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DENR

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Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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DENR, IPINATITIGIL ANG OPERASYON NG DUMPSITE SA LIMAY, BATAAN

NAGLABAS ng cease and desist order (CDO) ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) laban sa municipal government ng Limay sa Bataan dahil sa pagpapatakbo nito ng open dumpsite na mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ng batas sa ilalim ng Republic Act 9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Base sa dalawang pahinang kautusan na inilabas noong Mayo 7, 2019 na nilagdaan ni Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Unit (LGU) Concerns Benny Antiporda, inaatasan nito si Mayor Lilvir Roque na ipatigil ang operasyon ng dumpsite kasabay ng pagsasagawa ng rehabilitasyon sa naturang lugar.

Ipatatawag naman ni Antiporda si Roque at ang mga miyembro ng Limay Municipal Council na pinamumunan ng kanilang vice-mayor na si Robert Arvin Roque sa tanggapan ng DENR sa Quezon City upang iprisinta ang kanilang plano para sa pagsasara at rehabilitasyon ng

dumpsite.

Inatasan din ang mga ito na dalhin ang lahat ng kaukulang dokumento, clearance at permit para sa naging operasyon ng naturang disposal site.

"Failure to appear in the said meeting and submit the required explanation would mean a waiver on your part and this Office shall resolve the case based on our records in accordance with the rules," babala pa ni Antiporda sa mga opisyal ng Limay.

Sa nakasaad sa Section 37 ng RA 9003, "no open dumps shall be established and operated, nor any practice or disposal of solid waste by any person, including LGUs, which constitutes the use of open dumps for solid wastes, is allowed."

Ayon pa sa Section 48(9) ng nasabing batas, mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ang pagpapatakbo ng open dumpsite at ang sinumang mahuhuling lumalabag dito ay pagmumulta-hin ng P500,000 at karagdang 10 percent ng kanyang annual income ng nakaraang taon.

Maaari ding sampahan



ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

ng administrative case ang mga local at national government official na hindi magpapatupad ng rules and regulations ng RA 9003.

Inihain ang CDO sa tanggapan ni Roque noong Mayo 8 nina DENR-Bataan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office Raul Mamac, Dinalupihan (Bataan) Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) Marife Castillo at staff members ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) ng Region 3.

Ayon kay Antiporda, nararapat lamang na ipahinto ang operasyon ng Limay dumpsite upang mapigilang makontamina ang tubig sa Manila Bay na sumasailalim ngayon sa rehabilitasyon.

"We cannot clean Manila Bay if we allow this," sabi pa ni Antiporda kasabay ng pagdidiin na maaaring maapektuhan ng dumpsite ang dumadalong tubig sa malalapit na body of water.

Ang Limay open dumpsite na matatagpuan sa Baran-

gay San Francisco de Asis I ay malapit lamang sa Mama-la River na dumadaloy naman ang tubig patungo sa Manila Bay. "Masasayang lang ang malaking halaga na gugugulin natin sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay kung mayroong gaya nito," ayon kay Antiporda na tumutukoy sa basura na tinatayang may taas na anim na metro na nakatambak sa open dumpsite na may lawak na 7 hektarya at pag-aari ng Limay municipal government.

Ayon kay CENRO Castillo, ang Limay ay may kasalukuyang memorandum of agreement (MOA) sa Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. (MCWMC) na may kaugnayan sa pagsasara at gagawing rehabilitasyon ng naturang dumpsite na nilagdaan noong 2015 at magtatapos sa Disyembre ng kasalukuyang taon.

Sinabi pa ni Castillo na hindi naglalabas ng ulat ang MCWMC simula noong itinakda ang pagsasara at gagawing rehabilitasyon ng Limay dumpsite.



There's a lot to be done to make Manila Bay 'swimmable'

BY RIZAL RAOUL S. REYES

✉@brownindio

DESPITE the massive efforts being implemented by the government through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to rehabilitate Manila Bay, there is a lot to be done in terms of making it 100 percent clean and "swimmable."

Dr. Robert So, chairman of Ecosystems Technologies Inc., told the BUSINESSMIRROR in a recent e-mail interview that fixing the Manila Bay problem, requires a holistic approach.

"Technology alone won't solve the problem because there is more than one problem; or that there are many problems, that contribute to the main problem that is the state of the Manila Bay," So said.

Part of the problem, he explained, is the "enforcement of regulations, which we are seeing an improvement of."

Another is coming up with the "appropriate regulations based on many perspectives, including that of science and technology. But if we are solving the particular problem that is the lack of space to locate a working treatment facility for sewage, then there is a technology solution that we can discuss."

To develop a comprehensive road map on cleaning-up the Manila Bay, So urged stakeholders to take time to listen to each other and from other sectors.

In the discussion, So said each stakeholder group must give their perspective as contributions to the effort.

For the organizations that will implement the plan in the cleanup, he suggested it would be well to educate themselves in the science and technology of pollution treatment, as well as the history of environmental rehabilitation efforts around the world.

As far as the business sector is concerned, So said they should be required to treat their effluent sewage and acquire technologies from an unregulated market of suppliers.

"Then I would include members of the science and technology sector who are true experts in sewage in wastewater treatment," he said.

