



# Kalikasan

Western Visayas



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## BIATF BARES REHAB GAINS, SEES SMOOTH TRANSITION TO BIDA

Despite the challenges faced by the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) during the lockdown months due to the coronavirus disease (COVID)-19 pandemic, rehabilitation of the island has moved forward.

In a virtual press conference with the local media on December 3, 2020, DENR Secretary and BIATF Chair Roy A. Cimatu, disclosed that the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) team in Region 6 monitoring Boracay Island's water quality has recorded an all-time low coliform count of 6.8

Most Probable Number per Liter (MPN/L).

The EMB team noted the low coliform count in ambient monitoring stations located in New Coast Boracay, Movenpick, Steve's Cliff, and at the front beach grotto.

Boracay waters is classified as Class SB, which is intended as recreational waters or areas suitable for bathing swimming and skin diving as per DENR Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 34, series of 1990.

A safe quality standard limit of 100 MPN/L

coliform is allowed for Class SB water. Beyond the safe limit, the water is already polluted and no longer suitable for its intended use.

Moreover, cases against nine establishments occupying forestlands have been filed by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), after conducting investigation in the months of October and November 2020. The involved establishments have violated provisions of PD 705 or the Revised Forestry Code and of PD 1067 or the Philippine Water Code.

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# CSC 6 honors DENR 6 with PRIME-HRM Bronze Award

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 6 received the PRIME-HRM Bronze Award Maturity Level 2 Accreditation by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Region 6.

CSC Regional Director Nelson G. Sarmiento together with CSC Region 6 Field Office – Iloilo Director John Esar T. David congratulated the DENR Region 6 last September 07, 2020 upon their conferment of a congratulatory certificate to the DENR 6 as PRIME-HRM Bronze Awardee, and was received by DENR Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr.

The Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM) aims to successfully transform the agencies' human resource management systems, competencies and practices, elevating HR to a level of excellence for good governance, efficiency and effective public service delivery.

The Civil Service Commission is mandated to inspect and audit the personnel actions and programs of the departments and other government offices and to also conduct periodic review of the decisions and actions of offices with delegated authority by the Commission.

With these, the CSC launched the CSC Agency Accreditation Program (CSCAAP) and enhanced through the Personnel Management Assessment and Assistance (PMAAP) which adopted the PRIME-HRM that strategically aligns

the government agencies in achieving their goals and excellent performance of human resources management functions, encouraging innovativeness, integrity and productivity in public service.

DENR Region 6 has met the maturity level indicators in all four (4) HRM systems which are; Recruitment, Selection and Placement; Performance Management; Learning and Development; and Rewards and Recognition.

As bronze awardee, the Department was also granted privileges such as authority to approve appointments subject to post audit and also to maintain the status under Level 2 and continue to improve in its HRM systems for the next higher level. RD Sarmiento said not too many agencies have achieved the Bronze Award for Maturity Level II.

Further, the CSC conducted a blended (virtual and

face-to-face) awarding ceremony to all its awardees for Region 6 on September 24, 2020.

In his message, RED Milla congratulated all the DENR Region 6 personnel for rendering exemplary public service which has resulted to the agency's attaining the PRIME-HRM Bronze Award Maturity Level 2. He also encouraged the DENR 6 personnel to always be the best public servant – whether in good or hard times.



## Iloilo River, DENR 6 entry for RIVERS for Life Award

Classified as Class "C" body of water, the Iloilo River has played a fundamental role in the lives, history, culture and civilization of the Ilonggos for thousands of years. Thus, it become an entry for the National Search for Recognizing Individuals/Institutions towards Vibrant and Enhanced Rivers (R.I.V.E.Rs) for Life.

It runs through the heart of Iloilo City with a length of 15km with its water flowing from the town of Oton

and traverses in the most populated areas in the city. With years of rehabilitation, the Iloilo River become one of the popular river in Western Visayas, starting with its beautiful sunset sceneries and the Esplanade were people enjoys the cool air and the landscape, up to the clean water the Iloilo River offers.

