



# Kalikasan

## Western Visayas



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The Environment Chief disclosed his plan of making Panay Island in Western Visayas as the center for bamboo products in the country during the 1st ASEAN Bamboo Congress held at the Iloilo Convention Center on August 13, 2019.



Sec. Cimatu engaged Mayors from Negros Occidental led by Governor Eugenio Jose V. Lacson in a huddle meeting and listened to their issues and concerns after an Orientation Workshop on Environmental Laws on July 25, 2019.

## CIMATU LEADS WV TO A SECURED, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



DENR 6 employees gladly welcome Secretary Cimatu during his visit to the regional office on December 12, 2019.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu came at a time when the DENR have to face the gargantuan task of cleaning up the world famous Boracay Island; at a time when the Department's credibility is being questioned if indeed, it could deliver its mandates.

He worked with other national government agencies as Chair of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) and boosted the Department's image after Boracay Island's rehabilitation proved successful. The Boracay Island rehab has become the measuring stick of other environmental rehab efforts in other tourism destinations in the country. As a result, trust rating for the DENR rose that even the international community lauded the Department's efforts.

### Working with his men

Secretary Cimatu made series of visitations among regional offices to see how DENR employees are doing at the regional level. He

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# DENR-EMB 6 led conduct of world environmental health day

An estero clean up was organized by the DENR-EMB 6 in observance of the World Environmental Health Day on October 5, 2019.

Hundreds of volunteers joined the activity. Other national government agencies such as the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine National Police (PNP), and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) along with Metro Iloilo Water District (MIWD), West Visayas State University (WVSU), Cen-

tral Philippine University (CPU), and residents of Brgy. Montinola and Brgy. Lourdes also lend their time and effort as volunteers to the clean up of the

Dungon Creek, a tributary of the Iloilo River.

A total of 156 sacks with an estimated weight of 2,660 kilograms or 2.9 tons were collected

by the volunteers. Plastic wastes, such as sachets and food packaging are the dominant composition of the total wastes collected.

The observance of the World Environmental Health Day in the Philippines is by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 595 signed by the President on October 1, 2018. The DENR's participation is by way of an *Estero Clean Up* in support to the Anti-Dengue drive of the Department of Health (DOH).###



## Western Visayas hosted 2nd R&D congress of EAAF

Western Visayas played host to the 2nd Research and Development Congress of East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) for Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the Course of Climate Change in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental last October 7-11, 2019.

The country's 7th Ramsar site is the Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area (NOCWCA), thus, it is the fitting venue for the 2nd R&D Congress of the EAAF.

The event was organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR-ERDB) and was held at the L'Fisher Hotel. It was attended by around 200 delegates from different countries, namely: Russia, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, United States of America, Cambodia, Japan and Pakistan.

The Congress has featured four plenary talks namely: *Frontline Innovation and Breakthroughs for Sustainable Urban Future for People, Wetlands, and Waterbirds* by Dr. Kiyoaki Ozaki, Deputy Director General and Senior Researcher at Yamashita Institute for Ornithology in Japan; *Effects/Impacts of Climate Change to Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds* by Dr. Lu Cai, Science Unit Adviser, EAAFP Science Unit in China; *Adaptable and Enabling Instruments to Protect Wetland Habitats Along Flyway* by Dr. Sheila Vergara, Director, Bio-

diversity Information Management, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity; and *Appropriate Management Strategies on Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds* by Dr. Judith Szabo, Professor, Universidade Federal de Bahia, Brazil.

Wetlands in the Philippines are haven to more than eighty (80) species of migratory birds that visit the country every year. In line with the need to protect the species and the wetlands, the 2nd EAAF R&D Congress has also discussed the following sub-themes: impacts of climate change to

wetlands and migratory waterbirds; appropriate management strategies on wetland habitat of waterbirds; adaptable enabling instruments in protecting wetland habitats along flyway; and frontline innovation and breakthroughs for sustainable urban future for people, wetlands, and waterbirds.###





# MGB, EMB have new regional directors

The two line bureaus of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 6 have new Regional Directors.