To develop an environmental mindset among the masses, he said there must be a change in behaviors and cultural norms in

Philippine society, specifically valuing long-term security over immediate convenience. He said this would have a huge impact in the decisions of the people on what they buy or are willing to pay for.

"Are we willing to pay more in association dues as a tenant or homeowner in a development that needs to install, upgrade or maintain a sewage treatment plant? Are we willing to live in a less convenient address if we know that the development has invested in superior sewage treatment or is reusing water for nonpotable purposes," So explained.

Putting environmental sustainability will play a big role in buying green products and implementing pro-green measures, he said.

"Owners of businesses, developers and property managers, and owners have always considered treating sewage and wastewater as an expense instead of an investment. While there is a cost associated with protecting the environment, it is indeed an investment for the benefit of future generations," he stressed.

On the government side, it must pursue good governance for the benefit of the people. Moreover, it needs to become experts the way private interests employ experts. "This is so we, as citizens, have experts on our side, and not only the private interests," he said.

So said the cleanup of Manila Bay "will take more time than what has been announced." Nevertheless, he commended that the effort of the government is the "humility it displayed when the leaders acknowledged that the government did not do its job."

He admitted this is a complex undertaking and stakeholders must now invest in learning and developing true expertise.

As an expert in environmental technologies for over 30 years, So said he is willing to support them and willing to learn with them as a fellow contributor to environmental sustainability.

"I am also willing to share what I, myself, have learned as an environmental technologist, and advocate for over 30 years.

"Grand pronouncements can inspire, saying that the Manila Bay will be safe for swimming is inspiring. That language has its place. It makes me want to help make it happen," he pointed out.



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DENR exec seeks funding for El Nido rehab, study of carrying capacity

THE top official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Mimaropa region is seeking an additional fund of P10 million to step up the rehabilitation of tourist spots in El Nido, Palawan.

Mimaropa, which stands for Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan, is home to a number of ecotourism sites, including the world-renowned El Nido.

Mimaropa Regional Executive Director Henry Adornado said the P10-million funding is necessary to boost the DENR's logistics to strictly enforce various environmental laws.

"We've already asked for an additional funding of P10 million and we are hoping that it will be approved for us to sustain our effort," Adornado told the *BUSINESSMIRROR*.

Also, Adornado, a former director of the DENR's Ecosystems Research Development Bureau (ERDB) said they have appealed for funding support from the Department of Tourism (DOT) to conduct a comprehensive study that will determine El Nido's biological carrying capacity.

He said the funding requirement for such is estimated to be P5 million.

The study will identify El Nido's strength, as well as weakness and vulnerabilities as a tourist attraction, Adornado said.

Adornado supports the idea of placing El Nido under government control to effectively implement various programs and projects that will address environmental problems on the island paradise.

"[We] welcome the proposal to place El Nido under government control similar to what took place in Boracay," Adornado, speaking in Filipino, told the *BUSINESSMIRROR*. He thinks Boracay was successful, because of the concerted effort of the DENR, DOT and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Compared to Boracay, however, El Nido is far cleaner and healthier in terms of the level of fecal coliform observed in its surrounding waters, he said. "Only the main beachfront in El Nido has poor water quality."

He said the problem is in El Nido is manageable given the resources to conduct a resort-to-resort inspection, and island-to-island observation, which entails costs outside the DENR Mimaropa's regular budget. **Jonathan L. Mayuga**



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ALL IN A DAY'S WORK. A scavenger on a raft along the waters of Manila Bay collects plastic and other recyclable materials to sell in a nearby junk shop. **Lino Sar**



GMA: Hasten granting of land titles

By Rio Araja

FORMER President and now House Speaker Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is batting for the speedy grant of land titles for the urban poor housing beneficiaries.

She recently led the oversight hearing of the committee on housing and urban development, chaired by Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Benitez to fast-track the granting of land titles.

The committee members convened to look into several presidential proclamations on social housing issued by Arroyo during her presidency to ensure that the housing projects would move forward "at the soonest possible time."

They continued with the deliberation on House Resolution No. 2067 seeking to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the implementation of Proclamation No. 627 of 2004.

The proclamation declared a two-hectare land within Barangay Comembo in Makati City as off-base housing for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Jeanette Cruz, Housing and Urban Development Coordination Council director, said the National Housing Authority was not able to fully exercise the administration over the area because of a special patent that was still not provided by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region.

On the other hand, Florencio Chavez, DENR's Land Management in Metro Manila officer, said such could be resolved by a "simple letter" from the NHA requesting for the special patent from its agency.

Upon receiving the request, the special patent could be available in a month, Chavez said.

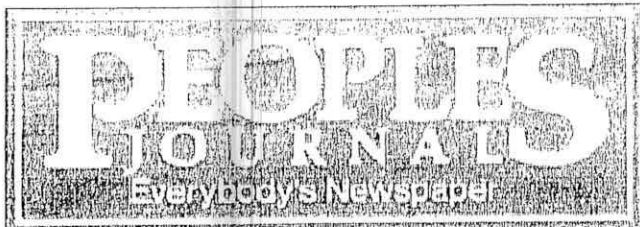
Benitez directed Brig. Gen. Arnold Fernandez to submit a list of qualified beneficiaries to the NHA to ensure that all 295 of them would receive the land titles.