The Iloilo River is a resource of immense environmental and social values. It is a major aquatic

landscape for all kinds of plants with 22 mangrove species; migratory birds and animals that become a rich breeding ground to important fish species, crustaceans, shellfish that provides sustenance and livelihood to some residents.

Class C classification of water is considered as; fishery water for propagation and growth of fish and other aquatic resources, Recreational Water Class II for boating, etc., and Industrial Water Supply Class I for Manufacturing processes after treatment.

The objectives of the RIVERS for Life are to raise awareness of the need to protect and conserve the country's rivers as the lifeblood of the earth and human civilization, and to recognize CENROs and PENROs implemented/enforced DENR policies, programs, project and activities, and regulates the ENR laws and regulations in their Area of Responsibilities (AOR).





# DAFFA TURNED A BARREN LAND INTO ONE OF THE BEST NGP SITES IN WESTERN VISAYAS

After years of abuse, illegal logging of old growth forests, rampant kaingin activities and probably, poaching of wildlife, have left the forestlands of Hinobaan town almost deserted.

In 2016, members and officers of the Damutan Agro-Forestry Farmers Association (DAFFA), a People's Organization established in October 21, 2014, entered into an agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 6 to reforest the 95 hectares of barren forestlands in Sitio Soso, Brgy. Damutan, Hinoba-an, Negros Occidental with Acacia mangium through the National Greening Program (NGP).

DAFFA President Cherry L. Sarnate recounted how the plantation site was covered with wild grasses and has become almost barren with a few remaining trees, several years prior to the NGP. DAFFA is one of the forty-one (41) registered People's Organizations (POs) within the jurisdiction of the Community ENR Office of Kabankalan City.

The area was then a hotspot for rebels and used to be their stronghold. Aside from that, a private company was operating in the area, engaged in wanton illegal logging of all tree species that was abundant in the Hinoba-an mountains for their personal gain.

Since the reforestation in 2016, DAFFA's officers and members has worked really

hard and successfully reforested the forests in Sitio Soso, Brgy. Damutan, Hinoba-an. Their commitment has resulted to a 97 percent survival rate of the planted seedlings. The Association is a project recipient of the DENR since 2014 up to present. Out of the total 174,094 seedlings produced, the Association has planted 158,270.

Recently, the DENR launched the Search for Best NGP sites, which aims to showcase the positive impacts of the project to beneficiaries and the communities nationwide. The DENR Region 6 National Greening Program (NGP) Team led by NGP Regional Coordinator For. Wilfredo P. Canto along with the Regional Public Affairs Office (RPAO) team led by its Chief, Artemio Salvador C. Colacion have chosen Sitio Soso, Brgy. Damutan, Hinoba-an, Negros Occidental as the region's entry to the search.

"All of the entries have inspiring stories about people and environment where pictures depict how the project should be that is considered as indeed success stories. But we need to choose only one, and that is Damutan Agro-Forestry Farmers Association or DAFFA in Negros Occidental that emerged the best among the rest," regional executive director Francisco E. Milla, Jr. said.

The Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP) is one of the 10 Priority Programs implemented by the Department under the strong leadership of Secretary Roy A. Cimatu. This CY 2020, the ENGP Region 6 is devoted to the establishment of bamboo plantation as support to Secretary Cimatu's thrust to make Region 6 the Bamboo Capital of the Philippines.

Furthermore, as of November 26, 2020, a total of 106.59% of seedling production was accomplished by the DENR 6 provincial offices and a total of 99.22% of plantation site out of 12,847 hectares targeted. The following are the targets and accomplishment per provinces to wit:

	SEEDLING PRODUCTION			PLANTATION EST.		
	Target	Accomp.	% Accomp.	Target	Accomp.	%Accomp.
Aklan	163,200	187,781	115.06%	800	800	100%
Antique	314,160	377,142	120.05%	1,540	1,540	100%
Capiz	1,085,484	1,087,271	100.16%	5,321	5,321	100%
Iloilo	426,768	453,332	106.22%	2,092	2,092	100%
Negros Occi.	631,176	687,916	108.99%	2,994	2,994	96.77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,620,788</b>	<b>2,793,442</b>	<b>106.59%</b>	<b>12,847</b>	<b>12,746.99</b>	<b>99.22%</b>



## Another First

After three years, another first sighting of a rarely seen migratory bird, Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), was recorded in Hinactacan wetlands in Lapaz District, Iloilo City last November 29, 2020.





