



PANAY SOON TO BE THE BAMBOO CAPITAL OF PH

SEEING the potential of Panay Island to grow healthy bamboos, DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu proposed the possibility of making Panay Island the country's Bamboo Capital.

Bamboos thrive well in many areas in Panay, disclosed Secretary Roy A. Cimatu during the orientation meeting of the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF-ELCAC) in June 20, 2019 at the RDC Hall of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) in Iloilo City.

Secretary Cimatu is also the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security (CORDS) and has met with the regional heads of the different national government agencies in Western Visayas during the meeting.

"Bamboos are in abundance here in Panay. I saw it when I visited Northern Iloilo and I suppose, we can

make Panay Island as the country's bamboo capital," he said.

Secretary Cimatu hopes to pursue bamboo plantation in the same way which the National Greening Program (NGP) is being implemented. He saw its potential of mitigating the impacts of climate change. Indeed, bamboo forests serves as carbon sink while producing oxygen as well. Its environmental benefits include being a natural control for soil erosion, regulate water levels in watersheds, conserve biodiversity and beautify the landscape, to mention a few.

It was during the orientation meeting when Secretary Cimatu discussed the respective programs and projects of the different national government agencies which provide basic services and livelihood opportunities in the rural communities. This move is

aimed at ending the local communist armed conflict in this part of the country.

The CORDS will be a support to the National Task Force to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) in the country. Through Executive Order No. 70, the Duterte Administration has institutionalized the Whole-of-Nation Approach in order to attain inclusive and sustainable peace. With this EO, government agencies shall be working together to deliver intensified development and other peace-building initiatives in conflict-affected and vulnerable communities.

Secretary Cimatu will also meet with the local leaders in Western Visayas to include all the mayors, governors and representatives to further discuss development and security issues in the region and how to address them.

DENR 6 has a new RED

On January 10, 2019, all employees of the DENR Region 6 warmly welcomed the change of leadership thru a simple turn-over ceremony held at the Courtyard of the regional office.

The turn-over between outgoing RED and now ASec for Western Mindanao Jim O Sampulna,



and incoming RED and former Boracay Ground Commander Francisco "Toto" E. Milla, Jr. was officiated by Undersecretary for Field Operations Juan Miguel T. Cuna.

After the turn-over, a toast was made to welcome RED Milla to DENR Region 6, led by USec Cuna. Also present to witness the event were Assistant Secretary for Field Operations-Visayas Marcial C. Amaro, ARD Jesse L. Vego of the Technical Services, ARD Livino B. Duran of the Management Services, EMB RD Sophie T. Manuel, the PENROs, CENROs, Division Chiefs and regional employees.

RED Milla's reassignment was mandated by virtue of Special Order No. 2019-02 dated January 7, 2019. He was formerly assigned as the Ground Commander for Boracay in April 3, 2018 until his installation as the RED for Region 6.

RED Milla is a native of Bula, Camarines Sur, a BFD scholar and a distinguished graduate of Bachelor of Science in Forestry (1981-1985) from the University of the Philippines (UP) Los Baños where he received a UP Leadership Awardee. He was awarded as Outstanding Bulaño in 2010.

He began his career in government service as Forester I with the then Bureau of Forest Development (BFD) in Region 5 on August 1, 1985. From there, he rose in the ranks holding the positions of Forestry Supervisor I with the now DENR; Chief, Forest Management Specialist; as OIC, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO); as OIC Regional Technical Director for Lands in Region 4-A; as Regional Director in Region 3; as Ground Commander of the National Task Force - Boracay; and now, as Regional Executive Director for Region 6.



DENR-EMB leads Earth Hour 2019

The DENR-EMB 6 led the observance of the annual Earth Hour in March 30, 2019 at the Iloilo Convention Center, Mandurriao District, Iloilo City.

More than 400 individuals coming from the different government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the academe and the private sector joined Earth Hour 2019 celebration with the theme #Connect2Earth. It aims to inspire and empower everyone to take tangible actions for

the betterment of the planet.

