

DATE : 03 SEP 2019

DAY : Tuesday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



**ROTARY'S AID.** Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu (left) shares a light moment with Rotary Club of Manila president Jack Rodriguez (center) and RCM director and Manila Yacht Club Commodore Robert Lim Joseph at the club's weekly meeting at the Elks Club in Makati. Cimatu appealed to Rotary Clubs in Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, Pampanga, Bulacan, Zambales, Subic to support the cleanup of Manila Bay and the esteros, rivers and canals that pour into it.



## Boracay receives cleaning equipment from Coke

The Coca-Cola System is proud to be part of this endeavor, which is testament to the possibilities realized by strong, genuine partnerships between stakeholders with a common goal

Through its World Without Waste vision, the Coca-Cola System in the Philippines has donated a state-of-the-art cleaning tractor to the municipality of Malay, Aklan, which the local government will use to keep the beaches of Boracay clean.

Gareth McGeown, CEO & president of Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines (CCBPI) said the donation is part of the company's collaboration with the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF). It also reflects Coca-Cola's commitment to partnering with the government in realizing the country's goals towards environmental preservation.

"This endeavor also reaffirms our dedication to attaining the vision of a World Without Waste, and we are committed to working with all stakeholders toward realizing this goal. We are grateful for this opportunity to join hands and work earnestly with like-minded institutions in government," he said.

CCBPI and the Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines last week held a ceremonial turnover of the equipment to the Municipal Government of Aklan and the members of BIATF represented by Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu and Tourism Undersecretary Edwin Enrile.

At the ceremony, Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines president Cecile Alcantara described this inter-agency, inter-sector collaboration as "a significant development" that could go a long way in addressing an urgent concern regarding one of the Philippines' most beloved beaches.

"The Coca-Cola System is proud to be part of this endeavor, which is testament to the possibilities realized by strong, genuine partnerships between stakeholders with a common goal," she said.

Manufactured in the US by Surf Rake by H. Barber and Sons, the equipment donated by Coca-Cola is said to be the most popular tractor-towed beach-cleaner in the world.



# DENR designated lead agency of Pasig River rehab body

By **ALEXIS ROMERO**

President Duterte has designated the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as lead agency of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) to ensure close coordination of

measures to rehabilitate Metro Manila's major waterways.

The change in the composition for the commission is contained in Executive Order 90 signed by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea by authority of Duterte last Wednesday.

"There is a need for close coordination and oversight of all ongoing efforts of the national government relative to the clean-up and rehabilitation of major waterways in Metro Manila," the order read.

The order amended EO

No. 54 issued in 1999 which created the PRRC, an inter-agency body mandated to ensure that Pasig River is rehabilitated to its historically pristine condition conducive to transport, recreation and tourism.

Under the 1999 order, the

chair of the commission was the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) while the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) was the co-chair.

The new EO retained MMDA as co-chair of the commission. The DBM re-

mains as a member along with the public works, tourism, transportation, finance, trade, defense, interior and local government and human settlements departments; the Office of the Executive Secretary and three private sector representatives.



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## Duterte transfers Pasig River body to DENR

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has designated the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as co-chairman of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC).

Duterte, through Executive Order (EO) 90, which was signed on August 28, transferred the chairmanship of the rehabilitation body to the DENR from the Department of

Budget and Management.

The order retains the Metro Manila Development Authority as co-chairman of the commission. EO 90, a copy of which was released by the Palace on Monday, took effect immediately.

The PRRC, created in January 1999 by virtue of EO 54, is an inter-agency body tasked to ensure that the Pasig River is rehabilitated

to its historically pristine condition conducive to the propagation of fishes and other aquatic resources, transport, recreation and tourism.

The 27-kilometer Pasig River connects the Laguna de Bay and Manila Bay. The river traverses the cities of Manila, Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Taguig, and the municipalities of Pateros in Metro

Manila and Taytay in Rizal.

Other members of the commission include the Office of the Executive Secretary and the departments of Public Works, Tourism, Transportation, Finance, Trade and Industry, Defense, Interior and Local Government, and Human Settlements and Urban Development.

**CATHERINE S. VALENTE**



# DENR has control over Pasig River rehab

By Kristina Maralit

The chairmanship of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) has been transferred to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), a circular released yesterday by Malacañang disclosed.

President Rodrigo Duterte issued the directive with the signing of Executive Order (EO) 90 last 28 August.

Under the circular, the DENR shall take over from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in overseeing the PRRC, which was formed through an EO issued on 6 January 1999 by former President Joseph Estrada.

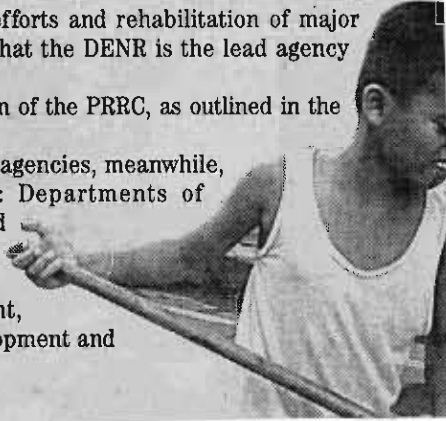
The Estrada EO tapped the Budget secretary and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) general manager to be the chair and co-chair of the said body.

The President, as stated in EO 90, made the transfer to have "close coordination and oversight" of clean-up efforts and rehabilitation of major waterways around the metropolis, given that the DENR is the lead agency of the Manila Bay Task Force.

The MMDA shall remain the co-chairman of the PRRC, as outlined in the Duterte-issued EO.

Secretaries and heads of the following agencies, meanwhile, will serve as members of the PRRC: Departments of Public Works and Highways, Budget and Management, Tourism, Transportation, Finance, Trade and Industry, National Defense, Interior and Local Government, and Human Settlements and Urban Development and Office of the Executive Secretary.

EO 90 takes effect immediately.





### **Pasig River rehab agency now chaired by DENR**

PRESIDENT RODRIGO R. Duterte has issued an executive order transferring the chairmanship of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The EO, signed on Aug. 28, cited Republic Act No. 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 mandating the DENR to exercise jurisdiction over all aspects of water pollution, and to take measures, using available methods and technologies, to prevent and abate such pollution. The EO also noted that the DENR, through an administrative order, has been tasked to lead the Manila Bay Task Force in improving the water quality of the Manila Bay. There is a need for close coordination and oversight of all ongoing efforts relative to the clean-up and rehabilitation of major waterways in Metro Manila, the EO said. — **Arjay L. Ballinbin**



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## PRRC chairmanship transferred to DENR

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has transferred the chairmanship of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources which used to be headed by the Department of Budget and Management.

Under Executive Order 90, the inter-agency committee mandated to rehabilitate Pasig River will be chaired by the Environment secretary. Meanwhile, the head of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority will serve as co-chairman.

The commission will be composed of the secretaries of Public Works and Highways, Budget and Management, Tourism, Transportation, Finance, Trade and Industry, National Defense, and Interior and Local Government.

**MJ Blancaflor**





## Pasig River rehab inilipat sa DENR

ANG Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ang hahawak at mangangasiwa sa Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC).

Ito ay makaraang ilipat ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa DENR ang nasabing pamumuno base sa bisa ng Executive Order 90 na kanyang nilagdaan kamakailan.

Nakapaloob sa EO na tatayong chairman ng PRRC ang kalihim ng DENR samantalang co-chairman naman ang pinuno ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Maupong miyembro ng komisyon ang kalihim o pinuno ng Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Budget and

Management (DBM), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) at iba pang mga ahensya ng pamahalaan.

Iniuutos din ng EO 90 ang mahigpit na pag-uugnayan at pagbabantay ng mga ahensyang naatasang mangasiwa sa rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River at iba pang major waterways sa Metro Manila para matiyak na maiwasan ang polusyon.

Pinagagamit naman sa DENR ang lahat ng paraan at kinakailangang teknolohiya o kagamitan para maibalik sa dati nitong ganda at kalinisan ang Pasig River. **(Dolly Cabreza/Prince Golez)**



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## PASIG RIVER REHAB SA DENR NA

**INILIPAT** ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pamamahala ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) mula sa Department of Budget and Management.

Base sa Executive Order No. 90 na nilagdaan ni Pangulong Duterte noong Agosto 28, 2019, binabaligtad nito ang Executive Order No. 54 na pinalabas noong 1999.

Sa bagong kautusan ng Pangulong Duterte, magiging chairman ng PRRC ang kalihim ng DENR habang magiging co-chairman naman ang chairman ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Magsisilbing miyembro ng komisyon ang mga kalihim o kinatawan ng Department of Public Works and Highways, DBM, Department of Tour-

ism, Department of Transportation, Department of Finance, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of National Defense, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, Office of the Executive Secretary, at tatlong kinatawan mula sa pribadong sektor na itatalaga ng Pangulo.

Sinabi pa sa kautusan ang mahigpit na pag-uugnayan at pagbabantay ng mga ahensiyang naatasang mangasiwa sa rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River at iba pang major waterways sa Metro Manila upang matiyak na maiwasan ang polusyon.

Pinagagamit naman sa DENR ang lahat ng paraan at available technologies o kagamitan upang maibalik sa dati nitong ganda at kalinisan ang Pasig River.

**EVELYN QUIROZ**



## Air quality is quality of life



Thomas M. Orbos

### STREET TALK

I CAME across an article a few months ago praising several of our cities in the Philippines having landed in the top list of cities in Southeast Asia in terms of clean air. Good to hear. However, a separate article that came out around the same time admitted that Metro Manila and other Philippine cities had little or outmoded air monitoring systems, implying the inaccuracy of the air cleanliness rankings.

Air quality is a matter of national concern given the rise of health costs, mostly respiratory illnesses, resulting from degrading air quality. In 2018, the country had the third-highest number of deaths due to air pollution, according to the World Health Organization. Another study equated health costs to around 1.5 percent of our gross domestic product.

Transport accounts for 34 percent of all energy related greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions in the air we breathe in Metro Manila. Hence, the real need to push for low carbon transport and programs.