## ADR aids in resolving land conflicts

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms has created a positive impact on the resolution of land conflicts in the country.

By virtue of Republic Act 9285 or the ADR Act of 2004 and Executive Order 53, the executive department is now allowed to institutionalize the use of alternative dispute resolution.

Here in Western Visayas, the DENR 6 thru its Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division (LPDD) has accomplished the resolution of seven cases that were either settled or reached a compromise agreement for CY 2020.

The DENR 6 started its mediation/alternative dispute resolution activities in CY 2014, with the Legal Division using the tool to speedily resolve cases that were up for decision. Once the parties had arrived at an agreement, the case decision was based on such agreement(s).

In 2018, the DENR 6 has identified personnel to function as ADR Officers and had undergone trainings and today, ten (10) accredited ADR Officers (ADROs) in the region were instrumental in resolving land conflicts. ADROs are trained to act with sincerity in handling ADR proceedings and display compassion and exercise patience in dealing with parties involved.

A levelling-off activity on ADR Processes/Services and consultation meeting to establish the regional pool of ADR Officers (ADROs) at the regional office was conducted in October 27, 2020 at the DENR 6 Activity Center.

Regional Executive Director (RED) Francisco E. Milla, Jr. underscored the effectiveness of the use of ADR processes and mechanisms in the speedy and amicable resolution especially of land conflicts.

"With the use of the ADR mechanism, many parties involved in land cases need not go through the tedious process of court litigation. More than that, it helped restore good relationships especially among relatives," he added.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu is happy with the result, saying that "the days of long, drawn-out cases are finally numbered." With ADR, gaps and flaws in the process which had delayed the resolution of cases are now being addressed.

## DENR conducts webinar on Strategic Communication

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), its line bureaus and its attached agencies, conducted a three-day online learning event on leadership and strategic communication, with all the Public Information Officers across the nation.

Entitled as "Strategic Communicator, Leading with Clarity through Uncertainty and Complexity," the first batch of the learning event was participated by all the Regional Public Affairs Offices (RPAOs) on October 14-16.

It aimed to capacitate the "competencies of the learners in leadership and strategic communication to generate and encourage support and commitment from various stakeholders relative to the implementation of the DENR's programs and projects during these challenging times".

It also aimed to promote a strong linkage with internal

and external partners and capacitate the competencies of the learners especially the IOs in leadership and being an effective strategic communicator.

The other batches were participated by Event Coordinators of Bureaus and Attached Agencies, Youth Coordinators and designated Information Officers of PENROs and CENROs.



## DENR 6 GAD held CODI, VAWC orientation

Women experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence through discrimination and harassment committed by their partners or strangers and human trafficking are among the different ways of violence against women.

In connection to this, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 6 Gender and Development (GAD), conducted a Blended (Virtual and Physical Presence) Orientation on the Functions Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) and Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) on December 3, 2020 at DENR Activity Center.

A lecture on the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children (RA 9262) and Related Laws was discussed by

Atty. Cheryl Rose Librero, Attorney III, Legal Division.

The Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children or VAW-C Act, values the dignity on women and children and guarantees full respect of human rights, recognizing the need to protect the family and its members, particularly women and children from violence and threats for their safety and security.

Atty. Librero, further discussed the different examples of violence's that is under the law and the protection that can be given to the victim or to its family. In her presentation, Atty. Librero, state that stress can worsen the risk of violence for women and children and COVID-19 pandemic is one of the example of stress.