A change in leadership for the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) came on August 16, 2019, which held a simple turn-over ceremony at their office.

Engr. Raul A. Laput, formerly the Division Chief of Mine Management Division of MGB Region 7, is now assigned as OIC Regional Director for MGB 6.

Meanwhile, former RD Roger A. De Dios thanked all MGB 6 officials and employees for their support during his stay in the region.

On September 2, 2019, the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) conducted their turn-over ceremony between outgoing RD Sophie T. Manuel and Atty. Ramar Niel Pascua, their incoming RD, after the flag raising ceremony.

Outgoing EMB RD Sophie T. Manuel thanked all by saying: "I have had the pleasure and honor

working with the best employees" and goes on to detail how they toiled long and hard during the Boracay challenge which she called "one of the rarest trial" the Department had worked on. In his acceptance speech, Atty. Pascua vowed to continue the responsibility and do his best to serve the people.

DENR 6 Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr. officiated the turn-over ceremonies and also encouraged MGB and EMB employees to support their respective new regional directors.



## DENR 6 conducts capability training on bamboo propagation



As part of enhancing their knowledge and understanding on bamboo potentials, the DENR thru its Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) conducted the three-day *Capability Training on Bamboo Propagation, Plantation Development, Rehabilitation, Enterprise and Value Chain* at Damires Hills, Tierra Verde in Janiway, Iloilo on October 28-31, 2019.

The training was attended by the Forest Extension Officers and Coordinators of the Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP) from Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Offices (P/CENROs) in the region. They were taught the importance and usage of bamboo, the proper way of propagating it and its economic benefits.

Gregorio E. Santos, Jr., Center Head of the Urban and Biodiversity Research, Development and Extension Center (UBRDEC) under the ERDB shared his expertise on bamboo to mitigate the effects of climate change, the production and its potentials to boost economic gains. He took the participants to Maasin Watershed Forest Reserve at Brgy. Daja, Maasin, Iloilo where he executed an actual demonstration on how to select the bud eye and how to properly propagate bamboo.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu pushes for a ninety-eight percent (98%) survival rate of planted bamboos here in Western Visayas. He would also require bamboo for domestic use to avoid using plastic materials.





Secretary Cimatu attended the Decommissioning of the 727 RPM-P/RPA/ABB-TPG at the Headquarters of 3rd ID Camp Peralta in Jamindan, Capiz, also graced by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte along with Senator Bong Go. The DENR was instrumental in providing livelihood activities to members of the rebel returnees.

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called the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) the “frontliners” and looked for ways to capacitate them. He is the only DENR Secretary who spent the time to visit each PENRO and CENRO in Western Visayas, thereby boosting the morale of the men and women at the field offices.

From DENR field offices, he has gathered the issues and concerns besetting the grassroots communities and addressed the problem within the context of environmental laws applicable. While he encouraged the DENR workforce to do their best, he also tapped on the strength of coordination and collaboration with other government agencies, local government units, peoples organizations, the private sector and the academe, to get things done. Often, he would emphasize: “Nothing is impossible if we all work together.” It proved a course of wisdom, indeed.

Peace, security and development go together. For a man who was more familiar with the battlefield than environmental crimes and its enemies, Secretary Cimatu has quickly studied the terrain of his new working territory. After Boracay, he was given the Manila Bay to cleanup and another tougher assignment: as the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security (CORDS) for Western Visayas.

As the CORDS for Western Visayas, Cimatu’s primary role is to assist the President in the efficient resolution of problems in government operations in the region. It is through him as CORDS that the programs, projects and activities of the national government in the region are being ensured to be implemented and are fully disseminated to the people by means of various mechanisms and strategies.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte approved an Executive Order which formalized the

designation of CORDS in 17 regions on July 11, 2019. The deployment of CORDS followed after the creation of a National Task Force to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) in the country. Previous administrations had embarked on the same endeavour, with the goal of coordinating government programs and facilitating budgets to help each region attain development and economic growth. This time, however, the Duterte administration has given focus on ensuring a sustained peace and order for the whole nation, aside from development and economic growth.