He recommended for the HUDCC and NHA to allow the AFP to administer the land title distribution to the qualified occupants of the property.

"Whether you give it to whoever is there, that is your lookout. It is designed for your members, for soldiers, for your colleagues. Whatever you do, that would reflect on you. And in this case, the NHA and HUDCC will just secure the titles, pass it to you, then the lookout will now be on your shoulder," he said.

Cruz, for her part, said the inter-agency committee must still convene to discuss pricing on May 28.

Arroyo maintained the pricing on socialized housing sites should be based on the zonal value of the area during the issuance of the proclamations.



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'EXPEDITE LAND TITLES FOR POOR'

By Ryan Ponce Pacpaco

SPEAKER Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has urged expediting the process of granting land titles to beneficiaries of urban poor housing that started during her presidency.

Arroyo, a former President, stressed this during last Friday's oversight hearing of the House Committee on Housing and Urban Development chaired by Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Benitez.

Panel members convened to look into several Presidential Proclamations on social housing issued by Arroyo during her administration to ensure that the housing projects move forward at the soonest possible time.

The panel continued with its deliberations on House Resolution (HR) No. 2067, which seeks to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the implementation of Proclamation No. 627, s. 2004.

The Proclamation declared a two-hectare land within Barangay Comembo in Makati City as off-base housing for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Director Jeanette Cruz of the Housing and Urban Development Coordination Council (HUDCC) explained that the National Housing Authority (NHA) was not able to fully exercise their administration over the area because of a special patent that was still not provided by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR).

Florencio Chavez, Land Management Officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) National Capital Region, however said that this could be resolved by a simple letter from the NHA requesting the special patent from their agency. Upon receiving the request, the special patent may be available in a month, according to Chavez.

Meanwhile, Benitez directed Brigadier General Arnold Fernandez of the AFP to submit the list of qualified

beneficiaries to the NHA to ensure that all 295 of them will receive the land titles.

Benitez recommended for the HUDCC and NHA to allow the AFP to administer the land title distribution to the qualified occupants of the property, to which the concerned agencies agreed.

"Whether you give it to whoever is there, that is your lookout. It is designed for your members, for soldiers, for your colleagues. So kung anuman ang gawin ninyo, magre-reflect sa inyo yun. And in this case, NHA and HUDCC will just secure the titles, pass it sa inyo, then the lookout will now be on your shoulder," said Benitez.

Cruz said that the inter-agency committee will need to convene to discuss pricing. The meeting was scheduled on May 28, 2019.

Arroyo stressed that pricing on socialized housing sites should be based on the zonal value of the area during the issuance of the proclamations.

Aside from Proclamation No. 627, the committee also reviewed the status of implementation of the following: (a) Executive No. 48, s. 2001, declaring non-core properties of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) as socialized housing sites; (b) Proclamation No. 391, s. 2003, declaring an area in Barrio Balagbag and Maricban in Pasay City open for disposition to qualified applicants; (c) Proclamation No. 397, s. 2003, reserving the Tala Estate in Caloocan City for socialized housing; and (d) Proclamation No. 1193, s. 2006, reserving a land in Sta. Ana, Manila for relocation site.

As a result of the hearing, the roadblocks that had prevented thousands of urban poor housing beneficiaries from receiving their land titles had been addressed and resolved by the homeowners, the NHA, and government agencies that own the parcels of land.

Awarding the titles had been hampered due to various issues in the process. Arroyo has been trying to speed up the process by conducting oversight hearings.



Red tape stalls return of trash to Canada

Group urges Trudeau to fast-track approval of permits

By **Tonette Orejas**
@ttorejasINQ

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Environmental group EcoWaste Coalition has again written Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, this time to expedite the release of permits so that the Philippine government can return the illegally shipped Canadian garbage on or before May 15.

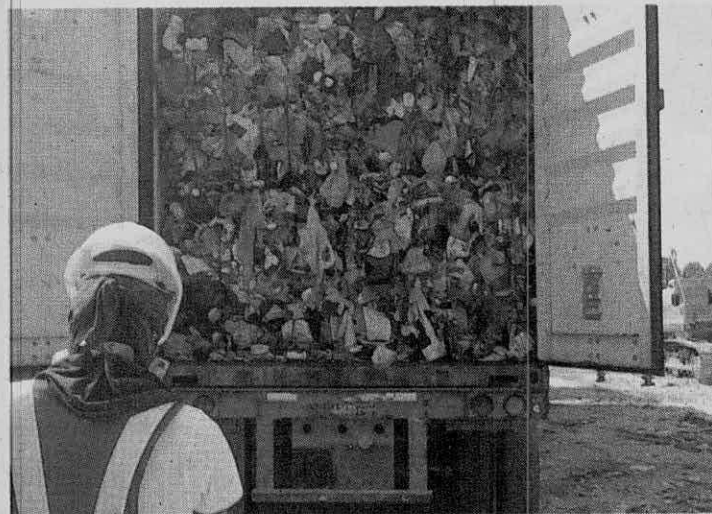
Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III gave the Bureau of Customs (BOC) until May 15 to ship back the trash after President Duterte threatened war on Canada over the environment issue.