## Malandog River Rehabilitation and Development Project continues

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 6 through its Provincial ENR Office in Antique launched, on July 9, 2020 the desilting activity of the Malandog River along Maybato Sur, San Jose, Antique as part of its ongoing Rehabilitation and Development Program. Leading the activity is Annie Camilo from the office of Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, LGU Province of Antique, San Jose Mayor Elmer Untaran together with DENR 6 Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr., PENRO Antique Andres T. Untal and CENR Officer Louie L. Laud.

The desilting activity is necessary to remove silt materials that block the natural flow of water from estuarine area of the river. Also, this will be of great help in the improvement of discharge flow capacity and enhancement of river ecosystems. It also paved way for the fishing vessels to free the river mouth supported by the joint resolution passed by Barangay Malandog and Maybato Sur titled: "An ordinance to Improve and Maintain the Ecological Integrity of Malandog River through Waste Management, Waterways Restriction and Docking Regulations".

Furthermore, during the recent visit of DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu last October 30, 2020, PENRO Untal and CENRO Louie Laud discussed the updates on the activities being conducted at Malandog River. These the status of the proposed DENR-PENRO Antique office building and the Sunset View Park. Secretary Cimatu was also appraised with the status of the informal settlers who are still waiting for the relocation site prepared by the Provincial Government of Antique.

## P.A. Talk features Sibalom Natural Park

The celebration of 2nd year anniversary of the passage of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018 under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) continues with an online conference for the legislated protected areas entitled P.A. Talk.

Organized by the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) in partnership with the Office of the Deputy House Speaker and Antique Representative Lorna Regina "Loren" B. Legarda the P.A. Talk aired its maiden episode through aired live via the official Facebook Page of Congresswoman Loren Legarda on June 22, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. and is scheduled for 18 months.

With the theme: "Protected Areas for a Protected Future," it features the 107 legislated protected areas and their provided ecosystem service, featuring six Protected Areas (PAs) in each episode with the respective Regional Executive Directors (REDs), Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officers (PENROs), Community

Environment and Natural Resources Officers (CENROs) and Protected Areas Superintendents (PASus) as resource persons.

With the green, lustrous forest with blue rogue rivers that is home to different endemic and endangered species, Sibalom Natural Park (SNP) was one of the PAs featured during the second episode of P.A. Talk.

The SNP has a coverage area of 6,788.44 hectares as per R.A. 11038, located at the municipality of Sibalom, Antique. It is a low elevation dipterocarp forest and a habitat to different endemic birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. A haven of rich flora and fauna endemic to Panay Islands and the Philippines.

DENR 6 RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr., said that the SNP has rich ecosystems that serve as biodiversity corridor to species in the Panay Mountains and as a steward of environment the protection and conservation of the natural resources depends to the community.



PA talk  
28 July 2020 | 10:00 AM

**Sibalom Natural Park**  
Antique

RED Francisco E. Milla, Jr.  
CENRO/PASu Louie L. Laud  
Mr. Arnold Aguing  
Imparayan Santay Gubat Association

Join us at:  
denrbiodiversity | conglorenlegarda



# MGB empowers LGUs with knowledge, use geohazard maps

Geohazard or geological hazard maps serve to “identify various geological features and associated hazards in a certain locality.”

Geohazard maps were prepared by the Mines and Geoscience Bureau (MGB) pursuant to the National Geohazard Mapping and Assessment Program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-MGB which started in 2005. The first geohazard maps were prepared with 1:50,000 scale and were successfully completed in 2010. It covered the entire regions of the Philippines.

Moreover, as a standard operating procedure or SOP, the MGB RO6 technical personnel conducts an exit conference with the officials of the local government units concerned right after the mapping and assessment of their respective areas. The team provided the LGUs with threat advisories and thoroughly discussed with them the susceptibility level of their area as to rain-induced landslide and flood. The LGUs were also given recommendations to know how to mitigate the effects of the aforesaid geohazards in their area.

After the 1:50,000 scale geohazard maps, the MGB embarked on another tedious geohazard mapping and upgraded it to 1:10,000 scale maps. The project was launched in 2011 until its completion in 2014. Again, the maps were distributed to 133 municipalities/cities in Western Visayas from 2015 until 2017.