Earth Hour 2019 was done in partnership with Globe Telecom and Premier Islands Management Corporation, Iloilo Convention Center. A Zumba Dance livens up the event and prepared the participants for the highlight: the lighting of the 60+ Earth Hour logo.

Present during the activity were: EMB 6 Regional Director Dr. Sophie T. Manuel; Engr. Noel

Hechanova, Head of the Iloilo City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO); Ms. Leng Hubag, Property Manager of Iloilo Convention Center; Mr. Jan Rae Aguilos, Marketing Officer of the Iloilo Business Park; and ASec. Paul Anthony Pangilinan, Commissioner-at-Large of the National Youth Commission (NYC). Each one of them gave inspiring and empowering messages to the participants.



DENR 6 distributes land titles

Beneficiaries of the *Handog Titulo* in Iloilo Province were beside themselves with joy upon their acceptance of their respective titles last February 26, 2019.

The DENR 6 through its Provincial ENR Office in Iloilo distributed a total of one hundred seventy seven (177) land titles to beneficiaries of Brgy. Ungka II, Pavia, Iloilo.

Handog Titulo is a program of the DENR that seeks to expedite the processing and issuance of public land patents to qualified beneficiaries, and is aligned to the top ten priority programs of DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu namely, Improved Land Administration and Management. It is a continued support of the Department in partnership with Local Government Units in public land titling, as security of tenure for socio-economic upliftment and development.

The *Handog Titulo* program was attended by Pavia Vice Mayor Gumban, SB Luigi Gorriceta, PENR Officer Raul L. Lorilla and staff, CENR Officer Salvador C. Manglinong, Jr. and staff, and barangay officials of Brgy. Ungka II, Pavia, Iloilo.



PENRO Capiz leads Arbor Day 2019

PENRO Capiz led the observance of Arbor Day 2019 in support to the provincial government of Capiz' One Million Trees in One Day Challenge. The contingent from both DENR regional and field offices numbering to 145 employees, along with provincial government employees, Interpolcom Panay Island Chapter (NGO) and one Peoples Organization has planted a total of 10,000 Acacia mangium and 50 Narra tree seedlings. ARD for Technical Services Livino B. Duran led the DENR team in support of this year's Arbor Day celebration conducted at the 3rd ID, PA, Camp Macario Peralta, Jamindan, Capiz.

Boracay gets more support

SIX months after Boracay Island reopens to the public, more support is coming in to sustain the gains of the rehabilitation activities spearheaded by the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF).

On April 25, 2019, the Star 8 Green Technology Corporation and Southwest Travel and Tours donated vehicles for use in the island, namely: three electric motorbikes, one unit solar-powered banca and one electric medical rescue van. The electric motorbikes are for patrol in the inland areas while the solar-powered banca is for monitoring of the island's shores. The electric medical van shall be used for disaster and rescue operations.

Meanwhile, last March 28, 2019 the Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines and Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines, Inc. donated a Surf Rake beach cleaner

to keep Boracay's white sands spic-and-span. The Surf Rake can capture the smallest objects from the sand such as broken glass, plastic, syringes, cigarette butts, cans, algae, straws, stones (3/8" to 6" in diameter), sea grass, seaweed, small pieces of wood and pop-tops. It helps clean Boracay's white sands and make it safer without those debris.

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, the BIATF Chair, gladly accepted all donations and signed the Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) with the donors on separate dates.

Another progressive development in support of Boracay rehabilitation was the adoption of Wetland No. 8 by the JG Summit Holdings. A MOA was signed between the BIATF and JG Summit Holdings on March 8, 2019.

Wetland No. 8 spans 1.8 hectares and is one of the nine remaining wetlands in the island. The adopter's initial plans include conduct of studies, including bathymetric surveys, profiling, and biodiversity assessment, which is the first phase of the rehab. Then the formulation and the drafting of the rehabilitation plan anchored on the results of the said activities, the second phase. Implementation of the rehabilitation plan in consonance with the schedule prescribed by the DENR is the last phase.