“While our government is ready with the necessary documentary requirements to facilitate the reexport as confirmed by our BOC, there is concern that the Canadian side might not meet the May 15 goal for the reshipment of waste to the port of Vancouver,” Aileen Lucero, EcoWaste national coordinator, said in the letter dated May 8.

Lucero appealed to Trudeau to prioritize the processing of the required documents such as the import permit so they can comply with the Philippine government’s May 15 deadline for the reshipment of the garbage.

In a report posted on its website on May 7, the Department of Finance said “bureaucratic red tape in the Canadian government has slowed down the process of reexporting the trash back to Canada.”

The Ontario-based Chronic Inc. exported 103 container vans of trash declared as plastics to Chronic Plastics based in Valen-



BACK TO SENDER The Philippine government expects that the remaining containers of trash from Canada will be returned to that country this month. —PHOTO COURTESY OF MCWM

zuela City and to Live Green Enterprise in 2013 and 2014.

The BOC said 34 containers had been locally disposed of but the Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. (MCWM) said only 26 containers were emptied in its landfill at Barangay Kalangitan in Capas town, Tarlac, in July 2015.

8 containers missing

Eight more containers were taken to Kalangitan but MCWM rejected these and could not recall who took these back.

The BOC did not give information on these eight containers. It could only account for 69 containers, 67 of which were held inside the Subic Bay International Terminal Corp. Two others were impounded at the Manila International Container Terminal.

Mr. Duterte issued what sounded like an ultimatum to

Canada when he said on April 23 that he would “accompany the ship that would bring back the trash to Canada.”

Lucero thanked the Canadian government for “heeding the demand of our own government and people to finally resolve the illegal waste traffic of 103 containers that has soured relations between our countries.”

She added: “The removal of your waste in our land will put this long-standing dumping controversy to a close, and open up a new chapter in our nations’ bilateral relations.”

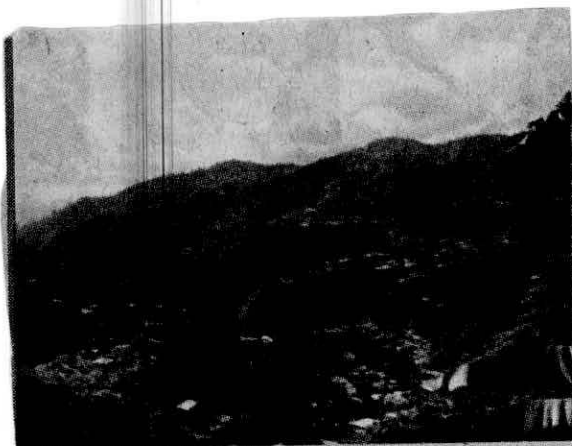
EcoWaste also pressed the BOC to tell what happened to the eight containers. “The authorities need to tell the public when, where and how the waste were disposed of and who paid for its disposal. We, the people, have the right to know,” Lucero said. INQ



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AN AERIAL view of Compostela Valley.

DAVAO: COMPOSTELA VALLEY

Chinese envoy proposes Longyan-ComVal sisterhood for mining development

A SISTERHOOD agreement between Longyan in China and Compostela Valley (ComVal) province, both rich in mineral resources, has been proposed, according to Davao City-based Chinese Consul General Li Lin. "Longyan is a city in China that is advanced in mining and it has mining company that is considered the world's biggest focusing on gold and copper mining, and apart from that, the machine industry and other machineries are advanced," Mr. Li told *BusinessWorld*. Officials from the Davao consulate and a delegation of Chinese businessmen participated in ComVal's first De Oro Business and Investment Conference held early March. The province raked in P1.2 billion in investment pledges during the event, the biggest of which is a P500-million property development plan from China State Construction Engineering Group. Mr. Li said they are planning to invite Longyan's government representatives to visit and meet with ComVal's provincial officials, or vice-versa. ComVal is rich in gold and silver reserves, with 10 out of the 11 municipalities hosting both large- and small-scale mining sites. A 1998 report by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional office placed the province's gold deposits at 36,328,699 metric tons, one of the biggest in the world. — **Maya M. Padillo**

BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS: WOWIE M. DULLER



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All set for country's biggest dental event

THE Organizing Committee of the Philippine Dental Association's 110th Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting has announced that all is set for the five-day convention from May 13-17, 2019 at the SMX Convention Center, Seashell Drive, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City.

With its theme, "Collaboration Towards Dynamic Professionalism", the convention will feature Philippine Dental Association and Asian College of Maxillofacial Surgeons Past President Dr. Mario E. Esquillo as keynote speaker during the PDA Presidents' Night on May 17, in cooperation with

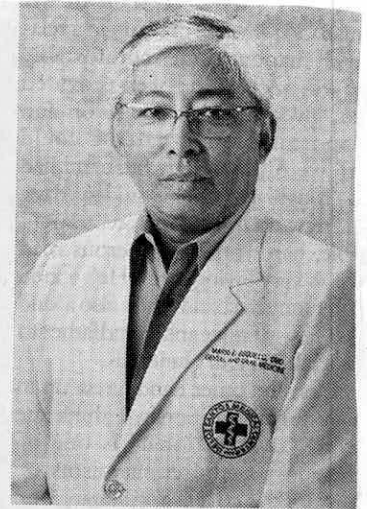
Philusa Corporation. The Inducting Officer is Dr. Leo Gerald de Castro, Past PDA President and Past House of Delegates Speaker.