And of all the government climate-change initiatives, three mobility programs come to mind because of their strategic importance to our climate-change efforts. The first one is the Public Utility Modernization Program, mistakenly heralded as the program solely phasing out the jeepneys. But it is not just about the vehicles. Yes, there is the required shift to the cleaner Euro 4 engines and the vehicle design where passenger capacity increases to almost double the present capacity. There is also the required consolidation of operations and the rationalization of

routes. All of these should result in more efficient jeepers trips on the road. Significant, as these jeepers currently account for 40 percent of all motorized transport trips nationwide.

Another initiative to be implemented in the next coming months is the mandatory Motor Vehicle Inspection program of the Land Transportation Office. The program aims to check the roadworthiness of all vehicles prior to registration. This will eradicate the present unreliable smoke emission-testing requirement that we have right now. With this program, all motor vehicles will have to pass a roadworthiness test of more than 50 items to include proper suspension, brakes, lights and—smoke emission.

But what could make the real difference is the push for more walkable areas. In a particular study that centered on city bus trips on Edsa, it was found out that a majority of the commuters took the bus for trips of less than 3 kilometers. Three kilometers! That's just around a 30-minute leisurely walk. For a biker, even easier. But that is if you have the space to walk or bike on. Fortunately, there is a breathe of fresh air as we see the sustained campaign

of the DILG to clear the roadways and sidewalks. There are also several programs on the pipeline by the DENR, DPWH, DOTr, and the MMDA that are pedestrian-centered, consisting of elevated walkways, bike lanes and open spaces. This should be coming soon. More walkable space means less carbon emissions, less traffic congestions and better personal health. Plus, it is definitely cheaper to build and maintain.

With all the heated discussions we are currently having on solving traffic—volume reduction, segregated lanes, illegal parking, where to put the terminals, and even making Edsa one way, etc.; maybe it is just really going back to the basic set of mobility—that is walking, even on the short distances, that we can have a less congested, pleasant commuter experience and a cleaner air environment for us and for future generations.

*Thomas "Tim" Orbos was former DOTr undersecretary for Roads and general manager of the MMDA. He is currently undertaking further studies at the McCourt School of Public Policy of Georgetown University. He can be reached via e-mail at: thomas\_orbos@sloan.mit.edu*



## LAGUNA WATER PATULOY NA SUMUSUPORTA SA DENR SA PAGTUGON SA POLUSYON SA HANGIN

ANG Laguna Water, kasama ang iba nitong kompanya, Estate Water, ay patuloy na sumusuporta sa pagpapanatili ng kapaligiran sa pamamagitan ng pag-ambag sa proyekto ng Adopt An Air Quality Monitoring Station ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Management Bureau Region IV-A Calabarzon (DENR IV-A).

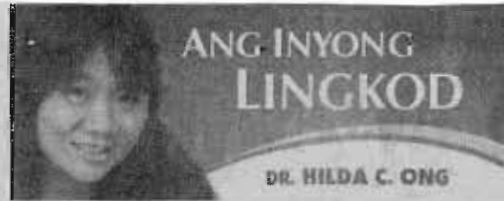
Ang dalawang kompanya ng tubig ay nagbigay ng isang 55-pulgadang vertical type touch digital signage, isang kagamitan na magiging bahagi ng Data Management Center Hardware para sa umiiral na Differential Optical Absorption Spectroscopy Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (DOAS-CAAQMS) na matatagpuan sa Santa Rosa, Biñan at Antipolo City. Ito ay

magsisiyabing isang public information system na magpapakita ng real time data mula sa DENR-EMB IV-A's air quality monitoring stations.

Bilang bahagi ng programang pangkapaligiran, ang DENR-EMB IV-A ay nagtataguyod ng malinis na hangin sa pamamagitan ng pag-monitor ng kalidad ng hangin, na sumusukat sa dami ng polusyon at ang average na kadalisan ng kapaligiran.

Katuwang ng ahensya ang iba't ibang mga pribadong kompanya sa itinayong mga kagamitan na makatutulong sa pagsubaybay sa kalidad ng hangin sa buong bansa.

Binigyan-diin ng ahensya ang kahalagahan sa donasyon ng kagamitan dahil magagamit ito sa pagkolekta at



DR. HILDA C. ONG

paghahatid ng mga datos na makatutulong makamtan ang tamang pangangalaga sa kailikasan.

"We need to be properly informed about what is happening around us, especially to our environment. We all have a responsibility to protect and preserve our resources, not only for us but most especially for the future gene-

rations," sabi ni Laguna Water General Manager Shoebe Caong.

Matagal na sinusuportahan ng Laguna Water ang iba't ibang mga proyekto at programa ng DENR. Ngayong taon, lumahok din ang kompanya sa programa ng pagtatanim ng puno ng DENR sa Mt. Batulao, Nasugbu Batangas na ginanap noong Hunyo.





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**RIVER REHAB** Youngsters hired by barangay officials remove the garbage clogging the Estero de Binondo in Manila, one of the waterways linked to the Pasig River. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

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**FLOATING DEBRIS.** Some residents of Brgy. 293 in Binondo, Manila have helped clean up various types of floating debris along the Muelle De Binondo River to prevent flooding of the river. **Norman Cruz**



**NAGTULONG-TULONG** sa paglilinis ng mga basurang palutang-lutang sa Muelle de Binondo River ang ilang residente ng Brgy. 293 sa Binondo, Maynila upang maiwasan ang pagbara ng mga ito sa estero. **JHUN MABANAG**



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION**

# CUSTOMS UNIT FORMED TO STOP IMPORT OF HAZARDOUS WASTE

**By Daxim L. Lucas**  
@daxINQ

The Bureau of Customs has created an Environmental Protection and Compliance Division (EPCD) to monitor and control the entry of hazardous substances and other wastes into the country, in response to a recent directive by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III.

The creation of the EPCD was in response to the Finance chief's order last July to BOC Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero to form a special unit at the agency to guard against the entry of waste materials that other countries are attempting to dump in the Philippines.

"This 'strike team' should work in tandem with other concerned government agen-

cies in mounting a 24/7 watch over, and prevent, the entry of hazardous or toxic wastes into our country, in keeping with our environmental laws," Dominguez said.

Dominguez issued the directive during a recent Department of Finance executive committee meeting after Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of the organization's member-states, not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground for the hazardous materials and wastes of other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow customs officials from Asean reacted positively to his proposal.

In response, Dominguez said during the DOF Execom meeting that "it's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs [bureau] to really act on this garbage issue."

Following Dominguez's directive, Guerrero issued Customs Memorandum Order No. 38-2019, institutionalizing the EPCD, which will become a permanent and specialized unit within the bureau.

The EPCD's mandate covers monitoring the processing of shipments of hazardous substances, waste products, nuclear wastes, recyclable products or substances under the regulatory control of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Under Republic Act No. 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear

Wastes Control Act of 1999, the BOC being one of the regulatory agencies, is mandated to assist the DENR in monitoring and preventing the entry of hazardous and nuclear wastes into the country.

The new division, which will be under the BOC's Enforcement and Security Service of the Enforcement Group, is also tasked to recommend the issuance of alert orders and prelodgment control orders against shipments suspected of containing goods in violation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) and environmental laws.

It is also tasked to investigate cases and to make recommendations for prosecution of violations of CMTA, in relation to environmental and other applicable laws, rules and regulations. INQ





# Customs forms new division vs foreign waste materials

By **CHINO S. LEYCO**

The Bureau of Customs has created the Environmental Protection and Compliance Division (EPCD) to monitor and control the entry of hazardous substances and other wastes into the country.

In a statement, Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said the creation of a new division under Customs is a welcome development to ensure that there will be no repeat of the incident in the past where the Philippines became a dump site for other countries' waste materials.

"This strike team should work in tandem with other concerned government agencies in mounting a 24/7 watch over, and prevent, the entry of hazardous or toxic wastes into our country, in keeping with our environmental laws," Dominguez said.

The creation of the EPCD was in response to Dominguez's directive last July to Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo

Guerrero to form a special strike team at the agency to guard against the entry of waste materials.

Dominguez issued the directive after Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in ASEAN to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of the organization's member-states not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground.

Guerrero said his fellow customs officials from the ASEAN member-states reacted positively to his proposal.

In response, Dominguez said that "it's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs (bureau) to really act on this garbage issue."

Following Dominguez's directive, Guerrero issued Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 38-2019, institutionalizing EPCD, which will become a permanent and specialized unit within the bureau.



## Customs 'strike team' given mandate to monitor, intercept foreign garbage

BY CAI U. ORDINARIO  
@caiordinario

**T**HE Bureau of Customs (BOC) has created a new unit to monitor and control the entry of hazardous substances and other wastes into the country.

In a news statement issued by the Department of Finance, the BOC's Environmental Protection and Compliance Division (EPCD) was formed in response to the DOF's directive to create a "special strike team" to prevent other countries from dumping their waste in the Philippines.

It can be noted that between 2013 and 2014, Canada shipped 69 containers of waste to the Port of Manila. The shipment was only returned to Canada this year.

"This strike team should work in tandem with other concerned government agencies in mounting a 24/7 watch over, and prevent, the entry of hazardous or toxic wastes into our country, in keeping with our environmental laws," Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said.

In July, Dominguez ordered BOC Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero to create such a unit within the agency.

Through Customs Memorandum Order 38-2019, BOC institutionalized the EPCD, which will become a permanent and specialized unit within the bureau.

Its mandate covers the monitoring and processing of shipments of hazardous substances, waste products, nuclear wastes, recyclable products or substances under the regulatory control of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Under Republic Act 6969, or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990, the BOC being one of the regulatory agencies, is mandated to assist the DENR in monitoring and preventing the entry of hazardous and nuclear wastes into the country.

The new division, which will be under the BOC's Enforcement and Security Service (ESS) of the Enforcement Group (EG), is

tasked to recommend the issuance of alert orders and prelodgment control orders against shipments suspected of containing goods prohibited under the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) and environmental laws.

The EPCD will also investigate cases and recommend for prosecution of violations of CMTA, in relation to environmental and other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

"It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs [bureau] to really act on this garbage issue," Dominguez said.