This is another welcome development for the island as Secretary Cimatu vowed to reclaim back the wetlands. Its unique ecosystem is vital to sustaining the ecological balance and tourism value of Boracay Island.



Ceremonial turn-over of electric vehicles



Medical Rescue Van



Solar-powered Banca



Electric Motorbikes

Secretary Cimatu wants innovative policies for sustainable mining

The DENR-MGB in Region 6 hosted the 9th Visayas Mineral and Energy Summit held at the Diversion 21 Hotel on May 23-25, 2019.

In his message during the Summit, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu underscored the necessity to strike a balance between sustainable mining and economic development for the country.

"The Environment Department continues to exert efforts in coming up with new and innovative policies to strike a balance between the interests of the mining and mineral extraction industry, the host or

affected communities, and the sectors opposed to mining," he said.

Secretary Cimatu also underscored the good opportunity to boost the mineral and energy industry but in a sustainable manner.

"I know that many of you, mining engineers here, have this innovative mind and caring heart to balance development and environmental protection. With your expertise, you can make good of this industry without hurting our environment," he added.

The Summit's theme: "Minerals and Energy - Indispensable in the government's

Build, Build, Build program," aims to accelerate infrastructure building to induce development, industry growth, creation of jobs, and improvement of people's lives with the minerals and energy industry. Such a goal requires great amount of energy and mineral.

With Secretary Cimatu are DENR 6 Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr, MGB Director Wilfredo G. Moncano, PSEM President, MGB Region 6 Regional Director Roger A. De Dios, and immediate past president of PSEM, Engr. Armando L. Malicse.





RED Milla and Division Chiefs led the foot parade as the kick off of Environment Month Celebration



Opening of Tiangge sang DENR



Undersecretary Benny D. Antiporda



RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr

DENR 6 CELEBRATES ENV

Theme: Beat

In observance of the Environment Month 2019 with the theme: Beat Air Pollution, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Western Visayas has conducted activities to highlight DENR's biggest event, namely:

DENR Day. On June 10, employees and officials of the DENR 6 led by RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr. joined the **foot parade** to kick-off the DENR Day activities. The foot parade started at the Iloilo Sunburst Park and culminated at the DENR 6 regional office at the Port Area. Right after the foot parade, a mass was conducted at the DENR 6 Courtyard. It was followed by a ceremonial ribbon cutting which formally opened the *Tiangge sa DENR*, which showcased recyclable materials, DENR Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, native products, foods and fruits. **Family Day.** The DENR 6 conducted its Family Day activities on June 17, thereby allowing the employees and officials to take a day off and have some bonding time through dance and games. Opening the DENR 6 Family Day is the Zumba Dance which prepped up the day's activities. After the Zumba, different DENR offices

engaged in a competitive yet friendly, and amusing Cheers and Yells. Then, it was followed by the *Larong Lahi*, traditional Filipino games which aptly define our Filipino culture. It strengthens positive character such as teamwork, patience, sacrifice and respect for rules. **Simultaneous River Cleanup.** The DENR 6 together with the academe and stakeholders has conducted a simultaneous River Cleanup on June 22, 2019 in strategic points along the Iloilo-Batiano Rivers. The activity was led by the DENR-EMB to help declog rivers and "esteros" from wastes. A total of 113 participants joined the cleanup and together, they were able to collect eighty three (83) sacks with a total weight of 475.03 kilograms. The waste distribution are as follows: 114.4 kg., biodegradable; 47.2 kg., recyclables; and 309.83 kg., residual. **Talaslikasan** and the **Kalikha**. The two activities were simultaneously conducted on June 25, with the *Talaslikasan*, an environmental quiz, held at the Courtyard and the *Kalikha*, an organic painting contest, was held at the Activity Center. *Talaslikasan* winners are students from **Aklan** (1st Runner-up), **Iloilo** (2nd Runner-up) and **Antique** (3rd Runner-



Arbor Day Celebration in Capiz



Talaslikasan 2019 Contest

Butanding swim across TINMR waters



A young whale shark locally called butanding had visited the Taklong Island National Marine Reserve (TINMR) in the island province of Guimaras.