Among the major topics to be tackled in the plenary sessions are the following: "A Biomimetic Approach to Prosthodontic Planning, Treatment and Ceramic Selection" by Dr. John Sorensen; "The Alarming Rise of HIV and the Need for Oral Health Care Awareness" by Dr. Gelza Zabat; "Antibiotic Surveillance: Antimicrobial Stewardship" by Dr. Maria Margarita M. Lota; and "Integrating Health Financing in the

Delivery of Dental Services-An Update on Philhealth Benefits" by Dr. Florentino Afable.

Aside from these topics, the scientific session will also have Basic Life Support Training Programs, Managing Head Officers Training for DENR and A Forum on Campaign Against Illegal Practice of Dentistry.

Dr. Stephen B. Almonte, PDA President-elect, said the event, which will also feature trade exhibits, is also supported by its partners, Dentsply-Sirona Philippines, United Laboratories Inc, Lamoijan Corporation, Metrodental, Philusa Corporation and Lead dent.



Dr. Mario E. Esquillo



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A broader look at today's business

U.N. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WARNS OF EFFECTS OF RISING SAND USE

GENEVA—The UN's environment program is warning about the overuse of sand resources, saying a three-fold increase in demand over the last 20 years amid increasing population, urbanization and building work has contributed to beach erosion, flooding and drought.

In a new report launched last week, the United Nations Environment Program (Unep) urged a rethink about the use of the world's second-most extracted resource, after water, by industry, governments and the public.

The Unep said demand for sand and gravel amounts to 40 billion to 50 billion tons every

year, and pointed to the need for conservation, recycling and a look for alternatives like sawdust.

Pascal Peduzzi, director of a Unep program with the University of Geneva, said more thought needs to be taken: "We aren't very smart about how we use sand, because we think: This is just sand." **AP**



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Asean strategizes to meet 2050 Vision on biodiversity

It is an aspiration to reform the world as we know it, to be the one that we wish for it to be.

This is how the vision for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework was described by Dr. Suneetha Subramanian of the United Nations University-International Institute of Global Health during the Asean Regional Consultation Meeting on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in Manila recently.

Organized by the Asean Centre for Biodiversity, with support from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (BD), the consultation meeting was attended by representatives from the Asean member-states (AMS) and from international nongovernment organizations, such as Food and Agriculture Organization, Wildlife Conservation Society and Tebtebba Foundation.

The meeting was supported by the Asean through the Asean Development Fund (ADF).

With the aim of assisting the AMS in identifying priority actions in implementing their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and in the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020 and beyond, the meeting identified milestones for sustainability transition to happen in the region onwards to fulfill the 2050 Vision.

The 2050 Vision, as decided upon by Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, is "Living in Harmony with Nature."

"In all consultations, whether regional or national, you may want to consider these questions: Are the current targets still relevant? Do we need to have new biodiversity targets? Or do we need to keep the Aichi Targets, add new ones and increase the level of ambition?" asked Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the ACB, to the participants during her opening message.

She added: "One day is not enough to summarize the achievements and gaps in meeting the Aichi Targets, but this workshop should inspire us to sustain consultations at the national level. Today, we are focusing on opportunities and challenges related to ecosystems agriculture, business, and indigenous peoples and local communities."

"What needs to transform within Asean to achieve the 2050 goals?" was the guiding question given to the participants during one of the workshop sessions.

After the participants' consultation within their respective workshop groups, it surfaced that there is a need for transformation of mindset such that Asean may be aware of what it can provide to the region, given its myriad of challenges post-2020.

The consultation workshop will have a second round of discussions in Lao PDR. The commitments that will be gathered during these two activities will be considered part of elements of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which in turn is expected to be adopted at the CBD COP 15 in 2020.

Meanwhile, coinciding with the celebration of the Earth Day 2019, the Regional Workshop on Accelerating Aichi Target 11 Implementation in the East and Southeast Asia regions was held with representatives from AMS and from international nongovernment organizations in attendance.

The capacity-building work-

shop held in Manila recently was one of the activities conducted under the cooperation between the ACB and the National Biodiversity Authority of India (NBA-India). The workshop was supported by the ADF and the Secretariat of the CBD.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, or simply Aichi Target 11, states that, "By 2020, at least 17 percent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes."

The two-day workshop aimed to gather updates in achieving the target on the coverage of terrestrial and marine protected areas in the East and Southeast Asian regions, and engage other partners and in assessing progress on ecological representation, areas important for biodiversity and ecosystems services, and other effective area-based conservation measures, among others.

Dr. Jeyaram Soundrapandi of NBA-India, served as one of the resource speakers for the workshop, along with experts from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Wildlife Conservation Society, Fauna and Flora International, World Wildlife Fund, Haribon Foundation, Tebtebba Foundation and United Nations University-International Institute for Global Health.

One of the highlights of the workshop was the development of national Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely Action Plans to accelerate implementation of Aichi Target 11 in 2020.



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A broader look at today's business

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Asean strategizes to meet 2050 vision on biodiversity

The AMS identified activities they will prioritize until October 2020. Some of the action plans include to increase the number of protected areas, stop perimeter development for mining projects, and promote sustainable use of non-timber and forest products, among others.