The creation of the EPCD is in line with the thrust of Asean member-states like Malaysia and Cambodia that are also working to prevent wastes from being dumped in their countries.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example, this problem about the wastes, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community, this garbage problem," Guerrero said during a recent Execom meeting.

URBAN DECAY IN 110-YEAR-OLD SUMMER CAPITAL

# 'NOT THE BAGUIO WE USED TO KNOW'

By Vincent Cabreza  
@vincentcabrezaINQ

BAGUIO CITY—Overdevelopment was the frequent lament of officials who promised to control tree cutting and construction of high-rise buildings during the city's 110th Foundation Day celebration on Sunday.

"This is no longer the Baguio we used to know," Rep. Marquez Go said, adding that the city has become a microcosm of how badly Filipinos have overused the country's natural resources.

Go said the national forest cover was 80 percent of the country at the start of the 20th century when the American colonial government designed and built the summer capital. By 1999, forests covered only 18 percent of the country, he said.

The lawmaker's concern was echoed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who said that Baguio mountains "are balding and the Department of Environment and Natu-

ral Resources cites the construction boom and urban sprawl as reasons for the decline of the city's pine trees."

## Urban decay

But should his pet measure become a law, Lacson said the city government may access up to P300 million to fix its urban decay issues on top of the P150 million to which Baguio was entitled as its share from internal revenue allotments (IRA).

Lacson, who was guest at the Baguio Day program, was referring to a measure called the budget-reform advocacy for village empowerment (BRAVE).

The measure seeks to allocate augmentation funds for provinces, towns, cities and villages that tap 20 percent of their IRA shares for development projects.

All local governments are entitled to a share of the IRA or taxes collected by the government.

Going by the 2018 budget, Baguio used P150.5 million of its

local development fund out of its P752.6-million IRA share. But Lacson said the city would also be given an additional P150-P300 million in support funds if the BRAVE bill passed Congress. Go is filing the House counterpart bill this week.

Lacson said he was no stranger to Baguio having lived here for four years as a cadet of the Philippine Military Academy. He said he commiserated with residents who complained that Baguio population ballooned during daytime.

## Bleaker picture

"Tourism brought significant changes" to Baguio, Lacson said, as visitors "flock here during holidays, even during the weekends leaving behind their waste."

Baguio drew 1.5 million visitors in 2017 and 1.8 million last year.

While tourism boosts the economy, the picture for Baguio becomes bleaker when "pine trees die by the day," Lacson said.

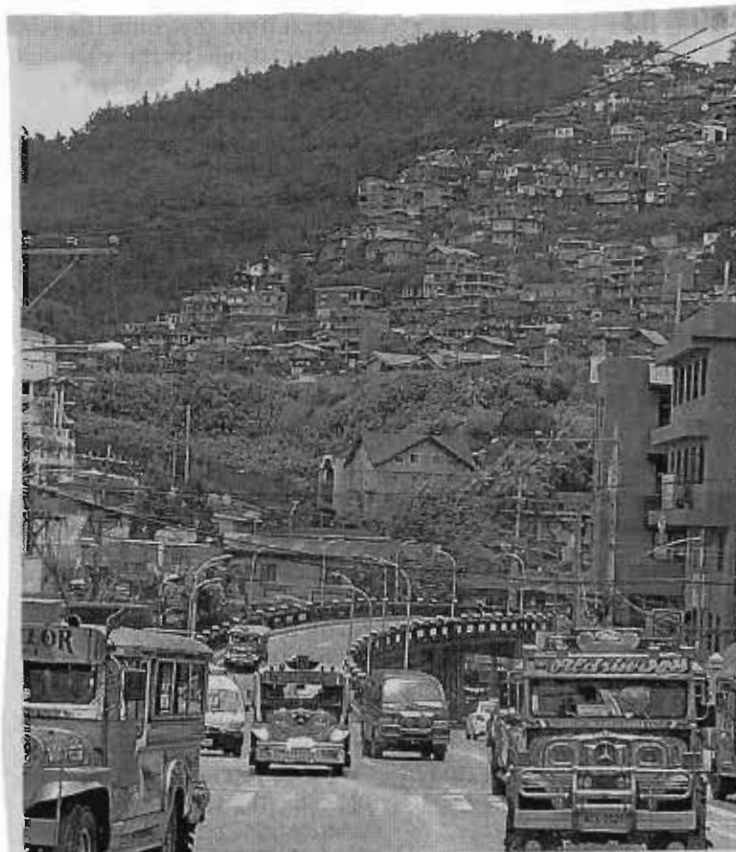
"You need to regain and nurture your home," he said.

Go said the city government would organize several technical working groups to address not only Baguio's reduced tree population of 2.5 million but also human activities that affected the environment, such as the growing waste generated by its 350,000 residents.

Chartered in 1909, Baguio was originally designed for 25,000 people by Chicago architect Daniel Burnham. Destroyed in 1945 at the end of World War II and in 1990 after the Luzon earthquake, Baguio residents and investors restored the city, Go said.

"Development is inevitable. We build more roads, expand sewers, improve communication, but all these activities have environmental consequences," he said.

"We are beyond the original design of Burnham ... We generate more waste, spend more water, more electricity and use more fossil fuel," Go added. INQ



FIGHTING FOR SPACE Houses, commercial buildings and vehicles fight for every space in Baguio City as the country's summer capital, originally designed for 25,000 residents, faces problems associated with overdevelopment. —EV ESPIRITU



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## Metro water allocation mula Angat Dam, dinagdagan

**DAHIL** sa unti-unting pag-angat ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam sa lalawigan ng Bulacan, dinagdagan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa Kalakhang Maynila at mga karatig-lalawigan.

Hanggang 9:00 am kahapon, 2 Setyembre, umakyat sa 183.08 metro ang tubig sa Angat Dam mula 182.78 metro noong Linggo.

Bahagyang mas mataas sa normal operating level na 180 meters ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Dahil dito, itinaas sa 40 cubic meters per seconds (cms) mula 36 cms ang alokasyon ng tubig sa Metro Manila at mga katabing probinsiya.

Gayonman, ayon sa NWRB, ang alokasyong ito ay mababa sa normal water allocation na 48 cms.

Ayon sa Maynilad, nais tiyakin ng NWRB na maaabot ng Angat Dam ang water level na mahigit 210 metro sa pagtatapos ng 2019 upang matiyak ang maayos na suplay pagdating ng tag-init sa 2020.

Dahil dito, pinayohan ng water concessionaire ang publiko na magtipid pa rin sa paggamit ng tubig.

(MICKA BAUTISTA)



## Digging for water

Since 2003, according to satellite monitoring, Pampanga and Bulacan have been sinking by

four to six centimeters or about 1.5 to 2.4 inches every year. The consequences are not confined to the two provinces. The impact is being felt around Manila Bay, where scientists say the sinking is raising the water level so that brackish water is surging inland, inundating entire communities.

Even without this problem, the city of Manila has been steadily sinking gradually. Climate change is accelerating the process, and it can only be aggravated by the problem in neighboring Bulacan and Pampanga, where the principal cause has been traced to groundwater extraction.

A report last week showed that in some parts of Bulacan, the sinking has become so serious that certain villages are now permanently submerged, displacing thousands. The few people who have remained now rely on boats to move around their communities.

In Metro Manila, the government has imposed a moratorium on groundwater extraction through deep wells since 2004. Geologists have warned that foundations are being weakened by the deep wells, causing subsidence or caving in of the ground and threatening communities.

The deep wells were common, especially in cities and towns that now constitute southern Metro Manila,

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before the two private water concessionaires began upgrading the water distribution network in the National Capital Region. With serious water supply disruptions this year especially in the eastern NCR service area, however, people are again reviving deep wells to augment water supply.

Outside the NCR, deep wells are also used for farms, factories and household water needs. In some communities, communal deep wells are the principal sources of fresh water. Most of the wells are unregulated. With an ever-growing population and increased economic activities, and with no corresponding expansion of fresh water services, extracting water from the ground could continue unabated.

The National Water Resources Board is tasked to enforce the prohibition on groundwater extraction, but the agency has an acute lack of personnel to do this. In areas threatened by subsidence compounded by climate change, the NWRB can coordinate with local government units to enforce the moratorium on deep wells.

Water, however, is the most basic requirement for survival. Unless the government can provide access to a network of safe water supply, people will seek their own sources, even from the ground. They will likely believe that this can cause the ground to collapse only if it actually happens.



## Businessinbriefs

### MANILA WATER TREATMENT PLANT 87% DONE

AYALA-LED Manila Water Co. Inc. is making progress in building its sewerage treatment plant (STP) in Pasig City. In a recent statement, the listed East Zone concessionaire said pipes were being laid along C. Raymundo Ave., from Guanio St. to Mercedes Ave., in the city. The pipe installation is expected to be finished on Jan. 15, 2020. The pipes will be connected to the planned Ilugin STP in Pinagbuhatan village that forms part of Manila Water's North and South Pasig Sewerage System Project. The treatment plant, whose construction started in November 2014, is now 87-percent complete. Once fully completed, the Ilugin STP could treat 100 million liters a day (MLD) of used water. Manila Water shares rose by 20 centavos or 0.89 percent to end at P22.30 each on Monday.

**JORDEENE B. LAGARE**

## ILOILO LAGOON CLOSED TO TOURISTS FOR A MONTH TO ALLOW RECOVERY

ILOILO CITY—Tourists will be temporarily barred from visiting the Tangke lagoon, a popular destination in the northern part of Iloilo province, as local officials undertake measures to preserve the area.

Mayor Siegfredo Betita of Carles town, through an executive order, said the saltwater lagoon would be closed to the public from Sept. 1 to Sept. 30 “to protect and preserve [its] natural beauty and to assist the natural recovery of the [site].”

Betita said the closure was also a safety measure for tourists, amid the prevailing southwest monsoon (“habagat”), which could enhance waves and rain.

The lagoon in Barangay Gabi is part of the Gigantes group of islands, one of the top tourist drawers of Iloilo due to its pristine white sand beaches and coves, rock formations and clear waters.

