



Kalikasan

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SECRETARY GINA LAYS DOWN PILLARS OF GOVERNANCE



DENR employees welcome new Secretary, Gina Lopez, as she delivers her message during flag ceremony.

LIKE a whiff of cool fresh breeze that reinvigorates the stale air, Secretary Regina Paz "Gina" L. Lopez, in high spirit and great optimism, takes the leadership of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) with a mission to stop human sufferings caused by environmental abuse. She invokes love of God, love for country, and love for fellow Filipinos as fundamental to the attainment of development goals.

"Mabait ba kayo? Mahal ninyo ba ang Diyos? Mahal ninyo ba ang Pilipinas? Mahal ninyo ba ang mga Pilipino? Magaling ba kayo?" she asked

DENR employees as she urged them to summon up these virtues.

These virtues are the foundation of the Secretary's "Pillars of Governance", by which she envisions to transform DENR from mere regulator to a catalyst of development.

Her ultimate goal is to bring about social justice by making sure that the country's resources are used to improve the lives of the great majority of Filipinos. She vowed to put an end to suffering brought about by abuse of the environment.

She believes in cooperation. For her, "nothing in this world

can stand in the way of people united for a noble cause." She stands by the rule of law to protect the common good and adheres to sustainable development and ecosystem principles in maintaining the environment's integrity. (continue on page 2)

"Our newsletter will be a medium for public service"

Welcome to our new DENR newsletter, Kalikasan.

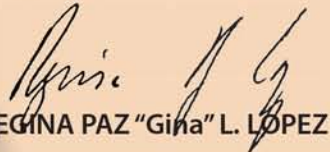
I envision this newsletter to go beyond a mere chronicles of events and serves as a crucible for what we want the DENR to become, for our employees and stakeholders.

The DENR ought to be an agency for reducing human suffering by eliminating environmental abuse that befouls our water, air and land, that impoverishes communities, and that diminishes our biodiversity. Necessarily, our newsletter would offer not just updated information on programs and projects; it will promote advocacies for a cleaner, healthier and greener planet; it will be more than educational, by being motivational; it will not merely render reports, but will engage internal and external publics to become more productive as partners, and to become more assertive in protecting our environmental heritage. Hence, the intention of this newsletter is to promote social justice and social equity.

Our newsletter will be a medium for public service. It will raise the quality of life of the poor, by leading them to alternative livelihoods that promote the preservation of our environment and natural resources. To ensure equitable growth, we will foment mass participation in bringing about positive changes conducive to sustainable development.

Our newsletter is produced by the Office of the Secretary through the Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service. Stories for this maiden issue are being developed by SCIS staff but as it progresses, we expect that stories that will be published will be authored by our entire rank and file; by external partners, and by our stakeholders. Let us share experiences, learn from each other, inspire one another, and achieve more together through this platform.

Let us celebrate the launching of Kalikasan, and prepare to contribute to its narratives and dialogs.


REGINA PAZ "Gina" L. LOPEZ

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



2 / PILLARS OF GOVERNANCE



4 / IN FOCUS: SECRETARY GINA: A TRUE RARA AVIS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



6 / PARTNERS' COLUMNS



8 / OYA, MINDANAO!

PILLARS OF GOVERNANCE

The Secretary's pillars of governance are a unique blend of her personal convictions, her environment and natural resources (ENR) development principles and her key management strategies.

They are grounded on good governance, social justice, rule of law, ecosystem integrity, honoring global commitments, partnership with civil society, social entrepreneurship, sustainable consumption and production and 'polluter pays' principles - braced by area/island ecosystem development and convergence approach - and upheld by the Chief's will, heart, and faith in God.

They embody the environment chief's brand of leadership that signifies integrity, public service and the common good.

INSTITUTIONALIZING CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Secretary Lopez firmly believes that civil society participation will ensure successful implementation of DENR policies and programs. She stressed the critical role civil society plays in addressing environmental problems.

"The environment is being desecrated because of poverty; likewise, people suffer because of environmental degradation and destruction." It would create massive change if civil society would be involved in all levels of ENR management, said the Secretary.

It would create massive change if civil society would be involved in all ENR management

A week after the environment chief took office; she started establishing a civil society organization (CSO) arm within the DENR that would institutionalize the participation of civil society in ENR management. The Department created mechanisms that would guarantee the meaningful engagement of the church, non-government organizations, youth, farmers, and fisher folks.

During the Mindanao Environment Summit, held on August 5, around 200 CSOs participated in a strategic planning workshop that provided orientation on the major programs of DENR. The workshop involved CSOs in

formulating action plans to address environmental issues and in developing relevant policies and programs.

A number of CSOs have also joined the new administration in providing vital information for the ongoing review and audit of mining operations. Some of this information served as basis for the suspension or cancellation of Environmental Compliance Certificates (ECCs) and permits of mining firms.



The Lumads gather during a discussion with DENR in Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

Part of the task of the civil society organization arm that is being formed is to involve the youth in ENR protection and development. Like everyone else, the Secretary believes that the youth holds the key to the future of Filipinos.