The gentle giant of the sea was seen swimming around the marine reserve in the morning of April 30, 2019. A certain RB Flores Bitala said he captured the moment when the butanding slowly approached their fishing boat using his mobile phone. He further disclosed they had sightings of three whale sharks and dolphins swimming around the area sometime in March.

The presence of whale sharks, dolphins, and sea turtles indicates that the coastal and marine ecosystem of an area is healthy and free from any disturbances. "It might also be due to the abundance of krill and small fishes which they feed on," said OIC-Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) of TINMR, Rhett Arthur Diana.

Guimaras PENR Officer Vicente Sardina instructed the PENRO technical staff assigned in the area to ensure the protection of these endangered marine species.

"There is a need for us to strengthen our conservation and protection efforts in TINMR. It is a marine protected area with rich food for marine animals such as whale sharks and dolphins. Their sightings can serve as additional tourist attraction but one that needs strict regulation," said DENR 6 Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr./###



Mutya ng Kalikasan 2019 winners

ENVIRONMENT MONTH 2019

Air Pollution

up). Meanwhile, *Kalikha* has eleven participants who used organic materials such as . Winners for the *Kalikha* were awarded to student artists from Oton National High School (1st and 3rd Placers) and Panit-an National High School (2nd Placer). **Arbor Day.** On June 25, ARD Livino B. Duran led the contingent of DENR in planting a total of 10,050 tree seedlings at the 3ID, PA, Camp Macario Peralta in Jamindan, Capiz. **Mixed Volleyball.** On June 27, ten teams from the six PENROs, two from the bureaus (EMB & MGB), one from the Technical Services and one from the Management Services played the Mixed Volleyball at Brgy. Concepcion's covered court. The winners are: *PENRO Iloilo* (Champion); *PENRO Aklan* (1st Runner-up); and *PENRO Capiz* (2nd Runner-up). **Environment Month Culmination Program.** The Environment Month 2019 Culmination Program was held at the Diversion 21 Hotel's Ann Margaret Hall, and was well-attended by more than six hundred employees coming from the regional office, line bureaus and field offices. The program first had the *Service Awards and Performance Awards* to deserving employees. It was followed by the awarding of

winners for the *Talaslikasan*, *Laro ng Lahi* and Mixed Volleyball. The dance competition called *Likasayaw* showcased employees' talent on cultural dancing. The beauty pageant called *Mutya ng Kalikasan 2019* has eleven gorgeous participants who vied for the title. It also showcased recycled gowns called *Terno Resiklo*. Also gracing the event was CSC Regional Director Nelson G. Sarmiento who gave the inspirational message and insights about Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS). In the afternoon, USec for SWM and LGU Concerns, and concurrent USec for SCIS, Benny Antiporda along with Iloilo Lone District Congresswoman Jam-Jam Baronda and former 5th District Congressman Rolex Suplico also graced the culmination program. RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr. Introduced Usec Benny D. Antiporda who gave his message and appreciated RED Milla for inviting him to the event. USec Antiporda urged all DENR 6 officials and employees to save our environment seriously by changing our attitudes especially towards proper solid waste management. He underscored the success of Boracay cleanup, and relayed the efforts being undertaken now for Manila Bay cleanup.



Winners for Kalikha Contest

LIST OF 2019 ELECTED OFFICIALS REGION 6 - WESTERN VISAYAS

GOVERNOR

- AKLAN- Hon Florencio T. Miraflores
- ANTIQUE- Hon. Rhodora J. Cadiao
- CAPIZ- Hon. Esteban Evan B. Contreras
- GUIMARAS- Samuel T. Gumarin
- ILOILO- Arthur R. Defensor, Jr.
- NEGROS OCCIDENTAL- Eugenio Jose V. Lacson