Gigantes includes 10 islands, the biggest of which are Gigantes Norte and Gigantes Sur that have two villages each. Aside from the Tangke lagoon, the popular destinations in the area are the Ban-

tigue sandbar, Antonia beach and Cabugao Gamay Island.

### Visitor influx

An ideal destination for island-hopping, Gigantes also draws tourists due to the folklore that 2.74-meter-tall (9 feet) inhabitants once roamed and lived on the islands. Residents would show visitors large wooden coffins found on the island that they said were used by its early settlers.

Its name, which means “Island of the Giants,” is derived from the folklore.

The lagoon was also closed in previous years as local and provincial officials struggled to manage the influx of visitors in recent years.

The number of visitors to Carles increased from 10,947 in 2013 to 11,356 in 2014, and more than doubled to 24,977 in 2015. In 2016, tourist arrivals reached 36,229 and continued to increase to 55,300 in 2017 and 64,205 last year.

The group of islands can be reached after a more than two-hour boat ride from Estancia or Carles towns. —NESTOR P. BURGOS JR. INQ





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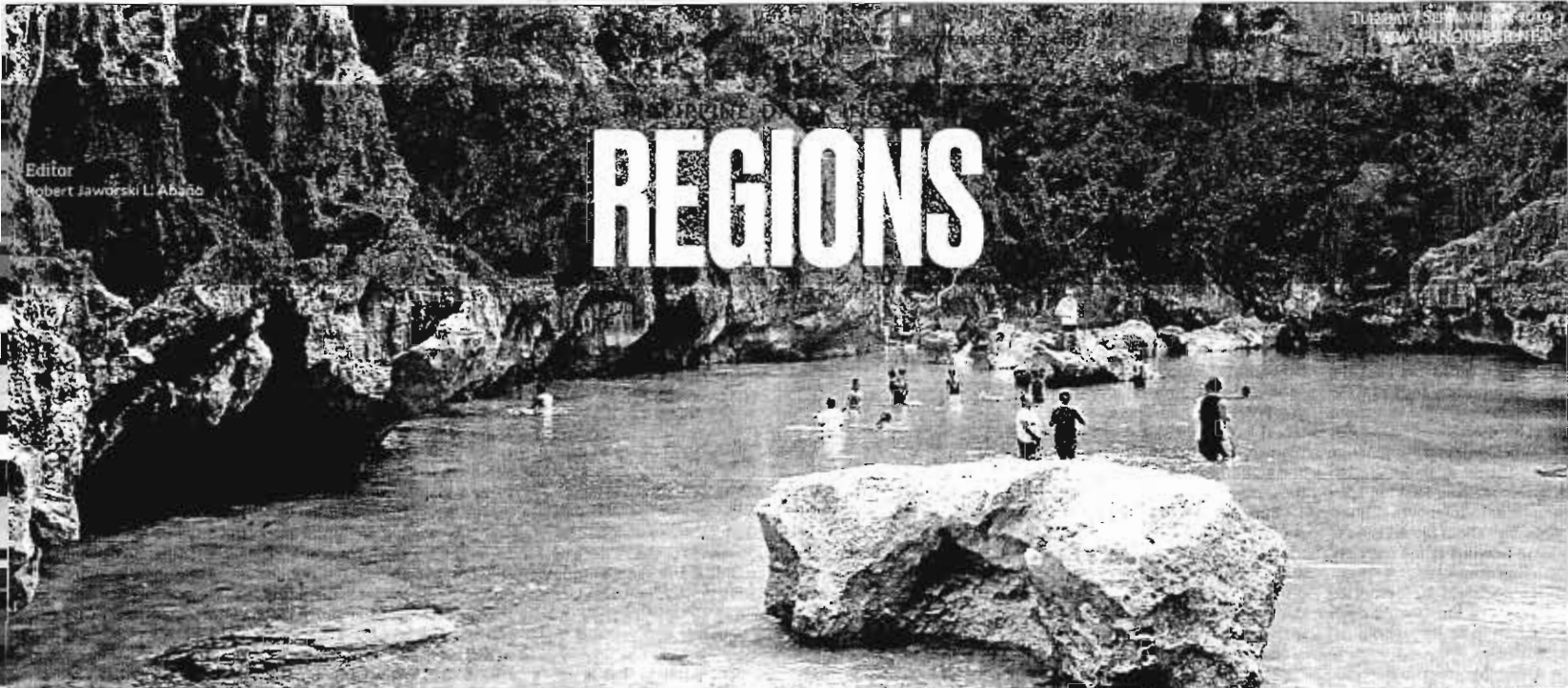
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Editor  
Robert Jaworski L. Abado

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**POPULAR SPOT** Tourists never miss a dip in the saltwater Tangke lagoon when they visit Gigantes Islands in Carles, Iloilo. The local government, however, closed the popular spot this month to allow the area to recover from the surge of visitors.—IAN PAUL CORDERO / CONTRIBUTOR





# NEDA to launch 'Green Capitalism' action plan

NEDA is working with the Asian Development Bank in formulating the Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework and Action Plan

By Maria Romero

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia has bared plans to launch a sustainable action plan that would serve as the backbone of "Green Capitalism" this September.

The concept of Green Capitalism, he explained, is making profit-maximization and environmental protection go hand-in-hand, and in certain cases, complementary to each other

At the recent Forum on Renewable

Energy and Waste-to-Energy Public-Private Partnership, Pernia disclosed that the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) is working with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in formulating the Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework and Action Plan.

This would complement the guide for local government units that covers all phases of solid waste management project cycle. The guide was drafted by the Public-Private Partnership

(PPP) Center, together with the DENR Environmental Management Bureau-Solid Waste Management Division.

The plan is also projected to provide an outline of the national solid waste management strategy.

Pernia, who is also NEDA's Director-General, called on both public and private company stakeholders to further expand their role in developing innovative solutions in implementing and integrating renewable energy and waste-to-energy components in infrastructure and development projects.

"This is possible since the majority of the waste we produce is biodegradable at around 52 percent and recyclable at 28 percent. With the right push, the country can still further reduce the



THE National Solid Waste Management Commission said that it was in 2016 when the country generated about 40,000 tons of waste per day. Of that total, Metro Manila cornered 9,000 tons.



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amount of solid waste it generates," Pernia said.

While meeting the power demand is a vital factor to sustain economic growth, finding ways to grow without compromising the environment and draining our natural resources is equally important, he noted.

Citing the latest data on the Philippines' demand for energy, the country's dependable energy supply stood at 21,241 megawatts while the total peak demand was at 14,782 MW in 2018.

From 2014 to 2018, the country's total energy consumption rose at an average of 4.22 percent per year. Under a high economic growth state, the country's energy

requirement is seen to increase four-fold by 2040 by an average of 5.7 percent yearly.

Meanwhile, the National Solid Waste Management Commission said that it was in 2016 when the country generated about 40,000 tons of waste per day. Of that total, Metro Manila cornered 9,000 tons.

On the other hand, renewable energy and natural gas account for the majority of the country's primary energy supply mix stood at 39.1 percent in 2017. Pernia noted that while this has been decreasing in the past five years, the government has institutionalized policies and programs that will help offshoot the consumption of renewable energies.



**PEACE IN NATURE**

# AMAZON TRIBES SEEK DIVINE INTERVENTION AS FORESTS BURN

FEIJO, BRAZIL—As thousands of fires ravage the Amazon, the world's largest rain forest, some indigenous tribes are turning to prayer in a bid to halt the destruction and protect their environment for future generations.

In the village of Feijo, in the west of Brazil, approaching the border with Peru, indigenous people from the tribe of Shanenawa on Sunday performed a ritual to try to find peace between humans and nature. With faces painted, dozens danced in circles as they prayed

to put an end to the fires.

"We want peace and love," Tekahyne Shanenawa, a Shanenawa leader, told Reuters as he danced in a circle as part of their ritual. "Peace, harmony and education to stop these fires that have attacked the Amazon."

Thousands of fires have been recorded in the Amazon this year, the most in at least a decade, at the same time as Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro argued that the forest needed to be exploited, and Indian reservations reduced. —REUTERS



**AN APPEAL AND A PRAYER**

# POPE URGES POLITICAL WILL AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

VATICAN CITY—Pope Francis is challenging governments to show the “political will” to take drastic steps to deal with climate change during an upcoming UN summit while encouraging people to abandon dependence on fossil fuels.

Francis issued the fervent appeal in a message on Sunday to mark the start of several weeks of prayer by Christians to raise political awareness about pollution and exploitation of natural resources. The period of prayer and reflection runs until Oct. 4, the feast day of Francis of Assisi, his namesake saint who embraced a back-to-basics lifestyle and

praised nature and animals.

He began his appeal by quoting from the Bible about Creation: “And God saw that it was good.”

Tragically, mused Francis, “something good in God’s eyes has become something to be exploited in human hands.”

He denounced a litany of how humans have harmed the environment including pollution and reliance on fossil fuels as well as the impact global warming was having.

“The increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather phenomena and the desertification of the soil are causing immense hardship for the most vul-

nerable among us,” Francis said.

He also cited melting glaciers, neglect of water basins and plastics and microplastics as “equally troubling.”

He advised reviewing if daily decisions about food, transportation, use of water and other material goods were “thoughtless and harmful.”

Francis echoed pressing calls by young people for “courageous decisions,” adding that “we owe them real answers, not empty words, actions not illusions.”

The Pontiff said that at the UN Climate Action Summit later this month, “governments will

have the responsibility of showing the political will to take drastic measures” to achieve as quickly as possible net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and to limit the average increase in global temperature in line with the Paris climate accords.

He pointed no fingers at any one nation or region.

But he noted that next month, the Vatican is promoting a gathering of bishops about the Amazon region, “whose integrity is gravely threatened.” Recently, fires ravaging Amazon forest land in Brazil were a focus of the G-7 (Group of Seven) summit in France. —AP



HABANG tinitipa natin ito, mga Bro, binabayo na ng bagyong Dorian ang Bahamas at umabot na rin ito sa Florida at North Carolina sa Amerika.