"I want to capture their (youth) idealism and energy into doing something for the environment and the people... I want to imprint in their hearts and minds, the mandate of taking care of the environment," said the Secretary.

To make this happen, Secretary Lopez gave instructions to the Department to include the youth sector in all environmental summits that will be organized nationwide and involve them in DENR projects.

BUILDING ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY THROUGH AREA DEVELOPMENT AND CONVERGENCE APPROACH

"I would like to be more proactive and take on the area development and management approach and make something happen in an area," said Secretary Gina Lopez.

She has impressed this idea upon the DENR since Day 1 of her office. She stressed that the Philippines is not like Canada and Australia that when damage is done in an area, other areas are not affected.

The Philippines is more than 7000 islands. Damage in one area of an island could result in a domino effect on the whole island ecosystem. If ever development on ENR is to be made, the approach to be used must suit the island feature, Secretary Lopez clarified.

DENR adopts area development and convergence approach in developing ENR

Secretary Lopez' new approach to enhancing ecosystem integrity centers on watershed ecosystem rehabilitation and development. Through the sustainable integrated area development and management (SIADM) strategy, core interventions of the DENR would be placed on river basins within the watersheds and communities within those areas.

For informed, concerted, and more effective actions, the DENR is adopting the convergence approach, tapping the academe, networks of environmentalists, the private sector, and pool of government agency partners like the Department of Agriculture and Department of Tourism in building "area and island models" to showcase both the area development and convergence approach in developing ENR.

Seventeen (17) priority areas are initially designated for development: Cordillera (Chico River Basin), Zambales (Sta. Cruz), Nueva Ecija (Laur, Fort Magsaysay), Laguna (within LLDA area), Batangas (Lobo), Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Sorsogon (Gubat, Matnog, Sorsogon City), Romblon (Sibuyan Island), Antique (Pandan), Guimaras, Davao (Talaingo, Mariles), Maguindanao (Rajah Buayan), Maguindanao (South Upi), Surigao (Cantilan), Sarangani, and Mati (Davao).



Rich coral reefs in Puerto Galera, Mindoro.

By building "area and island models," Secretary Lopez can send a strong message that ENR development can be done in any area or island without harming the environment causing suffering to people—that taking care of the environment can lead into a better quality of life.

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The DENR should not be a mere regulator, but also "activator and catalyzer of change - a more proactive agency, working for the good of the people who are owners of the land," said DENR Secretary Lopez.

"I want to create a situation where taking care of the environment makes people happy and more economically prosperous through sustainable enterprises," she added.

The extension of the National Greening Program (NGP) until 2028, according to

Ang
ADVENTYUR
ni Jerhaz
sa pangangalaga
ng kapaligiran
at Kalikasan
Istorya at guhit ni
Ricky Los Bañez
Sa iskrip ni
Mya Caparas



Mga istoryang
napapanahon at
makakatulong sa
pagbibigay ng mga
impormasyon at
gabay sa pagkalinga
ng kapaligiran at
kalikasan.

Abangan dito sa
KALIKASAN Newsletter.

the Secretary, provides great opportunity to achieve this goal. "I would like to utilize the NGP money to create economic zones in the country. Not just tree planting, but agro forestry. I want to do it with civil society and convert some of these areas into tourism zones. Funds for the extension of NGP could be funnelled into the economy through farmers, fishermen, and the youth," she said.

I want to create a situation where taking care of the environment makes people happy and more economically prosperous through sustainable enterprises

"There is money in agro forestry and ecotourism," the environment chief affirms, citing the La Mesa Eco Park as an example, which she managed in the past and is now generating PhP40 million a year. "We need to put a spirit of enterprise in all areas so that people would benefit," she pointed out.

Having the civic sector on one side and the business sector on the other, the development arm of the DENR that is being formed could develop and implement social entrepreneurship programs that would make money for the communities and get them out of poverty.

The environment chief is particularly looking for a viable enterprise development program for the indigenous people (IPs). She believes that the resources of the state-owned Natural Resources Development Corporation (NRDC), the corporate arm of the DENR, could be instrumental in attaining this goal.

Recently, she directed Ms. Sylvia Ordonez, former Senior Managing Director of Technology and Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC), who is being eyed to become President of NRDC, to draw up mechanics and set funds for an entrepreneurship program that would provide financial and other forms of assistance to IPs.



Sec Lopez visited around 300 Lumad evacuees in Haran Compound, Davao, who fled their homes and farmlands last year following harassment by paramilitary groups and indiscriminate killing of their leaders.

PURSuing GOOD GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The creation of a civil society within the DENR to institutionalize the participation of civil society and the adoption of the convergence approach in area development are both indicators of good governance. Both strategies exhibit good governance characteristics in that they are participatory, consensus-oriented, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive.

Social justice is another thrust of the new DENR administration. Secretary Gina Lopez explains that "social justice" is when the resources of the country are used for the common good and are enjoyed by the Filipino people. "There is social justice when only a few benefit and the majority suffer the consequences of environmental abuse," she said.