CONGRESSMAN/ CONGRESSWOMAN

AKLAN

- Hon. Carlito S. Marquez, 1st District
- Hon. Teodoro T. Haresco Jr., 2nd District

ANTIQUE

- Hon Loren B. Legarda. Lone District of Antique

CAPIZ

- Hon. Emmanuel A. Billiones, 1st District

GUIMARAS

- Hon. Ma. Lucille L. Nava

ILOILO

- Hon. Janette L. Garin, 1st District
- Hon. Michael B. Gorriceta, 2nd District
- Hon. Lorenz R. Defensor, 3rd District
- Hon. Braeden John Q. Biron, 4th District
- Hon. Raul C. Tupas, 5th District
- Hon. Julienne L. Baronda, Lone District of Iloilo

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL

- Hon. Gerardo P. Valmayor Jr., 1st District
- Leo Rafael M. Cueva, 2nd District
- Francisco B. Benitez, 3rd District
- Juliet Marie D. Ferrer, 4th District
- Ma. Lourdes T. Arroyo, 5th District
- Genaro M. Alvarez, Jr., 6th District

(List of other elected officials will be printed here on the next issue)

San Jose, Antique soon to become the cleanest town in PH

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu wanted San Jose de Buenavista to work its way up to becoming the model as the best and cleanest capital town in the Philippines.

Secretary Cimatu expressed his desire to cleanup San Jose de Buenavista in a meeting with Mayor Elmer C. Untaran of San Jose de Buenavista last May 27, 2019. He then laid out the next steps to undertake.

"We first need to put up a Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) in Bagumbayan Bridge to treat the wastewater discharged by the commercial establishments," he said. Secretary Cimatu also underscored the need for San Jose Water District to build a separate STP for household liquid wastes before it drains to rivers and creeks.

He also ordered the strict implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management (ESWM) Act in all affected barangays in San Jose to put up a Sanitary Landfill, and to create the Task Force Bagumbayan Creek that shall oversee the successful implementation of the project.

Lastly, he reminded both the local government unit and DENR Region 6 officials to continue in their efforts in rehabilitating the Malandog River and to make it a tourist destination. He also emphasized that the DENR needs to address the concerns and effect interventions on all of the seven major rivers in Antique.

Antique PENR Officer Andres T. Untal actively supports the Secretary's instruction and has worked closely with the LGU and the Malandog River Task Force. He also led the cleanup activities and conducted awareness campaigns through lectures and pulong pulong in the different barangays of the province.



DENR 6 makes change work for women

MARCH is all about Women's Month celebration. With its theme: We Make Change Work for Women, the DENR 6 has lined up activities to drumbeat the celebration.

An Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign on the newly approved RA 11210 or the 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law and its Implementing Rules and Regulations was discussed through a short lecture on March 25, 2019 by Personnel Chief Dorothy Alcon.

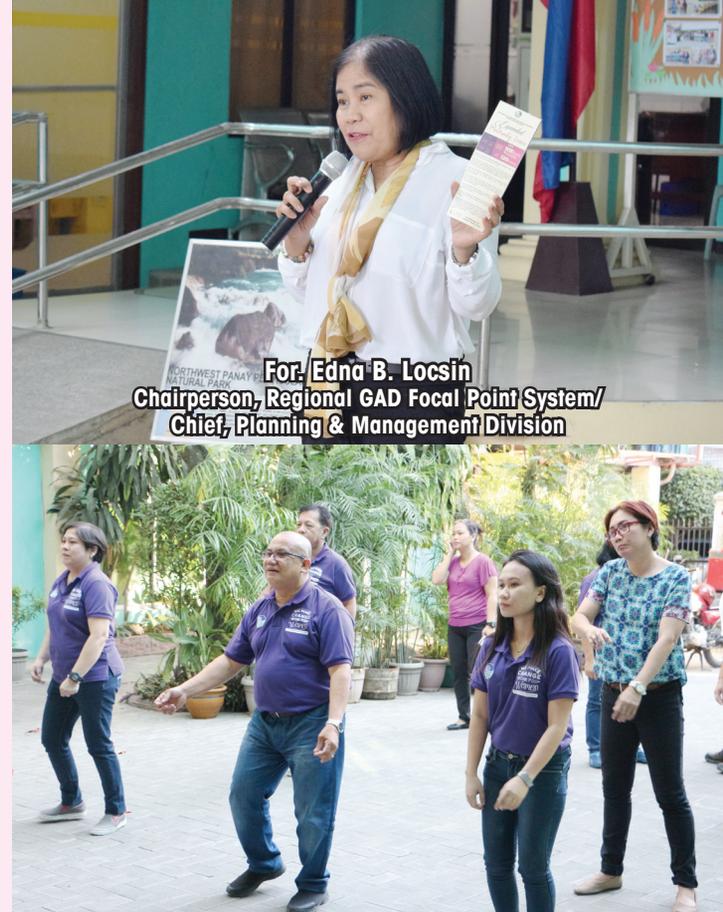
"We are glad that the Expanded Maternity Leave has been approved. It now provides extended leave benefits to our employees who are in their childbearing years," said PMD Chief Edna B. Locsin, also the Chairperson of Regional GAD Focal Point System.