Lim highlighted the alarming rate of species extinction. However, she showcased the activities that the ACB has been undertaking to address and find solutions for these concerns.

"We barely have 18 months before COP 15—our deadline to meet the Aichi Targets. Let us use this workshop to strengthen our resolve to work together to achieve Target 11," Lim said.

She added, "the ACB reiterates its commitment to regional cooperation to ensure that biodiversity, through achievement of Aichi Target 11, is mainstreamed in all development sectors, ensuring that our planet's species and their ecosystems will survive and continue to contribute to sustainable development."

The ACB was established in 2005 by the AMS as a response to biodiversity loss in the region. It supports and coordinates the implementation of activities in the Asean leading to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, for the benefit of the region and the AMS. The ACB was tasked by the CBD Secretariat as the node for the Regional Implementation Support Network on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets on protected areas and endangered species.



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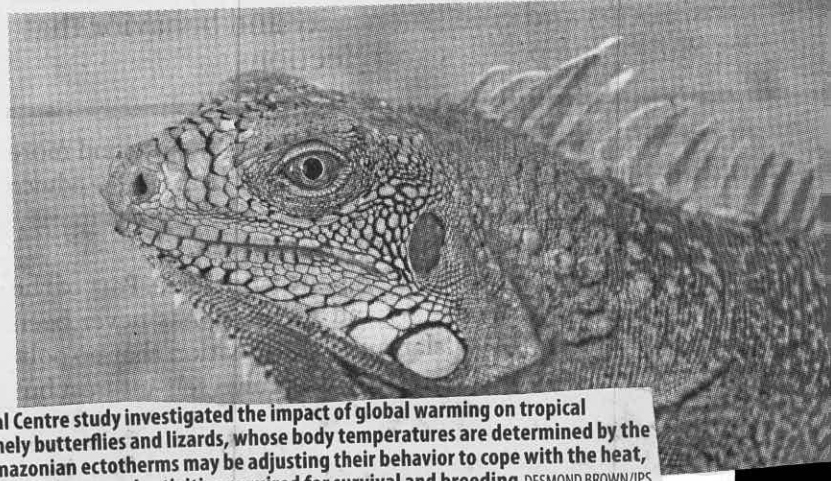
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A broader look at today's business

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Loss of biodiversity puts current, future generations at risk

PARIS—An alarming report about the massive loss of biodiversity around the world warns that future generations will be at risk if urgent action isn't taken to protect the more than 1 million species of plants and animals threatened with extinction.



A CEIBA Biological Centre study investigated the impact of global warming on tropical ectotherms, namely butterflies and lizards, whose body temperatures are determined by the environment. Amazonian ectotherms may be adjusting their behavior to cope with the heat, but at the expense of the normal activities required for survival and breeding. DESMOND BROWN/IPS

Such extinction could happen "within decades" and could affect 40 percent of amphibian species, more than a third of marine mammals and nearly 33 percent of reef-forming corals, said the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

"Biodiversity is important for human well-being, and we humans are destroying it," Sir Robert Watson, the outgoing chairman of the IPBES, when the report was launched last week.

The body, formed in 2012 and comprising more than 130 government members, stated in its comprehensive review that nature is "declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history."

The IPBES Global Assessment Report added that the rate of species's extinction is also "accelerating," and that this entails serious effects for the world's human population as well, with an increasing impact on food, water and energy security, and on peace and stability.

"It's a security issue in so far as the loss of natural resources, especially in poor, developing countries, which can lead to conflict," Watson said.

In a media briefing at the end of a six-day plenary—hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) in Paris—scientists called for bold measures at all levels of society to save the planet's biodiversity, putting the issue at the same level of urgency as climate change.

"Unless we act now, we will undermine human well-being for current and future generations," Watson said. "It's a moral issue: We should not destroy nature. And it's an ethical issue because the loss of biodiversity hurts the poorest of people, further exacerbating an already inequitable world."

While climate change up to now has not been a dominant factor in biodiversity loss, it is expected to equal or surpass the issues of overfishing, pollution of sea and land (with toxic waste, plastics and heavy metals), the spread of invasive species decimating native ones, and the destruction of natural forests, the IPBES said.

Scientists said the "picture is less clear" for insect species, but the available evidence points to about 10 percent being threatened.

IPBES experts further state that at least 680 "vertebrate species" (or species with backbone) have been driven to extinction since the 16th century, and more than 9 percent of all domesticated breeds of mammals used for food and agriculture had become extinct by 2016, with at least 1,000 more breeds still threatened.

This has happened at a faster rate than in previous eras.

The 455 experts involved in the report analyzed upwards of 15,000 scientific papers among their fields of research, said IPBES Executive Secretary Anne Larigauderie. They ranked the five "direct drivers of change in nature with the largest relative global impacts" on the world's estimated 8 million species.

These five drivers are: changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change; pollution; and invasive alien species, according to the report.

Ocean pollution, with toxic waste and tons of plastic devastating marine life, is now common knowledge, but perhaps people are less aware that the use of fertilizers has created some 400 coastal ecosystem "dead zones," affecting 245,000 square kilometers (sq km).

Despite the disturbing statistics, Larigauderie said the IPBES still wished to send a message of hope.