To realize and maintain "social justice" in environmental governance, the environment chief established tools that would reinforce or strengthen the agency's delivery of public service. She created an environmental crime task force, action centers, and 24/7 communication hotlines. She declared media and people's day to ensure the agency's responsiveness to people's needs. She enforces the rule of law in DENR's regulation function. Aside from realizing social justice, these initiatives also promote transparency and accountability- both indicators of good governance.

For Secretary Lopez, public service is very important because for her the welfare of the people is top priority and any condition that assures their safety and lives is non-negotiable.

The Secretary initiated programs that would make DENR officials and employees responsive to public concerns and needs:

On August 8, she signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of National Defense (DND),



DENR, DILG, DND, DOT, PNP, PCG, and AFP raised fist as they form the National Anti-Environmental Crimes Task Force called, "A-Team".

Department of Transportation (DOT), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to form the National Anti-Environmental Crimes Task Force called "A-TEAM Kalikasan". The team would go after large-scale environmental offenders and ensure full and strict implementation of vital laws and regulations on environmental protection.

"Social Justice" is when the resources of the country are used for the common good and are enjoyed by the Filipino people

To immediately respond and address issues, queries and public concerns, the Secretary declared Wednesday of every week as "People's Day". Launched last August 10, the special day gave ordinary citizens, people's organizations (POs) and civic

groups opportunities to be heard. Key officials of the Department's attached agencies responded to problems on public land titling, reclamation, mining and deforestation issues, and possible livelihood opportunities for affected communities.

The DENR Secretary also holds regular press conferences tagged as "Meet the Beat", to give media updates on the DENR's latest plans, projects and activities..

To attend to the daily queries and complaints of the public, phone hotline 920-6214, mobile hotline 09175529344, and emails aksyonkalikasan@denr.gov.ph and mail@denr.gov.ph were installed to receive calls and messages seven (7) days a week in the central office. Hotlines and emails are also being installed in the regional offices.

The Secretary does occasional visits also to civil society groups to personally hear their urgent concerns and needs. Last August 5, she visited around 300 Lumad evacuees in Haran Compound, who fled their homes and farmlands last year following harassment by paramilitary groups and indiscriminate killing of their leaders. After hearing their cries on three separate visits, the Secretary called on the AFP for the immediate demilitarization of Lumad lands to secure their safe return to their ancestral lands.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

Secretary Lopez is also fully committed to honoring global commitments, developing policies and programs for the sustainable production and consumption of natural resources, and ensuring accountability by making polluters pay.

DENR will honor global commitments, develop policies and programs for the sustainable production and consumption of natural resources, and ensure accountability by making polluters pay

In pursuit of honoring global commitments, Secretary Lopez plans to align and harmonize DENR programs and projects to comply with the country's commitments under international agreements on environment and natural resources.

For sustainable consumption and production, the Secretary aims to attain U.N. Sustainable Development Goal No. 12 - 'doing more and better with less,' through increasing net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resources use, degradation and pollution along the whole lifecycle.

Implementing programs on sustainable consumption and production would bring additional value to ENR governance and management. It would "promote resource and energy efficiency and helps provide access to basic services, green, and decent jobs." It would also help to "reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthening economic competitiveness and reducing poverty" (U.N. Sustainable Development Goal No. 12). (continue on page 7)

IN FOCUS

SECRETARY GINA:

A TRUE RARA AVIS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

An Environment and Natural Resources Secretary like none before her, a true *rara avis*. That, in a nutshell, is Regina Paz L. Lopez, the new head of the DENR.

Even before she was appointed as chief steward of the environment and natural resources of the Philippines, her hardline views have been cheered by environmentalists and challenged by giants of the mining industry. She was not known to flinch or waver when a heavyweight blocked her path, for she could like a typhoon swirl around obstacles. Yet there was no violence behind her toughness; it was the inner peace born of meditation that steels her, rather than brute force or the threat thereof. And though born to an affluent family, and though she could have led a luxurious and carefree life, she chose to blaze her own trail the hard way, in the dirt, serving the poor as an activist and crusader. Jee Y. Geronimo recalled in a profile in Rappler.com: "At 18 years old, she left home, renounced her life of privilege, and became a full-fledged yoga missionary in Portugal, India, and Africa. There, she had to constantly look for money for her own survival, and for the needs of underprivileged kids she served."

And because she cared so deeply for the poor, she had to care for the environment that is key to improving their lives. Back in the Philippines, she later came to lead the reforestation

of La Mesa Watershed and La Mesa Ecopark, and in 2010 was named chairperson of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, which led efforts to resurrect the historic river. For her work with Bantay Kalikasan, she received the 1997 International Public Relations Award for Excellence for the Environment and the 2009 Outstanding Manilan Award for the Environment. In 2011, as managing director of the ABS-CBN Foundation, and working with partner organizations, she also launched the Save Palawan Movement, a signature campaign to mobilize protection for key biodiversity areas against mining.

Such is the person – Gina – now at the helm of the

DENR.