The tasks of each CORDS is anchored on the objectives outlined in Executive Order No. 70 or the Whole-of-Nation Approach that is designed to attain inclusive and sustainable peace, especially in conflict-affected areas. It aims to address the insurgency at its root causes, namely: poverty, historical injustice, social inequality and lack



Interfacing of RTF-ELCAC with the CORDS in Negros Occidental on October 22, 2019 at Bacolod City.



The RTF-ELCAC Meeting in Iloilo City was attended by Mayors from Panay and Guimaras on October 29, 2019 at Smallville 21 Hotel.





*DENR 6 key officials was led by Secretary Cimatu to a cross visit in Bayambang, Pangasinan on October 23, 2019 where they saw firsthand how engineered bamboos are manufactured.*

of inclusivity. It also seeks to harmonize the delivery of basic services and social development packages in conflict-affected areas and vulnerable

communities. Thus, Cimatu worked both ways – as DENR Secretary and as CORDS. He has made regular

visits to Western Visayas since he assumed the added responsibility, and had consultations among local leaders and the private sectors. His frequent collaboration with the local leaders through the Regional Task Force–End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) meetings is seen as a strong support of the national government to the efforts being done at the provincial and regional level for the attainment of peace, security and economic development in this part of the country

### Collaboration is the key

What one can achieve can be better done with collaboration of many. Working both as CORDS and as DENR Secretary is never easy, but Cimatu managed to exceed what is expected of him through his collaboration with other agencies.

When he attended the *National Convergence Initiative – Sustainable Rural Development (NCI-SRD) Summit* on July 24, 2019, he underscored the reality that while we are pushing for sustainable development in rural areas, the urban centers are experiencing overdevelopment. In the process,



*Sec. Cimatu graced the 2019 NCI-SRD Summit on July 24, 2019 at The Mansion Hotel, Iloilo City as Keynote Speaker. He encouraged all local leaders and government officials to balance development both in the urban centers and rural areas.*



*Sec. Cimatu took the time to check the field offices. This one was during his visit in PENRO Capiz on September 18, 2019.*

*Through an interfacing with DENR 6 key officials, Sec. Cimatu gathers pressing environmental issues and concerns and guide them to find lawful solutions.*



the sustainability of our environment is being compromised. He called on all stakeholders and local government units to support the DENR in implementing environmental laws on clean air, clean water and proper solid waste management.

He cited that one of the good examples of convergence is the Boracay Island rehabilitation in Malay, Aklan, where the DENR closely worked with the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). The efforts were further strengthened with the cooperation of the stakeholders and the private sector whose overwhelming support kept pouring in and were instrumental in the success of Boracay Island rehabilitation.

During the *RTF-ELCAC Interfacing with CORDS* on July 25 at the Iloilo Convention Center, Cimatú disclosed that solving the insurgency in the country does not need military approach. It rather takes political will to put an end to local armed conflict and attained sustained peace. He encouraged the local leaders to work alongside national government agencies in providing livelihood to communities, especially those that are considered influenced areas by the Communist Terrorist Group (CTG).

He also declared his plan of making Panay Island the Bamboo Capital of the Philippines. This he made after careful consideration, and seeing Panay Island’s natural abundance in bamboo. The project shall be implemented under the National Greening Program (NGP). Aside from providing livelihood to communities who shall become beneficiaries of the project, he is also convinced this would address the need to reforest the mountains and as mitigation and adaptation

strategy to climate change. “Slowly, we will shift from taking woods from our forests to using engineered bamboos instead for our housing and construction materials,” Cimatú said.