Mahalagang subaybayan natin ang bagyong Dorian dahil mas malakas ito sa bagyong Yolanda na pumatay ng nasa 8,000 Pinoy noong 2013.

Apektado kay Dorian ang nasa 600 overseas Filipino worker sa Bahamas; 122,000 Filipino Americans sa Florida, kabilang na ang 143,500 na purong Pinoy; at libo-libo pa sa North Carolina at iba pang estado ng Amerika na daraanan nito.

### DORIAN VS YOLANDA

May pinakamalakas o bugsong hangin si Dorian na 354 kilometro kada oras samantalang nasa 375KPH kay Yolanda noon.

May taas na 7 metro ang alon o storm surge na nililikha ni Dorian samantalang nasa 7.5 metro ang alon ni Yolanda.

May sukat na 2 piye ang haba ng ulan ni Dorian samantalang nasa 1 piye ang kay Yolanda.

Tumatakbo si Dorian ng 1.6 kilometro lamang samantalang tumakbo si Yolanda ng 39 kilometro kada oras noon.

Kung ating susumihin ang lahat, halos magkasinglakas sina Dorian at Yolanda.

Ang malaking pagkakaiba nga lang ay ang bagal ng takbo palabas ng dalawang bansa.

Sa Amerika, magtagal ang malakihan at malawakang baha na talaga namang nakasisira ng buhay at ari-arian.

Si Dorian, magtagal ng halos 12 oras sa isang lugar samantalang nagtagal lang si Yolanda ng limang oras sa Tabloban, Leyte.

### SINIRA LAHAT

Sinira lahat ni Dorian ang dinaanan nito sa Bahamas na paborito ng mga Pinoy, kabilang na ang maraming artista.

Bahay, sasakyan, hotel, pantalan, paliparan dahil sa naghalong superlakas na hangin at sobrang tubig,



## BAGYONG DORIAN, MAS DELIKADO KAY YOLANDA

Ayon sa prime minister, may mga lugar na hindi na nilapunos ng storm surge at sobrang baha at hindi na nila malaman kung saan ang hangganan ng dagat at kanilang mga lansangan.

Sa Florida at South Carolina, mahigit isang milyong katao, mula sa 20 milyong apektado ang pwersahang pinalikas para makaligtas sa kamatayan.

Paglabas ng isyu ng diaryo nating ito, tapos na ang pananalasa ni Dorian at nagsimula na nitong hampasin ang mga estado ng Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina at Georgia.

Wala pa namang naiulat na namatay sa bagyong inilarawan ng mga matatanda na wala pa silang naranasang bagyo na kasinglakas ni Dorian.

### MASISIRA ANG PINOY

Sa laki ng populasyong Pinoy sa mga lugar na ito, tiyak na maraming Pinoy ang may kamag-anak doon.

May mga turista pa ngang na-trap sa bagyo at hindi basta nakauwi sa Pilipinas o nakalayo sa bagyo dahil mahigit 700 na flight ang kinansela sa lugar.

Palabas at papasok sa mga nasabing lugar ang mga kinanselang flight.

Hindi pa nakikilala ang mga Pinoy na apektado subalit may mga nagtatawagan nang magkakamag-anak sa pagitan ng Pilipinas at mga apektadong lugar sa Amerika.

Sana naman, walang mapipinsala sa mga Pinoy at kung mayroon man, makaya nilang tanggapin ang mga pinsala sa buhay at ari-arian at magtulong-tulong sa gitna ng kalamidad.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

Ayon sa mga sumu-subaybay na siyentista sa paglitaw ng mga malalakas at dumaraming ganitong bagyo, ang climate change o pag-iinit umano

ng mundo ang pangu-nahing dahilan.

Dahil sa climate change o pag-iinit ng mundo, natutunaw na maraming yelo na mata-tagpuan sa south at north pole at may mga bundok na nga ng yelo na natunaw nan a dahilan ng pagtaas ng lebel ng tubig sa buong mundo.

Sa darating na 30-50 taon, maaari umangong nasa 1 metro na ang taas ng tubig sa ating mga karagatan at apektado ang Pilipinas dahil binubuo ito ng mahigit 7,000 isla.

Nililikha rin ng mainit na mundo ang mga malalakas at maraming bagyo at may paliwanag ang mga siyentista rito.

### PAGTATAPON NG BASURA

Bilang bahagi ng pagkontrol o pagpababa ng temperature ng mundo, binabawasan na ang paggamit ng uling bilang fuel sa paggawa ng kuryente.

Pinagaganda na rin ang mapolusyon na hangin sa bisa ng mga makina ng mga sasakyan at aangkop ito sa Euro 4.

Ang 60 porsyento na polusyon sa hangin sa mahal kong Pinas ay galing sa tambutso ng mga sasakyan, lalo na ang carbon dioxide at isa itong dahilan ng pag-iinit ng mundo.

Ipinagbawal na rin ang gas ng aircon na mga luma at bago na ang kailangan na gamitin.

Ipinagbabawal din ang pagsunog ng mga plastik na pinanggagalingan din ng carbon dioxide.

Sana magtulong-tulong ang lahat para mabawasan ang climate change na pag-iinit ng mundo.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.



C2 | TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019  
manilastandardlife@gmail.com

## Life

## Manila Standard



# The future of Philippine biodiversity takes flight

Philippine eagles Geothermica and Sambisig are currently at the Wildlife Reserves Singapore to hopefully mate and produce eaglets which can be released in suitable, vacant habitats in the Philippines.



15-year-old Geothermica is under the care of Energy Development Corporation as part of the Philippine Eagle Foundation's Adopt-an-Eagle program.

**I**N MAY this year, the quest to continue ensuring the survival of Philippine eagles reached new heights when a pair of Philippine eagles bred in captivity at the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City—the 15-year-old male Geothermica and 17-year-old female Sambisig—was sent to Singapore's Jurong Bird Park.

Loaning the birds is part of an agreement between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Wildlife Reserves Singapore, a leading wildlife conservation group.

It is also symbolic of the deep ties that the Philippines and Singapore have in common especially advocacies such as environmental conservation and biodiversity protection.

Geothermica is the adopted eagle of geothermal leader Energy Development Corporation, while Sambisig is the adopted eagle of a chemical company. Both are considered at the prime age of breeding.

During their two-year stay at Jurong Bird Park, it is hoped that the eagles will mate and produce eaglets which can be released in suitable, vacant habitats back in the Philippines.

The Philippine eagle's role on top of the food chain is considered crucial in keeping the balance of nature's ecosystem. An abundant Philippine eagle population also

indicates a healthy state of forests.

According to a statement from EDC, an estimated 400 pairs of Philippine eagles remain in the wild. In November last year, forest guards found the seventh nesting site for Philippine eagles in Mt. Apo, the country's highest peak.

According to the Philippine Eagle Foundation, eagles bred in captivity can live up to 40 years and are considered more resilient to human handling and living in breeding facilities than their wildlife counterparts. Hence, in 2012, EDC adopted Geothermica under PEF's Adopt-an-Eagle Program.

"Sending Geothermica to the WRS is an important step in our collective efforts to protect the Philippine eagle, the survival of which is inseparable from the protection of our biodiversity. Since Philippine eagles are threatened by the loss of forest cover and shooting activi-

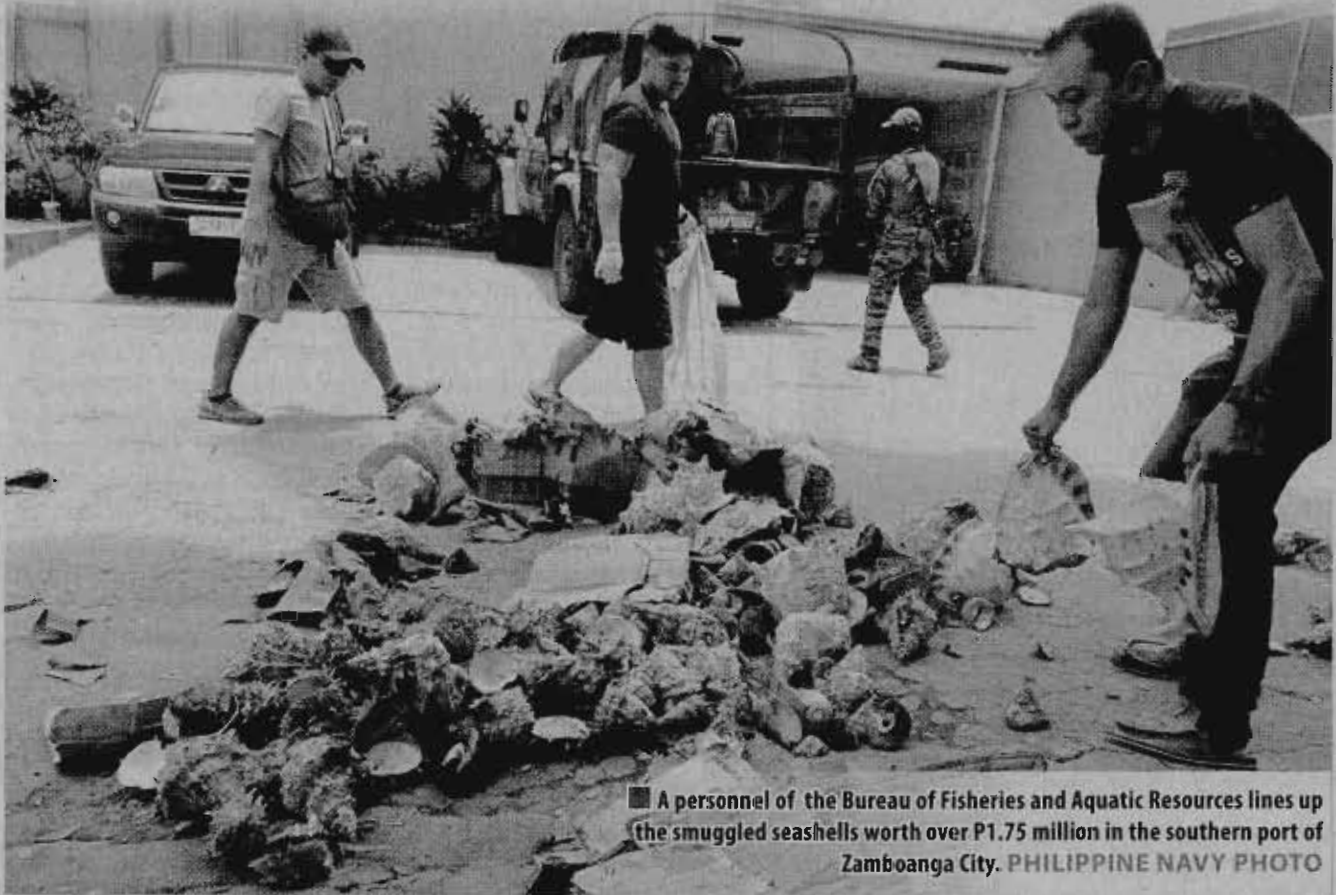
ties, we hope to exhaust all efforts to protect one of the most precious treasures of our biological heritage," said EDC CSR head Allan Barceña.