Aside from the threat advisories and reports which the MGB provided to LGUs concerned and all 4,051 barangays in the region, a massive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign have been conducted by the Mines Bureau as well. The Bureau also sees to it that in attendance during the said IEC are the Local Chief Executives (LCEs), Municipal/City Planning and

Development Officer (M/CPDO), Municipal/City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (M/CDRRMO), representatives from Persons With Disability (PWDs), Senior Citizen and Women’s Group.

The 1:50,000 scale maps are smaller compared to 1:10,000 scale maps, as it sometimes consists of several municipalities and focused only on barangay proper of the municipality or city. It could also contain two or more municipalities. On the other hand, the 1:10,000 scale maps focused on sitios/puroks of every barangay of the municipality/city. The 1:10,000 scale maps also provide information necessary to aid residents of the area in locating vital infrastructures such as barangay hall, health centers, schools, chapels, designated evacuation centers, etc.

The Philippines experiences approximately 20 tropical cyclones every year due to its geographical location – it lies along the “typhoon belt in the Pacific”, making it highly vulnerable to flooding and landslides.

With this in mind, LGUs continue to use MGB’s geohazard maps with certification that such maps were made part of their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP),

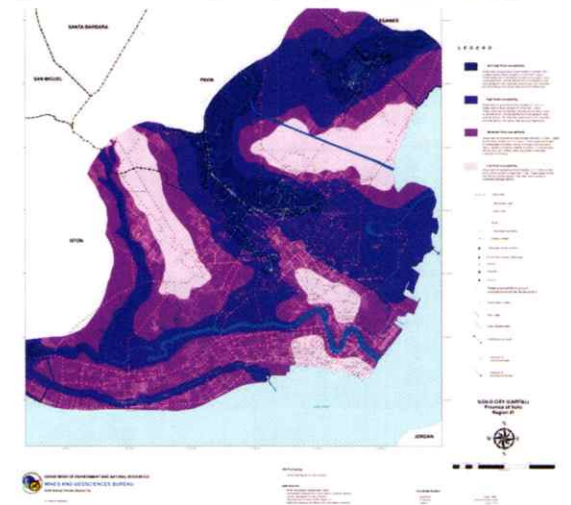


Geologist vMae Y. Magarzo, Geosciences Division Chief of the MGB RO6, led the conduct of the VRA IEC campaign in the municipality of Kalibo, Aklan province. Right photo shows a screengrab of the detailed flood hazard map of Iloilo City from [mgb6.org/gallery](http://mgb6.org/gallery).

Comprehensive Development Plans (CDP), and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) plan, among others.

Another map being prepared by the MGB is the Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA) map of all the cities and municipalities in the region. “The VRA contains information on the percentage of three elements, namely: population, built-up areas, and road networks to low, moderate and high to very high landslide/flood susceptibilities. These VRA maps being generated by the MGB RO6 is for planning purposes,” said Magarzo.

This project commenced in 2015 and is still on-going. The same procedure is done by the MGB by giving an IEC to LGUs concerned after the assessment, making them aware of their respective areas’ susceptibility level to landslide/flood.



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“This proves that the rule of law is paramount and that law enforcement is crucial and non-negotiable,” Cimatu told members of the fourth estate.

Cimatu also disclosed that in July, Wetland No. 6, located in Brgy. Manoc-manoc has been recovered and cleared of informal settlers. Also recovered are wetland numbers 2 in Brgy. Yapak, 3 and 4 in Brgy. Balabag, and 8 also in Manoc-manoc. All five recovered wetlands are the remaining wetland areas



out of the nine identified by the DENR and were adopted by private companies for its sustainable development and conservation.

Wetlands are some of the most beautiful and very useful landscapes in Boracay Island as these help reduce soil erosion and store water to help minimize the impacts of flooding.

As to the enforcement of the easement law, 249 out of 339 structures have complied with the 25+5 meter beach easement rule as of November 2020.