Fierce as she is in her advocacies, Gina has a soft spot for the rank and file. Just ask Atty. Alvin Joseph G. Constantino, president of the Kalipunan ng mga Kawani sa Kagawaran ng Kalikasan (K4), the umbrella organization for DENR employee unions across the archipelago. Recalling his introductory meeting with her, he said: "She's really approachable, easy to get along with, 'di ka matatakot." He added: "From my first encounter with her, she already said she will support all the rank-and-file employees and think of programs that would benefit the employees of the DENR, and for that I appreciate her."

Gina has many plans for making the DENR more public

service-oriented. To be able to pursue those plans efficiently, she plans to upgrade the quality of the workforce, from the ground up, "to make it fit what I want to do."

The leadership she brings to the DENR has been honed by decades of first-hand experience working among the poor as well as in the wilderness. Those are already formidable credentials, but she has more, academically: she studied at Assumption College and the Newton College of the Sacred Heart in Boston, earned a master's degree in

development management from the Asian Institute of Management, and was bestowed an honorary doctorate in humanities by the Ateneo de Naga University.

Her physique might look frail, but make no mistake: Gina is lean and mean, tenacious as visionaries come, yet sensitive and profound. She is a champion, and means to make the DENR one too. (A.J.)



USEC. NICKY PERLAS:

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADER, WRITER, THINKER

I first met Nicanor Perlas in 1998 during my early years at the department. He was part of the localization of the Philippine Agenda 21. Little did I know that, 18 years later, our paths would again cross here at the DENR. He still looked the same, although a little bit slimmer.

I asked him what he was doing at DENR. His answer was simple, but purposive, "I'm here to help Secretary Regina Paz "Gina" L. Lopez realize her vision." By this he meant the vision to transform the DENR into a listening and more caring department and, most of all, become corruption free, a vision that he shares.

A renowned writer and progressive thinker, Perlas authored books on transforming societies like MISSION POSSIBLE! Sow Courage: Harvest a New World, Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power, and Threefolding.

Starting in the '70s, Perlas was already involved in civic and social work, which focused on the protection of the environment. He was one of those instrumental in the mothballing of the Bataan Nuclear Plant and overthrowing the administration of President Erap Estrada.

He was one of the first non-government organization representatives to attend the global forum at Rio de Janeiro and was instrumental in the crafting of Philippine Agenda 21.

His deep involvement in environmental activism, as well as in transforming societies, is known both in the local and

international arena. He received two international awards, the "Global 500 Award" from the United Nations Environment Program, for his works against the use of the most damaging fertilizers in agriculture and the capacitation of more than 100,000 farmers in integrated pest management. He too was a recipient of the "Right Livelihood Award" for his contribution to developing the theoretical and practical basis for a world order that benefits all people. Perlas and Walden Bello were the first two Filipinos awarded with this prestigious award.

He founded the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives, coined the term sustainable agriculture, and has been a consistent advocate for sustainable development. He co-founded the GlobeNet 3 and the Global Institute for Responsible Leadership, which seek to promote innovative thinking and collaboration across traditional boundaries—departments, organizations, sectors, and cultures.

He also founded the Movement of Imaginals for Sustainable Societies Through Initiatives, Organizing and Networking (MISSION) in 2010 - a cultural, spiritual, scientific movement of individuals in civil society, government and business.

A prolific writer and speaker, Perlas thinks that the future of the Philippines is related to the "value system supporting globalization warning that developments we are facing today demand a deeper, ethical and spiritual response". As we enter the 21st century we are facing a new and emerging

system of globalization and advanced technology, as well as issues like genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence. These are things we need to think and be careful about in the interest of preserving humanity.

Perlas at the DENR

With decades of extensive work with communities and institutions, the environmental leader, renowned author, and founder of the civil society brings in formidable credentials to DENR as Undersecretary for Civil Society and Societal Partnership. Indeed, an appropriate title for someone who has 50 years in civic and environmental works to his name.

Excited about his work with the DENR, Usec-designate Perlas will prioritize the anti-corruption drive of Secretary Lopez and strengthening links with civil society in providing solutions to insurmountable environmental problems of the country.

Anti-Corruption Drive

First and foremost Usec-designate Perlas will see to it that DENR is corruption free by conducting the performance audit on DENR field officials nationwide. The audit, similar to ones being conducted with mining companies, will determine who is fit and unfit for the job. The civil society will play a critical role in this audit, as they are the ones most familiar with the real situation on the ground.

Perlas shared the vision of



Usec-designate Perlas shares his vision with Sec Lopez on a corrupt-free DENR and social justice.

Secretary Lopez of a corrupt-free DENR and social justice. "He said, that "There can never be social justice unless

Usec-designate Perlas will prioritize the anti-corruption drive of Sec Lopez and strengthen links with civil society in providing solutions to insurmountable environmental problems of the country

corruption is eradicated, particularly at DENR." Having worked with communities and civil society for the last 50 years, Perlas claimed that corruption at DENR is massive, particularly in the implementation of DENR programs and projects. "People are suffering just because you did not do your job," he stressed.

