVs! The more you wash your car the more you thin out its protective coating and shine and you increase the chances of rust happening to your vehicle! Even in my hobby involving aquariums that range from 1000 to 8000 gallon tanks, I incorporate outside filters that are so efficient that I am able to limit water change to 10% every 3 to 6 months. In our small backyard farm, we built similar tanks that allow us to process and filter wastewater from our small piggery and use both water and slurry for plants. This not only gives us water for the garden but also comes with nutrients from pig waste raised on premium BMeg feeds. People see pig poop but I see unused nutrients that plants love.

I sincerely hope we can all pass the word on San Miguel Corp.'s clarion call to wake up to the truth. Water is now a very limited resource and we all have to help save water in order to save ourselves!

* * *
Email: utalk2ctalk@gmail.com



Special Advertising Section

Republic Cement sustains rainwater harvesting



Republic Cement has three major rainwater collection ponds in the Batangas plant.

WATER is a precious and limited resource and needs to be managed well. With this in mind, the Republic Cement Batangas Plant continues to conduct rainwater harvesting and has done so since 2015 for 100 percent of its domestic and industrial water consumption requirements or 328,150 cubic meter of water per year.

The Batangas plant has eliminated its groundwater demand, leaving the scarce groundwater resources for its neighboring communities and farmers. Rainwater harvesting is the collection and storage of rainwater in natu-

ral resources or artificially designed resources to prevent runoff and avoid scarcity of water, especially during the dry months.

The Batangas plant has three major collection ponds that collect rainwater, namely the Republic Lake, the Pozzolan Pond, and the East Shale Pond, which is the largest among the three.

The severe drought due to *El Niño* in 2014, which almost shut down the

cement plant, was the driving force for this initiative, which, at the same time, was conceived to reduce water bills from the local water utilities.

Additionally, instead of just being backfilled at the end of quarry life, the reservoirs can now be part of the final mine rehabilitation plan and stakeholders may benefit from these new water sources during summer months. This is a very good example of how

Republic Cement operates to assure customers of consistent supply of good quality products, while taking good care of the environment in the process.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Mines and Geosciences Bureau Mine Rehabilitation and Fund Committee and the local government of Tayasan have recognized the Batangas plant's water conservation efforts through rain water collection.