Aside from being the natural habitat of the Philippine eagle, Mt. Apo also offers an abundance of geothermal energy—a form of clean and renewable energy that relies on heat coming from the earth. Like the Philippine eagle, geothermal energy is dependent on a healthy vast forest cover for sustained production.

For this reason, central to EDC's corporate social responsibility initiatives is environmental conservation. At its 106-megawatt Mount Apo Geothermal Project, watersheds are well-maintained and forests are lush. The 701-hectare protected geothermal reservation surrounding MAGP alone is home to 39 species of mammals and 165 species of birds, including the Philippine eagle.



## Navy patrol seizes P1.75-M seashells



■ A personnel of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources lines up the smuggled seashells worth over P1.75 million in the southern port of Zamboanga City. PHILIPPINE NAVY PHOTO

**ZAMBOANGA CITY:** A Navy patrol seized assorted seashells worth over P1.75 million from a boat that smuggled the contraband to Zamboanga City, the Naval Forces Western Mindanao said Monday.

It said Navy men spotted *MV Mardia* moored inside a private pier in Baliwasan village, inspected the boat and discovered the seashells hidden in 13 sacks. The prohibited cargo came from the town of Pangutaran in Sulu.

The weekend operations resulted in the confiscation of assorted seashells, mostly Helmet (*Cassidae*) and Top shells (*Trochidae*).

"The confiscated seashells were then

turned over to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. As per conducted joint inventory, the watercraft was loaded with 13 sacks of prohibited seashells with a market value of P1.75 million. *MV Mardia* violated Section 102 of Republic Act 10654 or the amended Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998," the Navy said.

It said the species of the seized seashells are included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, an international agreement between governments, which aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

"Naval Forces Western Mindanao and the Philippine Navy as a whole, with its operating units, will continuously endeavor to not only protect the seawaters of Western Mindanao from any atrocities and sea jacking at sea but also in one with the government to promote the conservation and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species," it said.

But the Navy did not say if any of the crew members of the boat had been detained and charged in court. It also failed to release the names of the crew, captain and the owner of the smuggled seashells.

**AL JACINTO**



Tuesday, September 3, 2019

Malaya Business Insight | SPECIAL REPORT

C1

BY DL MAYO

AMONG the conveniences of modern life, plastic arguably reigns supreme. So cheap to produce and transport, and easy to handle, plastic is convenient for the fast life we live. It was a practical and low-cost replacement for paper-- the continued use of which was threatening to wipe out unimaginable hectares of forests--and other valuable materials needed to feed the raging industries, that from 2000 to 2015 alone, we produced 448 million tons of it (Roland Geyer, University of California, Santa Barbara). Now plastic is ingrained in our daily lives, it is here, there and everywhere. But it--or the way we have been handling or mishandling its waste-- has become problematic. Modern living is fast and at times furious, so are we ready to slow down our lives a bit? Because that will be the result of eliminating plastic from our lives forever, many people think, and know. Or, of limiting its use in industries that have long thrived in the benefits of using it.

**Too much of a good thing.  
Or are we ruining the  
good that it does?**

We were shocked and then angry on seeing the upsetting image of a dead whale, the tangled remains of plastic bags spilling out from its gut. Where and how was it ingested? How was it possible? Who's responsible? Was it the plastic, or the hands that tossed it out causing the so-called disgraced material to find its way into the ocean? Eight million tons of it each year. Exposed to UV radiation and other elements in the ocean, plus constant abrasion from wave movements, they break down into tiny bits called micro plastics causing marine pollution like never before seen. The full extent of its impact on ecosystems is yet to be determined.



'A toxic love story'  
**Between  
plastics  
and us**

Banning plastic straws is one of the programs being undertaken in some cities and municipalities.





TITLE: 'A toxic love story' Between plastics and us'

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### Studies have found that

nearly half of all plastic ever produced has been made since 2000 (Geyer, U of C, Santa Barbara). Today, half of the world's plastic is being made in Asia which is no surprise as it is the most populous and home to the most active economies today. The continent is home also to countries with inadequate and maxed out waste management systems and policies, and where the oceans are the easiest to pollute through mismanaged solid waste.

Survey upon survey has found that thousands of marine animals have been killed after being entangled in plastic, or from ingesting the polymer mistaking it for food. Reports of human excrement containing micro plastics have circulated. Horror stories abound.

"A toxic love story" was how Tommy Tjiptadja, co-founder and CEO of Indonesia-based social enterprise company Greenhope, described people's relationship with the material. The dilemma stares us in the face—Plastic is ugly, and we can't live with its impact, but we can't live without the convenience it offers. It keeps food fresh and safe longer. And it has less carbon footprint. We hate it, but how do we live without it?

Plastics play an immeasurable part in modern life and living. From the most mundane bit of the day to the grandest aspect of how the world turns, this man-made material touches our lives for the better or for the worse, depending on where you stand on the matter. We all recognize and admit the ugly part of plastics that every conceivable initiative is bound to be unearthed or organized to fight its use. Even when we are about to throw out a single-use plastic package, the thought comes up and we hesitate for a tenth of a second, but we sigh then proceed to toss it away anyway. We consciously or otherwise admit to the benefits it gives us, then after the rallying chants against the polymer, we go back to lives that glorify it.

### How much plastic goes around?

According to Plastics Oceans International, over 300 million tons of plastics are made every year, about 8 million of it dumped into the ocean. Single-use plastics make up 50% of those made.

According to the ADR Institute-cited Ocean Conservancy and McKinsey Report on the Ocean Conservancy (2017), the Philippines alone produces

"2.7 million metric tons of plastic waste and half a million metric tons of plastic-waste leakage annually." This, even when the country has a surprisingly high collection waste (85 percent, according to government data). The irony is lost following another study (Jambeck, et al, 2015) which indicated the Philippines has one of the highest percentages of waste, mismanaged waste, and total mismanaged plastic waste.

With the reported total global production in 2015 reaching 381 tons, the country's 2.7 million metric tons seems minuscule, decidedly pale in comparison with the biggest producers of plastic (China 60 million, the US 38 million, Germany 14.5 million, and Brazil 12 million). In the list however of 10 countries ranked by mass of mismanaged plastic waste, the Philippines resoundingly comes in third, after China and Indonesia.

The Pasig River alone dumps 63,000 tons of plastics into the ocean each year, based on a 2017 study by American and Dutch researchers. "The Pasig River and Manila Bay have been identified among the water-bodies around the world that need rehabilitation most urgently," said Agata Pawlowska, World Bank's Manila Office Operations Manager.

This is how and why the Philippines—way down on the list of plastic making countries—has been crowned with such notoriety.

So, is the problem as simple as society having or making too much plastic for our own good? Or are we wasting all the good it does by mismanaging the waste that manufacturers and consumers generate?

### What industry uses it the most?

Plastic is cheap and versatile. And nearly indestructible. From its progenitor bakelite in 1907 to its meteoric rise in the 1990s, the world has been in awe and the marketplace has embraced it. Today, it is ingrained in our daily lives, from the food we eat to the gadgets that rule every mundane existence. Its applications cover building construction, textiles, consumer and institutional products, transportation (automobiles which are 20% plastic), electrical/electronics, and industrial machinery, among others. From the tiniest pin head to their presence in a spacecraft, plas-

tics have supplanted the use of traditional materials as wood, stone, leather, metal and glass. It is everywhere and anywhere, and because it is cheap to make, lightweight, shatterproof, and flexible, the packaging industry has embraced it. Over one-third of plastics in the developed world have been applied in packaging. And most of these are the single-use plastics consumers see and use every day. With gusto.

### Initiatives

Countries, cities, towns, villages each have their own varied ways of handling society's fears. In Kenya storeowners who use plastic bags risks four years in prison or a fine of up to \$40,000. According to a UN report published in 2018, more than 60 nations have taken steps to reduce single-use plastics by imposing bans or taxes. China and other Asian countries (including the Philippines) have banned the importation of plastic waste which mostly comes from the West. In some cities in the US and Canada, shoppers pay extra for every plastic bag they use. As part of its plastics strategy, the European Union aims to "make all plastic packaging recyclable by 2030 and raise the proportion that is recycled from 30% to 55% over the next seven years."

Developed countries are called on to provide developing countries with financial and practical help to develop capacity to cope with plastic garbage and draw action plans, rather than export their wastes to places that have inadequate or no waste management infrastructure. The Norwegian government has committed to spend \$200 million over the next four years to help anti-ocean plastics effort. Norway, a major oil producer, has a significant fisheries industry and its government considers "marine health as a strategic priority."

To help the Philippines battle ocean debris, the US government in July this year announced the awarding of two grants totaling P20 million to local organizations, such as the Mother Earth Foundation and EcoWaste Coalition, for projects to reduce plastic pollution in Philippine oceans. The grants are aimed at promoting and expanding community-based recycling programs, improve solid waste management, and support research on plastic waste around Manila Bay.