He promised that the anti-corruption measure will be implemented nationwide and there will be no let-up in the campaign. "I will help the secretary rid this department of people who are corrupt and inefficient. We will create a new

DENR that is responsive to the needs of the people and not the powerful businesses whose only business is to destroy the environment for profit," he emphatically said.

"We are going to build the institutions and make it function. Unlike in the past where the DENR leadership is preventing people from becoming honest, now that has change with Lopez on the helm. That is the reason why she also invited Perlas in her team because of his no no-nonsense anti-corruption stance."

This early, Usec-designate Perlas has resolved several problems on the ground. "Every time we intervened the problem gets resolved," he said. He cited samples of what his team has done in the past two weeks, like the cease and desist order issued to National Irrigation Administration for one irrigation project in Region 6.

Environmental Protection, NGP and Sustainable Agriculture

As an environmental activist and advocate for sustainable development, he will adopt the sustainable agriculture in most of the areas under the National Greening Program (NGP) areas to help the communities improve their lives, while at the same time protecting and sustaining the forests. The sustainable agriculture, if designed properly, according to Perlas would become a major anti-poverty program in the uplands, and at the same time a conservation measure.

The sustainable agriculture is the creation of the sustainable farming systems that mimic the functions of the ecosystems. Agroforestry is being practiced around the world, and if managed properly, it can mimic the function of an ecosystem. If properly designed it will bring in a "stream of flow of revenues and resources from month one on", he said. (continue on page 7)



Usec-designate Nicky Perlas talks with NGOs during DENR's 1st Salugnayan (SALu-salo at UGNAYan para sa kalikasAN).



PARTNER'S COLUMN

WHAT MIGHT OUR ENVIRONMENT BE IN HER WATCH?

ISAGANI R. SERRANO
President, Earth Day Network Philippines

I don't know much about DENR Secretary Gina Lopez, personally, but something tells me our environment would be better off under her watch. Call it gut feel, for now.

I'm not a good judge of character, I tend to rely on series of confidences, that is, listen to friends or someone I know who knows better. In this case I lean on what I heard from my partner, a professor, who in turn got it from a common friend Professor Ed Morato who knows Secretary Gina much better than anyone in our circle. What grabbed me about the kind words Ed said was that she is 'no spoiled rich kid' or something to that effect.

I did see her up close, though. That's way back when I, representing PRRM, signed up for some agreement or understanding in the launch of Bantay Kalikasan sponsored by the ABS-CBN

Foundation which Gina Lopez then headed. I recall Marlo Mendoza, now Sec Gina's USec, was also Gina's main man at Bantay Kalikasan.

That moment seems like ages now. Back then, environment was top of the agenda for both government and NGOs. Following the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, we were so eager to have the global Agenda 21 translated into our own Philippine Agenda 21, some kind of roadmap for a sustainable future.

A generation gone by and yet the environmental challenge has not gotten any easier. If the worrisome climate and disaster signs are any guide, we're headed for worse times and tougher challenges ahead than we had faced before. If only to stay in place, we need to exert much more in paying our dues to Mother Earth.

It was much easier then to arrest the environmental decline---depletion on one end and pollution of land, water and air on the other. Our population was much smaller in the 1990s. Now there are more of us who

need to live off our environment regardless of its state of degradation.

By 2022, the Philippines would be home to some 105 million people even as it remains to be a fragile archipelago with a carrying capacity for much less. Anyone can imagine the impact this will have on our already severely stressed environment.

It will not be an easy ride for the new administration. It will need every helping hand.

Earth Day Network Philippines (EDNP) was born in 2000 during Secretary Betet Gozun's time. Our icon then was the late Odette Alcantara who's famous for galvanizing action across social classes and sectors for Mother Earth. EDNP was a product of cooperation between DENR and us from civil society although the initial push came from colleagues in the United States

where the Earth Day movement started on April 22, 1970.

The birth of EDNP kicked off the annual joint celebration of Earth Day. Each year would banner a different theme, reflecting the headline concern of the time, from ecological waste management to climate change. This year's theme took on the challenge of the 2015 Paris Agreement on what needs to be done to stave off climate catastrophe.

On top of annual Earth Day activities, like Sandiwang, Earth Jam, fun runs, biking, among others, EDNP and DENR had worked together on other projects. The Trees4Life: Tubong Pinoy was a biodiversity project for propagation of indigenous tree species. We had done this in our 100-hectare reforestation project in Tagkawayan, Quezon. We can replicate this even better for the Clark Green City.

Our Zero Basura Olympics (ZBO) was meant to speed up the implementation of R.A. 9003, a.k.a Ecological Waste Management. Again, in the spirit of L.A.H.A.T (Lupa, Araw, Hangin, Tubig, at Ako), Tita

Odette's play of words, as usual, the ZBO mobilized government, civil society, church and business. The Mini(mize) Carbon Olympics (MCO) was an education and competition project on tracking our carbon footprint at school, community and individual levels.

It's been 16 years now of such collaboration. It's also the era of the Millennium Declaration and the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015. Now we are in transition to the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

We've seen progress in realizing MDG 7 on environmental sustainability, especially in the expansion of our forest cover and proclamation of protected areas. But we've had lots of disappointment, too, and ironically on an iconic theme of our initial collaboration-ecological waste management. We particularly lament the snail's pace in the closure of waste dumpsites and the very slow progress of moving toward a zero waste future.