In support of the IEC drive among the employees, the RPAO produced an in-house brochure on RA 11210 and distributed the same during the lecture.

Other activities conducted for the Women's Month were the: 1. Purple Fridays, or the wearing of purple shirts by all employees as part of the celebration; 2. Zumba dance for a healthy lifestyle; and 3. We Make Change Work for Women: Understanding and Embracing Life's Transitions for Optimum Office Productivity, a learning event.

The conduct of the learning event was an eye opener to many DENR 6 employees. The event was conceptualized by the Administrative Division to assist DENR 6' workforce in understanding the midlife transition which usually occurs from age 40 to 65.

"A big chunk of the DENR 6 population belongs to middle adulthood. Thus, the management is happy to assist them in dealing with the changes that occurs in this time of their lives for them to achieve their optimum office productivity," said Ernest C. Federiso, Administrative Division Chief.



For. Edna B. Locsin
Chairperson, Regional GAD Focal Point System/
Chief, Planning & Management Division



Dr. Daisy C. Daquilanea
Forensic Psychiatrist



Nuncie Evidente-Pampliega
Guidance Counselor

PRODUCED BY:

Regional Public Affairs Office (RPAO)
Regional, PENRO, CENRO, EMB and
MGB Information Officers

ADVISER

FRANCISCO E. MILLA, JR.
Regional Executive Director

CONSULTANTS

LIVINO B. DURAN
OIC-ARD for Technical Services

JESSE L. VEGO
OIC-ARD for Management Services

PENRO Negros Occ. to launch *CUPakinabangan para sa Kapaligiran*



PENR Officer Edgardo M. Rostata of Negros Occidental met with representatives from different food establishments in Bacolod City and proposed the launching of the "CUPakinabangan para sa Kapaligiran".

The initiative calls for collaboration with the food

establishments as it will gather used cups from them which would serve as pots for seedlings. The used cups will then be given to People's Organizations (POs) for their use.

"Instead of using seed plastic bags, our POs will be provided with used cups as pots for seedlings. This will help food establishments to recycle their cups and lessen the volume of plastic wastes going into the sanitary land fill," said PENRO Rostata.

Single-use plastics such as used cups are one of the major pollutants that threaten our marine ecosystem. This CUPakinabangan initiative will encourage other establishments as well to recycle their cups. Thus, instead of throwing it away after one use, it will become an alternative seed pot to put it into good use.

Sustainability Week #LoveBoracay

The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force promoted the need to sustain the gains of the rehabilitation efforts in the island of Boracay thru a week-long event called Sustainability Week and dubbed as *Love Boracay: Celebrate, Rehabilitate*.

Love Boracay ran from April 26 to May 1, 2019 and celebrated the rehabilitated island. It was aimed at inculcating a deeper sense of commitment among stakeholders to sustain their efforts. Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, in his message during the opening program, reminded everyone of the need for sustainability.