"We don't want that people feel discouraged, that there's nothing that can be done, that we've lost the battle, because we've not," she said.

Conservation efforts over the past decade have reduced the extinction risks for mammals and birds in 109 countries, and more than a hundred highly threatened birds, mammals and reptiles are



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Loss of biodiversity puts current, future generations at risk

"estimated to have benefitted from the eradication of invasive mammals on islands," according to IPBES experts.

They emphasized that there was still time to give nature a chance to recover if the world takes transformative action for global sustainability, including the use of renewables, ecological farming methods and reducing run-off pollution into oceans.

"What we offer is scientific evidence never put together before," said Eduardo S. Brondizio, one of the three cochairman of the report and professor of anthropology at Indiana University.

"This is evidence that can be taken seriously, and people can be awakened to take action," Brondizio told IPS. "This report is important for change."

During the briefing at Unesco, Brondizio had clear words for society at large and for the financial sectors and policy-makers.

"We need to change our narratives," he said. "Both our individual narratives that associate wasteful consumption with quality of life and with status, and the narratives of the economic systems that still consider that environmental degradation and social inequality are inevitable outcomes of economic growth."

"Economic growth is a means and not an end," he added. "We need to look for the quality of life of the planet."

He said that "positive incentives" were required to "move away from harmful subsidies" that were contributing to unsustainable business models.

The report says there has been a 15-percent increase in global per-capita consumption of materials since 1980 and a 300-percent increase in food crop production

since 1970, reducing the habitat of some species and causing pollution through fertilizers.

Meanwhile, 85 percent of wetlands present in 1700 had been lost by 2000, and 3.5 percent of domesticated breeds of birds were extinct by 2016.

Among the "cross-sectoral solutions" that the report proposes, Brondizio highlighted complementary and interdependent approaches to food production and conservation, sustainable fisheries, land-based climate-change mitigation and "nature-based" initiatives in cities—which are crucial for overall sustainability.

He pointed out that over the past decade, the "largest portion of urban growth has been in the urban South," with the largest portion being among the poor who live in cities with stressed environmental issues.

If adequate action isn't taken to halt the loss of biodiversity in cities, to deal with climate change and to improve the quality of life for urban residents, the negative impact will be globally felt, he said.

Brondizio equally called for the need to recognize the knowledge, innovations and practices, institutions and values of indigenous peoples and local communities.

"They are equal partners in this journey, and we need their inclusion and participation in environmental governance," he said.

Also addressing the report, Unesco's Director General Audrey Azoulay stressed the importance of education in ensuring sustainability and of sharing knowledge to heighten awareness.

"Following the adoption of this historic report, no one will be able to claim that they did not know. We can no longer continue to destroy the diversity of life. This is

our responsibility toward future generations," she said.

Here are four ways humanity depends on nature, according to the report and scientists:

Food

NEARLY all food comes directly from nature, said report coauthor Kai Chan, an environmental scientist at the University of British Columbia. Even though overall the world is growing more food, pressure on crops from pollution, habitat changes and other forces has made prices soar and even caused food riots in Latin America, he said.

Pollinators across the globe, not just bees, are in decline. Three quarters of the world's food crops, including fruits, vegetables, coffee and cocoa, require pollination. The report said pollinator loss could

cost the world \$285 billion to \$577 billion a year.

Medicine and health

ABOUT 70 percent of the drugs used to fight cancer "are natural or are synthetic products inspired by nature," the report said. About 4 billion people rely primarily on natural medicines.

George Mason University ecologist Thomas Lovejoy points to a single heat-thriving microbe that comes out of Yellowstone National Park's hot springs. Pieces of its genetic code are the key to a scientific technique called polymerase chain reaction that is used for medical, genetic and forensic tests and much of modern biotechnology.

"Nature underpins all dimensions of human health," the report said.

“Biodiversity is important for human well-being, and we humans are destroying it.”—WATSON



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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Loss of biodiversity puts current, future generations at risk

Fighting climate change

THE world's forests and oceans suck nearly 6.2 billion tons (5.6 billion metric tons) of heat-trapping carbon dioxide out of the air each year, the report said. That's about 60 percent of what humans produce through burning fossil fuels.

Earth would be warming more and faster without forests and oceans, scientists said.

Climate change and biodiversity loss are equally huge environmental problems that make each other worse, report Chairman Watson said.

Storm protection

PEOPLE can build expensive time-consuming sea walls to fight the rise of oceans from climate change, or the same protection can be offered by coastal mangroves, the report said.

But mangroves are in trouble, Watson said.

"They often act as a nursery for fisheries basically," Watson said. "And they clearly help to protect land from severe weather events and storm surges from the sea."

The problem, he said, is that many mangrove systems have been converted to shrimp farms, leaving the land vulnerable to storm surges and devoid of biodiversity.

Living planet

PEOPLE may think of biodiversity or endangered species as something detached from their daily lives. But those people don't understand that Earth functions as a "living planet" with many parts dependent on each other, George Mason's Lovejoy said.

"We're here in Paris. Can you experience Paris without nature?" asked Brondizio. "Every place we turn here we see biodiversity exposed to us in the streets. When we open the tap here, we drink excellent water. When we look at the parks, when we look at the atmosphere here in the city, it's all about nature."