We sympathize with the new administration who has inherited so much social and environmental deficits from its predecessors. It's not easy to overcome the cumulative negative legacies of five post-Marcos regimes. It's so easy to get overwhelmed by so much poverty and inequality, not to mention the enormous environmental challenge.

We understand why the urgent need to grow the economy and create jobs even at the risk of increasing our carbon footprint and share of green house gas (GHG) emissions in the global inventory. But growing now and paying later is not the only way. Neither is it our development destiny. We believe we can grow the economy in a clean way, on top of the more basic need to make it more fair and inclusive. We can build a dynamic economy that's powered by an increasing share of renewable energy in the whole energy mix. We need not justify this on climate grounds, we don't have mitigation obligation in the climate convention, to say the least, like the big emitters do. We just need to do it for our own health.

If we need to mine and extract our resources further, let it be done in ways that avoid irreversible alteration of affected ecosystems. We need the likes of Secretary Gina to exercise leadership on this one. *(continue on next page)*



K4 VOWS FULL SUPPORT TO GINA LOPEZ

ATTY. ALVIN JOSEPH CONSTANTINO
K4 President

THE Kalipunan ng mga Kawani sa Kagawaran ng Kalikasan (K4), the accredited sole and exclusive negotiating agent of all rank-and-file employees in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), gladly welcomed the appointment of Secretary Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez in the agency and vows full support to her leadership.

K4 President Atty. Alvin Joseph Constantino is confident that Secretary Lopez, being a staunch environmental advocate, can effectively lead the agency toward attaining its goals as the primary steward of the environment.

According to him, the reforms on mining initiated by the Environment Secretary, in her first two months of office, that resulted in the suspension of a number of mining companies are laudable. "These bold moves only demonstrate the Secretary's deep passion and care for the environment, and genuine concern for the welfare of Filipino people," he said.

Atty. Constantino is also glad that the rank-and-file employees are absorbing the energy and contagious enthusiasm of the Secretary in dealing with

environmental issues and problems.

In Region III, for instance, it was reported that processing time for the issuance of Residential Free Patents has considerably been reduced from 120 days based on the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10023 to just 30 days.

In the National Capital Region, streamlining of procedures are now underway, reducing the cut off time for the issuance of some wildlife and forestry utilization permits to just three days.

The Land Administration and Management Systems (LAMS) is now in full operation to expedite public land transactions in Metro Manila.

"Change is now unfolding in DENR. Stronger advocacy, protection and care for the environment and natural resources throughout the archipelago are among K4's resounding commitment to this administration," said Atty. Constantino.

With these developments, Atty. Constantino is hopeful that other employees would also heed the administration's call for change and good governance. 🌍

DENREU: INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR TRANSPARENCY

INCLUSIVE development is the new battle cry of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Employees Union (DENREU) as it reached its 23rd year in the service.

DENREU President, Galo Martinez, said that DENR employees must be involved in policy-and decision-making to achieve absolute transparency within the agency. The common good must be the priority of the Administration and it can only be realized through inclusive development.

The DENREU expressed confidence in the new administration under the leadership of Secretary Regina Paz Lopez. According to Martinez, Secretary Lopez's sincere concern for the welfare of the DENR employees was evident during her consultation with the DENREU. Lopez showed support for their plans

and programs such as the proposal for the Magna Carta for Environment and Natural Resources Workers.

The proposal for the Magna Carta is a convergence of efforts of the DENREU and other employees union within the DENR system such as the Environmental Management Bureau Employees Association and the Forest Management Bureau Employees Union.

It contains provisions that will promote and improve the health, safety, social and economic well-being, living and working conditions, as well as the employment security of environment and natural resources (ENR) workers. Among these are the improvement of merit promotion and career system, over time and rest day work pay, medical assistance, hazard pay and security of tenure. *(Meg Reyes)*

PILLARS... (from page 3)

The environment chief also plans to strengthen the implementation of the “polluter-pays principle” obliging the users of natural resources to bear the cost of running down the natural capital. Individuals or industries responsible for pollution would be obligated to bear the cost of managing the pollution to prevent damage to human health and the environment. This will benefit affected communities like the indigenous people who are often victims of environmental abuses. *(Alvin Gatbonton and Meg Reyes)*

KEY STRATEGIES

In managing ENR priority areas, the following strategies are adopted:

1. Unified Mapping using Geographic Information System (GIS) as a planning and decision making tool
2. Adoption of the watershed/river basin framework in planning:
 - a. Prioritizing areas within the watershed
 - b. Forest Land Use Planning
 - c. Adopting soil and water conservation
 - d. Agroforestry systems
3. Closing open access areas of forestlands by granting appropriate tenure/ management arrangement
4. Convergence approach among national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and civil society organizations (CSOs)
5. Area management approach. An integrated area development where all basic societal and economic services are delivered in an area for more impact
6. Capacity building of DENR frontliners, LGUs, CSO partners, people’s organizations and social entrepreneurs
7. Information education and communication, advocacy, and social mobilization; and
8. Certification systems. Example of these is the forest certification, which is a voluntary, market-based tool that supports Sustainable Forest Management or responsible forest management, verified by an independent third party in compliance with established principles, criteria, policies and standards prepared in multi-stakeholder processes that are transparent, democratic and inclusive.