All the government efforts to provide a better environment and natural resources can only be appreciated when people from the uplands are included in the said projects. Cimatú assured the local leaders they will be protected by the police and military, whenever they needed it. That is, as long as they need to deliver basic services for people in far-flung areas.

During the 1st ASEAN Bamboo Congress on August 12-16, 2019 held in Iloilo City, he noted that collective action from ASEAN member countries is crucial to mitigating the effects of climate change in the ASEAN region. Cimatú expressed confidence that ASEAN members will do their utmost to continuously research and develop production technologies for bamboo.

### A strong leader towards sustainability

Despite the successful Boracay rehabilitation, Cimatú never let his guard down. He has made regular visits to monitor the progress of the Boracay rehabilitation, only to make sure that things are moving as planned.

After the tropical storm Falcon lashed out the island on July 16, 2019, it became flooded. Cimatú tried to set foot in the island after the storm but due to bad weather, no boat trips were allowed. Thus, he held a meeting right at the Caticlan Jetty Port and gathered information from members of the BIATF. From there, he assessed the situation and required the Task Force to first address the

flooding, then the relocation site for affected illegal settlers in wetland number 6. He also requested an update on the demolition of the identified establishments along the no-build zone in forestlands. Indeed, Cimatú has exerted all his efforts to make Filipinos understand that compliance with environmental laws would result to environmental sustainability and to Boracaynons for their lasting good as direct stakeholders. With his strong lead, people learned a lot about beach easement (the famed 25+5), importance of wetlands, carrying capacity and forestlands, which needs to be restored.

He took the key officials of DENR Region 6 with him in Bayambang, Pangasinan to see first-hand how engineered bamboos are manufactured. Through that cross-visit, key officials were provided with insight to better appreciate the potentials of bamboo not only as climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy. It had also given them a blueprint of the possible economic advantages of bamboo plantations that could result to sustainable development for the region.

From the time he was confirmed the DENR Secretary on October 4, 2017, Secretary Roy A. Cimatú has proven to be a pillar of strength and support of his people. In a span of more than two years, he has carved out a beautiful legacy for the Filipino people that is not done yet. As he work for environmental protection and conservation, for peace and security – all these could result to sustainable development for the country.

He continues to conquer environmental battles by leading the DENR and the Filipino people together, hand in hand. Afterall, the battle is OURS together with him at the lead.###

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Prior to the conduct of the actual DT sessions, RPAO Chief Artemio Salvador C. Colacion gave a lecturette to set expectations among teachers of each school. He informed them that DT utilizes folk media, drama skits, environmental games, creative lectures and workshops to deliver the message on environmental protection and conservation.

“Let us not wait for our precious flora and fauna to be learned and seen only in books rather than allow the children to experience them in their natural habitat. As early as now, let us teach them how to become part of nature conservation as it is theirs to inherit, and their future children to also enjoy,” Colacion said.###



RPAO Chief Artemio Salvador C. Colacion conducted a short lecture before the students and teachers in the province of Antique (left). He also led the setting of expectations among advisers of DT-recipient schools in Boracay Island (right).



# Dalaw Turo –a creative way to teach the children

Some lessons are best conveyed in a creative way.

This is the reason why the DENR 6, through its Regional Public Affairs Office (RPAO), led the conduct of *Dalaw Turo* Program in Antique province and in the famed Boracay Island in Malay, Aklan as part of its information and education drive for nature conservation in CY 2019.

Dalaw-Turo (DT) is a non-traditional educational, participatory, communication teaching design developed by the PAWB as a medium for environmental education based on the principles of biological diversity and sustainable development.

It was institutionalized as an environmental education strategy by virtue of DAO 97-36 on December 15, 1997.

Pushing for a heightened awareness on the need to practice proper waste management and biodiversity conservation, the DT teams of RPAO and PENRO Antique had joined forces and spearheaded the campaign this year with the academe. On October 16, 2019, recipients of the *Dalaw Turo* Program are the students of Barasanan National High School and Villaflor Elementary School, both

in Tobias Fornier, Antique. Pupils and students of the two schools enjoyed the educational games and drama skits on proper solid waste management and illegal tree cutting. Such creative strategies helped to inculcate the need to do waste segregation to promote clean air and water and the need to plant more trees to help protect and conserve our biodiversity.