"The rehabilitation of Boracay is not yet complete and remains a work in progress. Building sustainability requires time as well as the continuing support of the people of Boracay," he said.

On May 1, the last day of Love Boracay has coincided with the observance of the Month of the Ocean (MOO). The DENR and LGU-Malay kicked off the events for the day with the release of three Hawksbill turtles at the Puka Beach in Brgy. Yapak, Boracay. It was a fitting event as the MOO adopted the theme: *Free the Sea from Marine Debris*. With rehabilitated coastal area, Boracay Island is again

home to marine turtles.

A series of Sustainability Talks were also conducted at the Brgy. Hall of Manocmanoc in Boracay Island. Lectures included "Say No to Plastic Straw" campaign; sustainable marine tourism; and ProCoast Project in Region 6 in collaboration with the GIZ. "On behalf of the DENR, we are grateful to our partners. We are giving our one hundred percent support to sustainability projects such as this," said RED Francisco E. Milla.

Also present during the Sustainability Week are former BMB Director Crisanta Marlene P. Rodriguez, ARD for Technical Services Livino B. Duran, CENRO Boracay Rhodellababit, CDD Chief Danilo Lorilla and DENR Region 7 RED



Turtle release

Gilbert C. Gonzales, Zoological Society of London (ZSL) Country Manager Godofredo Villapando, Environmental Advocate Ms. Antoinette Taus and employees of the local government unit of Malay, Aklan also graced the sustainability talks.

Malandog River is Antique's Next Big Thing



Malandog River
Hamtic, Antique

Malandog River is Antique's next big thing.

Known as the site where the ten Bornean datus has landed in 12th century, the Malandog River is being rehabilitated to become an ecotourism destination in the province of Antique.

Endowed with its own unique river ecosystem, Malandog River is a source of abundant fishing livelihood in times past, even until today. But with the passage of time, its once abundant and pristine state had fallen victim to modernization – and thus, to pollution.

In wanting to regain back the old glory of Malandog River, and in honor of its historical value, DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ordered the rehabilitation of Malandog River. The move

also has the strong support of former senator, now Antique's Congresswoman, Lorna Regina "Loren" Bautista Lopez.

"Malandog River is the only ancient tourist destination in the country," said Cimatu. If such historicity is coupled with modern development along with conservation strategies, it could spur on ecotourism activities for Antique.

Antique's Binirayan Festival commemorates the historic landing of the ten Bornean Datus and celebrates Antiqueños' noble history every April of the year. Binirayan literally means "where they landed."

Since last year, important rehabilitation activities had been conducted which include:

removal of all fish traps/debris, and with the presence of Bantay Suba, Malandog is continuously monitored; the completion of a Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Development Plan which is set to be presented to the Malandog River Task Force for approval; construction of infrastructures for riverbanks and rehabilitation of river embankment as part of ecotourism development; final report on assessment, profiling and characterization of Malandog River is yet being finalized; information campaigns among schools and communities is ongoing, the same with project monitoring and supervision; and a video documentation that highlights the importance of Malandog's history in connection with the Binirayan Festival.

IT'S ON THE RIGHT TRACK

The weeks following his installation as the new Regional Executive Director (RED) for DENR Western Visayas, RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr. visited the different field offices to encourage the employees to work harder and check on the progress and status of implementation of priority programs, such as the National Greening Program (NGP).

His first stop was at the project site in Brgy. Cagay, Roxas City on January 16, 2019. A mangrove project was successfully implemented there. From there, he visited an urban greening school site in Brgy. Agustin Navarra, Ivisan, Capiz. The last stop for the day's work trip was at the upland NGP reforestation site in Tangalan, Aklan.

On March 7, 2019, RED Milla visited PENRO Guimaras and took the opportunity to have a face-to-face conversation with the employees. After the visit at the PENR Office, he inspected the 27-hectare NGP site planted with tree species of Auri and Mangium in 2014. RED Milla also visited the nursery site in Brgy. Lapaz, Nueva Valencia prior to his visit to the Taklong Island National Marine Reserve (TINMR).