Companies for their part have taken initiatives to come up with

environment-friendly programs the latest of which is Japanese trading house Marubeni teaming up with a US startup to recycle polyester and poly-cotton blends. Consumer goods giant such as Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble and Unilever have vowed to recycle as much as they ship and to use recycled plastics. Packaging in McDonald's is planned to come from recycled or renewable sources by 2025.

NutriAsia, maker of famous Filipino condiment brands, has the Bring Your Own Bottle (BYOB) which encourages consumers to bring their own reusable bottles to refill for their condiments and products/

Nestle Philippines has teamed up with Valenzuela City in a program that basically aims to collect wastes from discarded sachets and incentivizing the community. Tagged May Balik Sa Plastik!, the program aims "to recover post-consumer waste laminates such as sachets and used beverage cartons (UBCs) by sorting and collecting them for co-processing in cement kilns, or for recycling and upcycling."

"There is a need to accelerate action on the issue on plastic. For Nestlé, this means addressing post-consumer wastes that would otherwise go to landfills and leak into waterways and oceans," said Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki.

### Advantages of plastics in packaging

"Remember that single-use packaging is designed with the consumer in mind," said a packaging expert who has partnered with marketing minds on strategies for the marketplace. "The great thing about single-use packaging is that food spoilage and staleness becomes much less of a concern as the product is finished off in one sitting," he added. More importantly, in a country like the Philippines, small single-use packets allow those in the lower income brackets to buy products they would otherwise be unable to purchase in bigger containers. This is the driving force behind the 'tingi' economy which thrives on fast moving goods that fly off the shelves of sari-sari stores most frequented by lower income families.

These consumers do not plan on buying a month's—much less a week's—supply for anything. They buy things as they need them, which means daily.

Based on results of the March 2019 SWS survey, 9.5 million

families consider themselves poor. Although those numbers are declared as 'record-low' (December 2018 was 11.6 million), these figures significantly impact the way consumer products are marketed. How do you open ways for the lowest income earners to procure necessities such as soap, coffee, milk? How about the American branded moisturizer one jar of which would set back a young lady worker about 2 days of wages? Buying 'tingi' used to be confined to cigarettes and cooking oils. Today there are 'tingi' in sachets for everything from cheese to oyster sauce to moisturizers. Even baby milk powder. This is because these products need to be affordable to households that need them daily.

The advantages of plastics over traditional materials are what have made it the choice over the decades. "Plastics are a vital part of the drive to lightweight products to save energy across all industry sectors. It makes sense to exploit their range of physical properties and processability, combined with lightweighting capabilities, enabling many valuable products," said professor Phil Coates of the University of Bradford in the UK.

Aside from these, why are plastics the preferred material for packaging? According to Packaging in Perspective, a paper prepared by the Packaging Advisory Council in the UK, "Plastic packaging is one of the most important contributors to protecting food from spoiling. Food waste has a significantly higher environmental impact, particularly in the form of its carbon footprint, than packaging waste." The paper further said that with plastic packaging food can travel to farther distances and stay longer on the shelves. And because the food itself required considerably more resources invested to create, protecting it from wastage makes more environmental sense.

Global trade has dictated that special items like liquids, gels, powders, out-of-season produce, among others, are safely protected when they reach the market, thus creating a role which plastics efficiently and effectively plays. Without plastics, shelves would be empty of a wide range of products that people rely on every day. Without single-use plastic including sachets, millions of Filipinos will be denied the benefits of affordable products.

*The circular economy is strongly pushed but there is a need for coordinated effort among government, business and consumers, with government providing cost-efficient and cost-effective collection and treatment systems ensuring that less waste find their way to landfills or the oceans; manufacturers taking full responsibility for the recovery of material and packaging wastes generated by their business; and consumers buying green and changing deeply entrenched household habits*

### Taking action

The 3 R's of waste management is the guidance suggested for creating a sustainable planet. Recycle, Reuse, Reduce. This is the mantra of environmentalists who want nothing more than to ensure that the natural path of the planet remains unaltered and that it stays healthy through the ages. Rather than opting for a linear economy (raw materials - production - use - disposal), society is encouraged take up the recycling economy (raw materials - production - use - disposal/ recycling), and better yet, a circular economy (raw materials - production - use/reuse - production - recycle), termed as a "regenerative approach" which aims to minimize waste by making the



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most of resources or using them in multiple life cycles as propounded by the cradle-to-cradle principle of McDonough and Braungart. In a circular economy, the use of resources and the waste and leakage are reduced. Some arguments indicate that there are cases that might require "different or additional strategies like purchasing new, more energy efficient equipment."

To be managed and injected to an economy, plastic waste needs to be collected but, according to the British Plastic Federation, 2 billion people have little or no access to regular waste collection. Also, recyclability depends on composition and complexity of polymers involved (the fewer polymers the better) materials made from a combination of ingredients are more difficult to turn into raw materials (when broken down to their components so that the chemicals could be reused).

In 2017, the Philippine Alliance of Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS) together with its corporate partners (Coca-Cola FEMSA Philippines; Liwayway Marketing Corporation; Monde Nissin Corp.; Nestlé Philippines Inc.; Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines, Inc.; Procter & Gamble Philippines; Unilever Philippines; Universal Robina Corporation; Vouno Trade and Marketing Corporation), committed "to invest in a P25-M residual plastic recycling facility that will address the need to recycle flexible, low-value plastics such as sachets."

PARMS and its partners have pushed for a program that is "founded on a comprehensive approach which includes a 5-component plan of an Information, education, and communications campaign; the Recovery of residual waste from schools and communities; the collection of such waste with the partnering LGU; the technical assessment of the waste and the market development of the recycled

products; and the treatment facility operation."

Alternatives

Cyrill Gutsch, founder of Parley for the Oceans, said "To be honest, I don't believe that we're going to clean up the oceans... I think the ultimate solution is new materials" which he proposes to make from non-harmful natural materials such as algae or fungi, synthesized in laboratories using advanced chemical engineering. Parley for the Oceans, founded in 2012 to raise awareness about threats to marine habitats, intercepts plastics waste bound for, or already in the ocean. The organization partners with brands such as Adidas and Stella McCartney to turn marine plastic waste into sports shoes, swimwear and shirts.

Another alternative is biodegradable plastic, which is any plastic made from, or by biological sources, such as cellulose, starch, chitin, gluten, even plant oil. According to Shelli van Santen, project officer at the Australian-based Tangaroa Blue Foundation, "Being bioplastic doesn't necessarily mean that the plastic is readily biodegradable or compostable.... Although all plastics are biodegradable under the right conditions of heat, time, UV light and the presence of suitable organisms, to be classified biodegradable plastic must meet different standards in different countries.... Even when plastic is completely compostable in your backyard compost that still doesn't mean that it will break down quickly in the ocean or fresh water. Thus, all bioplastic may still have negative impacts on freshwater and marine animals." Such that biodegradable plastic inadvertently mixed in the process with recyclables could even mess up the machines, according to Van Santen.

Based on reports, for flexible and rigid packaging, scientists have recently discovered a way



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to introduce an additive (like the oxo-biodegradable additive they call oxium) to allow them to biodegrade. The additive prompts the decomposition to begin once the materials are exposed to a high microbial count like that found in a landfill. The materials are reduced to water and carbon during a process that typically takes 18 months after exposure.

The list of alternatives grows longer which is worth every discussion given the increasing concern about the problem.

Paper has been the go-to material particularly in shopping. But naysayers state: If we are going to use paper bags as much as we use plastics then we would be cutting more trees and contribute to climate change. And like most alternatives paper is energy-intensive to produce. There are alternatives such as pasta straws, recyclable diapers, wood-pulp based materials like Papuc (paper-based material with fundamental properties of plastic like heat sealability), and

Ecoplas which is biodegradable cassava-based plastic introduced by Greenhope, among others.

How to promote widespread use is, however, the hurdle. Many view the odds as not only a mountain to climb; they are a mountain range of peaks to conquer.

Coordinated approach

The list of countries with the most mismanaged waste is composed mostly of emerging economies with long coastlines where people are now enjoying the perks of urbanization and consumerism. Most of these countries (top 5: China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Sri Lanka) have large coastal populations which according to Jambek, et al (2015) are the biggest generators of marine plastic wastes. Sizeable parts of the population live in coastal areas or along waterways where collection and disposal systems are inadequate or lacking. Adding to the problem are the open dump sites that are close to these waterways, especially in the case of the Philippines. As of 2016, the country still had 403 open and controlled dump sites (there were 946 in 2012) with no protection for the environment, is susceptible to open burning, and is exposed to the elements, vectors and scavengers. Based on National Solid Waste Management Commission Secretariat (NSWMCs) 2012 database: only about 4% or 56 LGUs were being served by the 45 sanitary landfills across the country. Metro Manila LGUs use sanitary landfills such as the Navotas SLF (can be used until 2026 by MMDA estimates), Rizal Provincial SLF (until 2037) and the Pilotege SLF.

Said the ADR Institute, "While waste generation is an inevitable environmental concern for growing economies like the Philippines, waste management is more pressing. Perhaps the policy question must focus on 1) where

the problem of unsustainable practice of plastic waste disposal occurs; and 2) how it should be addressed."

Waste materials typically come from households or the streets in highly urbanized cities and provinces where waste management systems and services are maxed out. Based on the study of Jambek, et al, residential waste makes up more than 57 percent of total generated waste compared with wastes coming from commercial (27 percent), industrial (4 percent) and institutional (12 percent).

Recycling is encouraged, and recycling requires varied infrastructure for various types of waste. The reason why single-use plastic ends up unrecycled or uncollected is that they have no value for recyclers or collectors—too small and too contaminated to clean. But the advantages are too good to not consider. "I can't imagine how life would be without those cute but quite practical sachets," said Angelica M., another millennial, in Tagalog," adding "Also I can't afford the big bottles of shampoo, and even if I could, e di ba plastic din yung container nila?"

While regulation is not total phase out is being pushed, improving waste management, finding innovative solutions, and educating the consumer on how not to disabuse the environment should win over other options such as reducing production, which is espoused by some groups like Greenpeace.