The team also went to Boracay Island and conducted *Dalaw Turo* sessions among four schools on November 21-22, 2019, namely: Boracay Na-



Students in Manoc-Manoc National High School



Students in Boracay National High School



Pupils in Balabag Elementary School



Students in Goshen School of Technology and Humanities, Inc. learned a lot from the environmental game called "web of life"

tional High School, Balabag Elementary School, Manoc-manoc National High School, and Goshen School of Technology and Humanities Inc. One Hundred Ninety Five (195) pupils and students from the four academic institutions benefited from those DT sessions. Children actively participated in every game that challenged their knowledge on waste identification and especially enjoyed the "web of life" game which taught them how life is deeply interconnected.

After each session, the DT team distributes a copy of the coffee table book entitled: *Kadagatan tubtub Kabukidan* (From the Seas to the Mountains): Traditional Knowledge Practices of Panay and Guimaras along with other Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials about Ecological Solid Waste Management (RA 9003), Anti Burning Law, Disaster Preparedness and Importance of Wetlands.

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High school students in Barasanan National High School in Tobias Fornier, Antique enjoyed the environmental game of identifying the kind of waste (bio or non-bio) written on a ball and which they must "shoot" on the right box.



# DENR 6 DISTRIBUTES PATENTS, PHP10M CHECKS FOR POS



During the momentous launching of the Central Antique Convergence Area (CACA) in the municipality of Valderrama, Antique, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 6 has distributed patents to land beneficiaries and checks for People's Organizations.

Nineteen patent beneficiaries coming from Barangays Tigmamale (with 7 beneficiaries), Buluangan I (5), Bunsod (4), Bugarayan (1), Cansilayan (1) and Pandanan (1) were given their patents or titles during the *Handog Titulo* program as part of the CACA event. A total of 21,398.5 hectares or 213,985 sq. m. of agricultural lands in Valderrama are now legally claimed. Many of the beneficiaries now in their senior years are beside themselves with joy during the patent distribution last November 8, 2019. The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Belison, Antique facilitated the patent distribution.

DENR 6 Regional Executive Director (RED)

Francisco E. Milla led the distribution of the patents along with Antique Lone District Representative Loren B. Legarda and Antique Governor Rhodora J. Cadiao.

Meanwhile, a total of Php10M worth of checks were distributed to ten (10) Peoples Organizations (POs) in the province of Antique, namely: Bakiang Upland Farmers Association, Cananghan Upland Farmers Association, Culyat Iraynon Bukidnon Tribal Association, Iglinab Upland Farmers Association, Ipayo Tree Growers Association Inc., San Ramon Upland Farmers Association, Marigne Upland Farmers Association, Idao Integrated Social Forestry Farmers Association, Mayabay Integrated Social Forestry Farmers Association, Narirong, Tabong-Tabong, and Tig-alaran Farmers Association. The said amount is for the new Enhance National Greening Program (ENGP) plantations contracted out to the ten POs in the province.

RED Milla underscored the need to bring DENR programs and projects nearer to the

people in the countryside to promote sustainable economic progress, climate resilient environment and help change the lives of the people for the better. No one else can deliver better results than the POs who are the local, grassroots groups that play important roles to help implement DENR's programs and projects in the communities.

The patent distribution is part of the *Improved Land Administration and Management*, and the ENGP are two of the ten priority programs of Secretary Roy A. Cimatu. The patent distribution provides security of tenure to patentees and also helps to spur socio-economic development in the countryside. On the other hand, the ENGP provide opportunities for communities to develop social enterprises, to produce sustainable livelihood, optimize its benefits, encourage local government units and organized upland communities in the development of forest plantations including forest parks.###