DENR can deliver satisfactory service if stakeholder partners render their full support and solid trust to the Department. Accomplishments must go beyond inputs and outputs; they should be translated to gross national happiness. For Secretary Lopez, taking care of the environment is more effective if people have livelihood. People would understand more the value of the environment if they get something valuable out of it. On the other hand, industries that contribute to pollution should be obliged to recompense for the damage they make. *(Alvin Gatbonton)*

NICKY PERLAS.. (from page 5)

As regards the NGP, it will be the national anti-poverty program in the uplands, lowlands, and coastal areas.

“We just need to improve it. We are the hotspot of biodiversity, thus we will introduce more biodiversity in the agroforestry system, not monoculture. This in a way would resolve issues on conservation and protection of natural resources as well as livelihood of the communities,” said Perlas.

Aware that some projects had failed, he enumerated several factors that contributed to the failure of government programs and projects: problem on science and technology, corruption on both sides of the implementation, lack of monitoring, lack of performance audit, and most of all political pressure. Although, technology is sound, these factors affect the success of the projects.

Societal Transformation

Relative to the transformation of not only the DENR but also the society as a whole, Perlas said: “Working with the structures is the key.” Structures, he explained, are nothing but

human beings. “There is no such thing as structure without human beings. In social science, the new term for structure is structuration. The old science especially the 20th-century speaks of structure, but the new social science of the 21st century speaks about structuration which means that people create structures, and people change thus you can create a new structure. What is needed is a strong structure with well-defined functions,” he stressed.

“Structuration is a dynamic process of creating structures. The current structure can change because, in the end, people change, he stressed. What is needed is a strong structure with well-defined functions.

Asked if he is a troubleshooter, he replied, he is, given the true nature of civil society as a troubleshooter.

Hopefully, with Secretary Gina Lopez’s political will and aggressive stance, combined with Perlas’ expertise and 50 years of extensive work with the communities, we can transform the DENR and our society from being corrupt and indifferent to being honest and caring to nature and to caring and honest communities. *(Adona S.D.)*

WHAT MIGHT... (from page 6)

Our agriculture and forestry can be made sustainable. Chemical agriculture is a dead end, organic agriculture is the future. Let’s beware of any further chemical or biotechnology intensification. We can intensify our natural resource-based economy organically and still meet the goals of productivity and higher income across the board.

The NGP, our main greening program, is a winner, a no-regrets option, to use a climate change cliché. Let’s expand it if we must. Let it be a major source of decent and secure livelihoods, instead of being a transient, or highly devalued, source of jobs that hardly makes a dent on the poverty situation.

Our shared dream of a green Philippines should not only be a reality in wet season, it could be a reality in Sec Gina’s watch and, hopefully, forever. 🌱

CIVIL SERVICE @ 116: COMPASSION FOR ENVIRONMENT

Civil Service Commission (CSC) celebrates its 116th anniversary this September with the theme, “Malasakit Para Sa Taumbayan, Kapwa Kawani, at Kalikasan.”

Using #malasakitism as the unified hashtag in social media, this year’s theme message is anchored on the word, compassion: to instill in all public servants the “malasakit” or compassion for fellow countrymen, fellow workers, and the environment.

The line-up of activities for this year’s celebration includes the 100% display of Anniversary Banner in all government

offices’ façade; the official PCSA Kick-Off Activity R.A.C.E. to serve Fun RUN on September 3; the annual Government Chorale Competition that showcases the singing talents of government employees on September 13, and the Coastal cleanup and mangrove planting events scheduled on different dates for the whole month.

The CSC anniversary celebration culminates with the annual search for outstanding public officials and employees with exemplary and outstanding contributions to national development. Winners will be awarded in the Honors Awards Program Rites at the Malacañan

Palace.

Special treats will also be given to government employees as tokens of appreciation for their hard work and dedication. Selected government offices and private companies such as Inkrite, Star City, Great Image, Chopshop, Adobo Connection, Sisig Society, Manila Ocean Park, Dermcare, and SM Malls will give away discount packages and freebies.

The Commission encourages all civil servants to participate in the month-long anniversary celebration. *(Fatima Leya)*

Wildlife BUNAY-ILANG
Mga halaman at hayop na nabubuhay sa ilang.

Ang Pilipinas ay may **1,396** na uri ng hayop nito ay sa Pilipinas lamang matatagpuan

samantala, may humigit-kumulang na **16,000** uri ng halaman ang Pilipinas na bumubuo sa **5%** ng iba't-ibang uri ng halaman sa buong mundo

Data Source: Biodiversity Management Bureau as of August 2016

ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY: EIGHT HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MINDANAO-WIDE ENVIRONMENT SUMMIT

by: Yasmin Roselle Caparas

When Secretary Regina Paz “Gina” Lopez accepted the responsibility of taking over the helm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), she said that one of her goals for the agency is to transform its image from being “merely a regulator” to being a “development arm” that would make “people more economically prosperous through sustainable programs and projects.”