From Panay Island, RED Milla also went to visit the province of Negros Occidental and attended the 1st Provincial Management Conference on March 18, 2019. In his short message, he encouraged all officials and employees of PENRO Negros Occidental to work in harmony with

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's ten priority agenda. He also underscored the integration of EMB and MGB to DENR and made mention of Secretary's tall order to give focus on river cleanup in their areas of responsibility.

After gracing the PMC, he visited CENRO Bago City under CENR Officer Joan Nathaniel Gerangaya's lead, and the different NGP sites, namely: 1) Brgy. Tibsoc, San Enrique, where a 16-hectare mangrove area was planted with Bungalon species in 2013 by members of Tibsoc Talaba Growers Association (TTGA), the Peoples Organization (PO) contracted by DENR to plant and manage the area; 2) Spur 15, Bunga, Don Salvador Benedicto, where the 50-hectare area was planted with timber in 2011 by the Bagong Silang BINHI Farmers Association, Inc. (BSBFAI); 3) Spur 28, Don Salvador Benedicto, where a 75-hectare area was also planted with timber in 2017 by the Don Salvador Benedicto Agro Forestry Association (DSBAFA); and 4) Brgy. Kumaliskis, Don Salvador Benedicto, where members of DSBAFA had planted a 20-hectare area with timber in 2014.

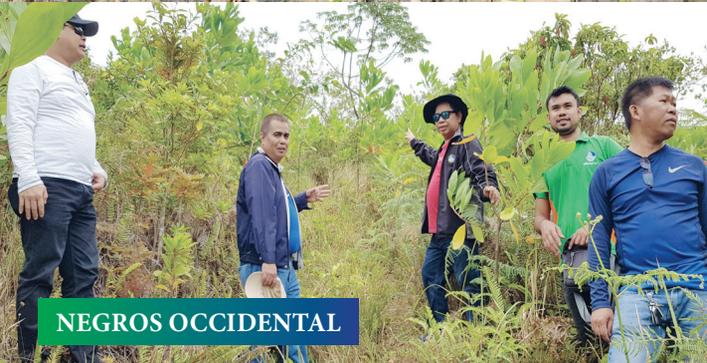
On March 23, he paid a visit to a 50-hectare 2018 NGP site planted with high value crops in Brgy. Sinogbuhan, San Joaquin, Iloilo. These are but few of the trips RED Milla made to the field offices to ensure the strong implementation of DENR's program and projects.



GUIMARAS



CAPIZ



NEGROS OCCIDENTAL



ILOILO



AKLAN

R.I.V.E.Rs for Life Award

The year 2019 saw DENR field offices busy doing the river profiling and cleanup in their respective areas of jurisdiction. This is also in line with DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's crafting of the R.I.V.E.Rs for Life Award.

An acronym for Recognizing Individuals/Institutions towards Vibrant and Enhanced Rivers (R.I.V.E.Rs) For Life Award, the competition is geared towards raising awareness on the need to protect and conserve the country's rivers as the lifeblood of the earth and human civilization. It shall also ensure the rivers' suitability, sustainability and future improvements for their proper use or classification.

"Our clean rivers are a measure of our good governance and efficiency," said Secretary Cimatu. Thus, he gave the tall order for DENR field offices to implement and enforce compliance of all stakeholders to ENR laws and regulations.

Through the R.I.V.E.Rs for Life Award, the DENR will make appropriate mitigations and interventions to arrest the worsening condition of river systems nationwide. This shall be in collaboration with the local government units and other stakeholders. In fact, the list of interventions undertaken for the river include: 1. Aesthetic water quality improvement; 2. Solid waste management; 3. Partnership and Community Mobilization; and 4. Information, Education and Communication campaign.

Only Class C rivers which are sources of livelihood and places for recreation are allowed to join the contest. Winning entries are awarded every June 10 of the year beginning 2019, in time for the DENR Anniversary.