A. D. McKenzie/IPS and AP



Maine is 1st state to ban single-use foam containers

AUGUSTA, Maine—Maine has banned single-use food and drink containers made from polystyrene foam, commonly known as Styrofoam, becoming the first state to do so.

Democratic Gov. Janet Mills signed the bill, which takes effect in 2021, into law this past week.

Environmental groups have sought such bans amid rising public awareness of throwaway plastic that accumulates in the oceans, but the Natural Resources Council of Maine said that Maine is the first state to enact a ban.

Similar legislation passed Maryland's Legislature in April, but it's unclear whether that state's Republican governor, Larry Hogan, will sign it.

Oregon, Vermont and Connecticut are also considering banning the containers, and dozens of communities from Berkeley, California, to New York City have already passed their own bans, some of which date back to the late 1980s. Several companies, such as Dunkin' and McDonald's, have also pledged to or have already eliminated foam cups.

In December, European Union

officials agreed to ban some single-use plastics, such as polystyrene food and beverage containers, in an effort to curb marine pollution.

"With the threats posed by plastic pollution becoming more apparent, costly, and even deadly to wildlife, we need to be doing everything possible to limit our use and better manage our single-use plastics—starting with eliminating the use of unnecessary forms like plastic foam," said Sarah Lakeman, Sustainable Maine director at the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

Mills called it an "important step forward in protecting our environment." The governor said it creates consistency for businesses while providing time to adjust.

The law will prohibit "covered establishments"—like restaurants and grocery stores—from using polystyrene containers. Hospitals, seafood shippers and state-funded meals-on-wheels programs will be exempt.

Maine has banned foam food containers at state facilities and functions since 1993. Some communities in the state had also already banned polystyrene.

The legislation faced strong opposition from the plastics industry, food service container manufacturers and Maine business and tourism groups, which argued polystyrene is economical and a better than other materials at keeping food from spoiling.

Such industry groups argue Maine's new law doesn't mean consumers will stop littering and doesn't ensure alternatives will be better for the environment.

"It is our sincere hope that Governor Mills and the Maine Legislature will reconsider this legislation next year after they see how it will negatively impact the environment and local businesses and consumers," said Omar Terrie, a director in the American Chemistry Council's plastics division.

The plastics industry also says they're taking voluntary steps to make plastic packaging reusable, recyclable or recoverable by 2030. The industry in January committed to spending \$1.5 billion over five years to end plastic waste through a new nonprofit, The Alliance to End Plastic Waste, according to American Chemistry Council lobbyist Margaret Gorman.

"All packaging leaves an environmental footprint regardless of the material type," Gorman told Maine lawmakers in written testimony. **AP**



SHIPPING CONTAMINATED, UNRECYCLABLE PLASTIC WASTES

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS HAIL AMENDMENT TO BASEL CONVENTION

By Jhesset O. Enano
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More than 180 countries agreed last week in Geneva to amend the Basel Convention so that exporters must first obtain the consent of receiving countries before shipping contaminated, mixed or unrecyclable plastic waste.

The Basel Convention is a global treaty that controls the international movement of hazardous waste.

Environmental groups hailed the amendment agreed on May 10, calling it a triumph for developing countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, which they said have become dumping grounds of plastic scrap from rich nations.

Right to refuse

At present, rich nations can send their plastic waste to private companies in developing countries without the need for government approval.

Seen as a step to curb the plastic pollution crisis, the

amendment will make the trade in plastic waste more transparent and better regulated.

International group Break Free from Plastic said Norway's proposed amendments to the convention provided countries with the "right to refuse" unwanted or unmanageable plastic waste.

Some 100 million tons of plastic are now in the oceans, with 80 to 90 percent of which coming from land-based sources, according to UN data.

The issue on plastic waste was highlighted anew after China banned imports of plastic waste in 2018, resulting in developing nations receiving a huge volume of waste that is difficult or even impossible to recycle.

Reports and data analyses done by Greenpeace East Asia and the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives found that Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand were flooded with plastic trash, following China's ban.

For years, China received the

bulk of scrap plastic from around the world to process much of it into higher quality material that could be used by manufacturers.

The surge in the flow of plastics to poorer nations reportedly led to illegal recycling operations, open burning, water contamination and crop diseases linked to environmental pollution.

Top exporters

Top exporters of plastic scraps, according to Greenpeace, include the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and Japan.

While not a party to the Basel Convention and therefore has no vote, the United States argued against the amendment, environmental groups said.

The decision demonstrates that nations are "finally catching up with the urgency and magnitude" of the plastic pollution issue, said David Azoulay, environmental health director of the Center for International Environmental Law.

"We are encouraged by the

decision of the Basel Convention as we look to the future bold decisions that will be needed to tackle plastic pollution at its roots, starting with reducing production," he said.

Crucial first step

Von Hernandez, global coordinator of Break Free from Plastic, said the amendment to the Basel Convention was a crucial first step toward stopping the use of developing countries as a dumping ground for the world's plastic waste.

"Recycling will not be enough, however. Ultimately, production of plastics has to be significantly curtailed to effectively resolve the plastic pollution crisis," he said.

The EcoWaste Coalition has called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to ban waste importation, following President Duterte's pronouncement against receiving trash from other nations. INQ