One of the priorities she has identified is the participation of civil society in the different levels of environment and natural resources management – policy formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring, and impact audit.

The Mindanao-wide Environment Summit was one step in realizing this priority. Held in Davao City on August 4 and 5, the event brought together different civil society organizations (CSOs), especially those representing the indigenous peoples (IPs), farmers and fisherfolk, and students to interact with DENR officials and discussed environmental issues besetting them.

Here are eight highlights of the summit:

1. The OYA Mindanao Theme

Day 1 of the summit had the theme, “Oya Mindanaw!” The word “oya” comes from a Manobo term signifying a cry or an appeal. This seemed fitting as the focus of the day was on the state of the Mindanao environment. The theme was later adopted as a battle cry by the participants throughout the two-day event.

2. The Kalipay sa Kinaiyahan exhibit



The exhibit was held at the Martin Building of the Ateneo de Davao University (AdDU), the summit’s main organizer. The Kalipay sa Kinaiyahan (translation: “Joy in Nature”) showcased local initiatives in protecting Mindanaoans and their environment. These included mercury-free gold panning, use of renewable energy, and display or sale of eco-friendly products from community-based livelihood activities.

3. The State of the Mindanao Environment Day (SOMEDay)

Atty. Romeo Cabarde Jr., chair of AdDU’s University Community Engagement and Advocacy Council, presented SOMEDay to a crowd of about a hundred from civil society, the DENR, and the academe at the Finster Auditorium.



The presentation was replete with photos and videos of the richness of Mindanao’s natural resources, threats to their continued existence, and recommendations to eliminate or reduce these threats. These recommendations included policy changes; increased involvement and cooperation among the community, government agencies, and other stakeholders; stricter

regulations; application of better scientific methodologies or techniques; streamlining of conflicting tenurial instruments; and “cleaning the house”, that is, getting rid of corruption within the bureaucracy.

4. The Pakighinabi Kauban si Sec. Gina

This portion (translation: “Interview with Sec. Gina”) allowed members of the audience to personally present their problems to Sec. Lopez or other DENR officials for remediation. Some even brought supporting documents, which designated Undersecretary Nicanor Perlas collected for further study. The Secretary also introduced the members of her management team, particularly the undersecretaries and bureau directors.



5. Turn-over of the Mindanao Environmental Agenda

The Agenda is actually a narrative on the state of the Mindanao environment as presented earlier in the day by Atty. Cabarde, including the recommendations to address the presented environmental issues. Before submitting the documents to Sec. Lopez, AdDU President Fr. Joel Tabora, SJ announced the commitment of the university – from its faculty to its students – to join the fight against environmental destruction.

Sec. Lopez later turned over the Agenda to President Rodrigo Duterte, the event’s special guest.

6. Presidential Commitment

The arrival of the President was definitely not in the original schedule, but he was gracious enough to accept the invitation to the delight of the audience mostly made up of AdDU students. The event was also telecast live on national television.

In his speech, Pres. Duterte stressed his determination to protect not only Davao City but the whole country for future generations. The President delivered a message to environmental law violators, particularly the mining and logging industries which he described as in their “sunset hours”.

He also reiterated the need to dismantle fish cages at the Laguna de Bay that may be destroying the livelihood of common fisherfolk.



7. High-level support for the strategic planning workshop

Day 2 of the summit was devoted to a strategic planning workshop with CSOs from all regions of Mindanao (except ARMM). The opening was graced by officials from different national agencies, which included:



- Agriculture Secretary **Manny Piñol**
- Health Secretary **Dr. Paulyñ Ubial**
- National Commission on Indigenous Peoples Chair **Atty. Leonor Oralde-Quintayo**
- Philippine Army 10th Infantry Division Commander Major General **Rafael Valencia**, and;
- Philippine National Police Region 11 Logistics Chief Police Senior Superintendent **Restito Gatera**

Sec. Piñol presented the DA’s plans to improve the lives of farmers and fisherfolk with environmentally-sustainable programs. He called the convergence between the DA and the DENR as “a marriage made in heaven.”

The officials gave their messages of support to the DENR Secretary and committed to address presented issues fully and promptly.

8. A side-trip to IP evacuees

Sec. Lopez took an unscheduled trip to the Haran compound of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Davao City, where more than 300 lumads of the Manobo tribe had sought shelter after fleeing from their lands in Bukidnon and Davao del Norte.

A council of elders pleaded with the environment chief for action towards mining companies that had encroached on their ancestral lands. They alleged that military personnel have been protecting the mining firms, and have bribed and armed other IP members in exchange for land.

The secretary has called for the immediate demilitarization of lumad communities and for the prioritization of the said mining companies in the ongoing mining audit. She has also vowed to assist the evacuees in returning to their lands.



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