To be sure, there is pending legislation in the country aimed at reinforcing Ecological Solid Waste Management Act No. 9003 of 2000, but experts have stated that policies still miss the mark because those who make them misunderstand or totally ignore the people's current behavior and why they behave in such manner. Worse, many fail to anticipate how people will respond in a



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completely new situation thus offer only a modicum of appeasement. For instance, despite an RA No. 9003 prohibition, the National Solid Waste Management Commission of the DENR disclosed this year that a total of 384 open dumps still operate nationwide outside of Metro Manila. Many LGUs have yet to comply with the law's directives, while majority of the population haphazardly polluting the environment lack proper understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Consumers, business and government need to work hand in hand for all efforts to succeed. The provincial government of Bataan announced recently that a British banker has presented a proposal to build a 100-mega-watt power plant using solid wastes with a funding of US\$500 million.

For plastic wastes to be recycled, they need to be collected so the government through the DENR plans to clear the banks of Manila Bays' tributaries and esteros --mostly populated by those who see the waters as a convenient way to dispose of every waste they generate-- to enable easier collection and waste management. "It's the strategy we'll be doing before we can say Manila Bay is clean," said DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu.

The circular economy is strongly pushed

but there is a need for coordinated effort among government, business and consumers, with government providing cost-efficient and cost-effective collection and treatment systems ensuring that less waste find their way to landfills or the oceans; manufacturers taking full responsibility for the recovery of material and packaging wastes generated by their business; and consumers buying green and changing deeply entrenched household habits regarding mismanaged plastic waste that hugely contribute to leakage to the environment (households generate 57 percent of all garbage). Retailers may be agents of information that can distribute to consumers education materials that help spread greater awareness of the consequences of our actions.

Because we will no longer stand the sight of beaches strewn with all sorts of unsightly plastic and dead animals with stomachs full of polymers, a coordinated approach need to be birthed and nurtured. But without discarding the fruits of advanced technologies that have helped industries to hum and humankind to thrive in our planet.

In Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things, Michael Braungart said, "Cradle to Cradle is like good gardening; it is not about 'saving' the planet but about learning to thrive on it." We will find ways, together.

# Bring Your Own Bottle and refill your favorite condiments in NutriAsia's BYOB

NutriAsia, the home of well-loved Pinoy brands like Datu Puti, UFC, Golden Fiesta and Locally has been the partner of Filipino homes in levelling up their meal times for years.

As a brand committed to making Masarap Masaya moments for its consumers, it aims not just to bring joy to Filipino homes, but to assume responsibility on a much larger scale through timely efforts that will benefit the environment during these increasingly critical times.

Since 2014, NutriAsia has been taking part

in the movement towards a zero-waste community through projects like Jumbahalang Tambalan and participation in DENR-EMB's Refill Revolution.

This year, NutriAsia carries on with its vision of a more environmentally sustainable world through a project called Bring Your Own Bottle (BYOB) which encourages users to bring their own reusable bottles and refill their favorite condiments and products like Datu Puti Vinegar, Datu Puti Soy Sauce, UFC Banana Catsup, and Golden Fiesta Cooking Oil. This simple act

is expected to raise awareness on responsible plastic use and help build a zero-waste community as a stepping stone to sustainability.

Through the support of the Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation and The Mind Museum, shoppers can visit and experience the first BYOB refilling station located in Bonifacio Global City (BGC). To participate, consumers have to bring their own clean and dry reusable bottles to refill their chosen product at a discounted price.

BYOB's store is made out of eco-bricks that use plastic discards as a component,

coming from the Arca South Eco Hub, a project of Arca South, Green Antz and Ayala Land Inc. The store will also serve as a drop-off point for plastic materials for repurposing.

"NutriAsia has been a trusted partner of every Filipino home in making Masarap Masaya meals. And with BYOB, we hope to go beyond and create more Masarap Masaya moments through encouraging shoppers to help build a zero-waste community through their own ways. We are also happy to share that all proceeds from BYOB

along with the plastic materials donated will be used to produce up-cycled furnishings for our beneficiary, GAT Andres Bonifacio High School." Said James Lim, NutriAsia's Corporate Marketing and Communications Head

BYOB, launched last July 30 and set to run until September 12, will be open Mondays to Sundays, 12 NN to 8PM at The Mind Museum in BGC. For more info, please visit <https://nutriasia.com/bring-your-own-bottle>



The BYOB store is made of eco-bricks that use plastic discards as a component.



BYOB encourages users to bring their own reusable bottles and refill Datu Puti Vinegar and Soy Sauce, UFC Banana Catsup, and Golden Fiesta Cooking Oil.



# What is PARMS

*“PARMS adopts current available technologies to properly treat waste. These will lead to the production of items such as classroom resources, including school chairs, or plastic lumber with the technical expertise from the Philippine Plastics Industry Association and the academic community. In the long term, the collaboration will look into advanced technologies to extract materials for reuse into packaging towards a Circular Economy.”*

The Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS) is a multi-stakeholder coalition consisting of members across the waste management value chain; from corporations, retailers, industry groups, haulers, converters, junkshops, MRFs, civil service organizations, academe,

and government agencies. PARMS is premised on developing and implementing a holistic and comprehensive program to increase resource recovery and reduce landfill dependence, leading towards a zero waste Philippines.

During the latter half of 2017, PARMS had committed with nine corporate partners (Coca-Cola FEMSA Philippines; Liwayway Marketing Corporation; Monde Nissin Corp.; Nestlé Philippines Inc.; Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines, Inc.; Procter & Gamble Philippines; Unilever Philippines; Universal Robina Corporation; Vouno Trade and Marketing Corporation) to invest in a Php 25-M residual plastic recycling facility that will address the need to recycle flexible, low-value plastics such as sachets.

The program is founded on a comprehensive approach which includes a 5-component plan of an Information, Education, and Communications Campaign; the Recovery of residual waste from schools and communities; the collection of such waste with the partnering LGU; the Technical Assessment of the waste and the Market Development of the recycled products; and the Treatment Facility operation.

PARMS actively participated in the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) 2018 which mobilized various companies and organizations in the shared advocacy of the cleanup of bodies of water while fostering awareness on the global issue of marine debris. The event gathered 450 volunteers from among PARMS members. The Philippines first joined the international initiative in 1994, making it the first organized coastal cleanup in the country. This year's theme, "Fighting for Trash-Free Seas," unites all sectors again in a nationwide cleanup in major coastlines.

“PARMS adopts current available technologies to properly treat waste. These will lead to the production of items such as classroom resources, including school chairs, or plastic lumber

with the technical expertise from the Philippine Plastics Industry Association and the academic community. In the long term, the collaboration will look into advanced technologies to extract materials for reuse into packaging towards a Circular Economy,” said Crispian Lao, PARMS president.

In 2017, PARMS with its members in the FMCG and plastics industry, and other environmental NGOs joined hands for a partnership committed to build a facility to recycle sachets and other flexible plastics in Parañaque City.

PARMS has partnered with GreenAntz to produce eco bricks made of used plastic that can be used for environmental and affordable construction. To enable the organization to significantly reduce both waste and greenhouse gas emissions, PARMS is tapping other partners in the private sector and has engaged public schools in Parañaque in a pilot Information-Education-Communication program designed to encourage students and teachers to develop positive habits through proper segregation, recycling and collection of flexible plastics. Recycled plastic will be turned into value added products such as desks and benches for donation back to public schools and planks for construction material.

Member companies have individually committed to exploring packaging design innovations using recyclable and recycled materials, as well as leading initiatives in partnership with local communities geared towards awareness and collection. All these form part of a more holistic approach to manage and address the challenge of plastic pollution.

“PARMS adopts current available technologies to properly treat waste. These will lead to the production of items such as classroom resources, including school chairs, or plastic lumber with the technical expertise from the

Philippine Plastics Industry Association and the academic community. In the long term, the collaboration will look into advanced technologies to extract materials for reuse into packaging towards a Circular Economy,” said Crispian Lao, PARMS President.

Early this year, Senator Cynthia Villar, chair of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources, cited a group of manufacturers present during the signing of the memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the PARMS and the Parañaque City government for the installation of a plastic waste recycling facility and research and development center in Barangay La Huerta.

“You are all on the right track in integrating sustainability in your business strategies. I think that makes good business sense and our future generations will thank you for that,” said Villar.

PARMS' works with Government partners: DENR, Department of Education, Dept of Interior and Local Governments, Bureau of Investments, Metro Manila Development Authority, National Solid Waste Management Commission, City of Parañaque, City of Pasay, City of Pasig, Department of Science and Technology, and the Food Nutrition Research Institute; tech partners: Green Antz and Recon X Energy; Corporate Member: Manila Water Total Solutions; Industry members: Federation of Philippine Industries, Philippine Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Packaging Institute of the Philippines, Philippine Plastics Industry Association, and Philippine Paper Manufacturers Association; and retail members: Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association, and Philippine Retailers Association; and CSO (NGO) and Academe members: Cora, DLSU, UP, Villar Sipag, Earth Day Network, Philippine Business for the environment, National Recyclers Organization of the Philippines, Kababaihan Iisa ang Layuning Umunlad ang Sambayanan, Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines and Solid Waste Management Association of the Philippines.



### EB, TUMANGGAP NG PARANGAL SA SKAL INT'L

NOONG August 22 ay tumanggap ang Eat Bulaga ng SKAL INTERNATIONAL TOURISM PERSONALITY AWARD para sa MISS MILLENNIAL PHILIPPINES. (Ang Skai International ay isang worldwide asso-

ciation of travel and tourism professionals.)

Kinilala ang Eat Bulaga at nabigyan ng parangal dahil sa malaking ambag nila sa pagpapakilala ng turismo sa iba't ibang lugar sa Pilipinas.

At tanging ang noon-time show lang na ito ang nabigyan ng award kasama ng DOT, DENR, DILG, Philippine Airlines etc. Samantala, simula na naman #travelgoals sa iba't ibang parte ng Pilipinas.

Sabay-sabay nating i-discover ang mga natatagong yaman ng bansa at samahan ang mga naggagandahang 40 candidates sa Miss Millennial Philippines 2019 sa kanilang tour sa ipinagmamalaki majestic sights sa kanilang lugar.