Meanwhile, in order to provide assistance among displaced workers in times of COVID 19 pandemic while working for the good of the environment, the Task Force thru the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation and Management Group (BIARMG) headed by General Manager Natividad Bernardino, has initiated a food for work program dubbed as “Boracay Wetland Bayanihan Program: We Clean and Heal As One.”

A total of 594 volunteers have benefited from this assistance. At the same time, the nine wetlands were cleaned of wastes with volunteers



collecting a total of 34,712.20 kilograms of mixed wastes.

With such beautiful transformations, the BIATF hopes Boracay Island would bounce back to its economic heydays with tourists arrivals slowly but surely improving. Nevertheless, the basic health and safety protocols shall continue to be observed in the island.

The BIATF’s term was set to end on May 8, 2020 as per Executive Order No. 53, series of 2018. However, with the challenges imposed due to the pandemic, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte was prompted to issue Executive No. 115, series of 2020, which allowed the Task Force to complete the remaining critical projects in Boracay Island until May 8, 2021.

“As the term of the Task Force nears its end, we envision a smooth transition to the new office that will be created to sustain the gains of the rehabilitation of our country’s prized jewel,” Cimatu said.

The proposed Boracay Island Development Authority or BIDA is hoped to be passed in Congress by CY 2021./





# Bamboo planting highlights CSC's 120th Anniversary

Francisco E. Milla, Jr., CESO III  
DENR 6 Regional Executive Director



Nelson G. Sarmiento  
CSC RD



Livino B. Duran  
DENR 6 ARD

The 120th anniversary celebration of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in Western Visayas has supported the greening efforts of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) by conducting a bamboo planting activity on September 25, 2020.

Bamboo, a renewable resource that have impacted greatly in different parts of the world due to its economic and environmental value, is now the focus of the government's greening initiative called the Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP) which is being implemented from 2016 until 2028.

CSC Regional Director Nelson G. Sarmiento stressed the need to collaborate with the DENR and take part in a tree planting activity to contribute in the preservation of nature. The activity was scheduled for the third week of the month.

Dubbed as Pag-Ulikid sa Dunang Manggad "A Tree

Planting Activity" under the subtheme Linggo ng Malasakit, the bamboo planting was conducted at Brgy. Calajunan, Mandurriao District.

Approximately 170 bamboo seedlings were planted by the CSC and DENR officials and employees alongside other national government agencies. In order to abide by the COVID-19 safety protocols, only a limited number of volunteers were allowed to participate and everyone wore their facemask, face shield and observed social distancing.

"We are planting bamboo today in connection to the 120th CSC Anniversary. But as you may have known, the month of September is also declared a Bamboo Month and we have observed September 18 as World Bamboo Day. This endeavor also supports DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's initiative to make Region 6 the "bamboo capital" in the country due to the many benefits we derived from it," said regional executive director Francisco E. Milla, Jr.

## DENR 6 initiated coastal clean-ups amidst pandemic

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regional Office, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Offices (PENROs) and Community Environment and Natural Resources Offices (CENROs) here in Western Visayas partners with different stakeholders, local government units (LGUs) and nearby coastal residents gathering volunteers to participate in the annual movement of International Coastal Clean-up (ICC) with the theme: "Safe Oceans Start at Home."

ICC is the largest volunteer effort for the past years to protect the ocean's health through picking up litters on beaches, coasts, rivers, waterways and even underwater dive sites and record information on the trash being collected.

DENR Regional Office initiated a clean-up activity

at the Iloilo River Esplanade. Volunteers collected approximately 169.50 kilograms of trash scattered in the river banks.

PENRO Aklan also took their part through simultaneous clean-up within their communities' waterways and coastal areas and gathered approximately 500 kilograms of wastes.

In the province of Antique, CENRO Culasi conducted a cleanup in coastal areas of Brgy. Poblacion, Culasi with the help of municipality's Philippine National Police (PNP) Maritime Group, and nearby residents.

Simultaneous coastal clean-up activities were also conducted in the lone island of Guimaras collecting approximately 450 kilograms of trash on coastal areas and

along Taklong Island National Marine Reserve (TINMAR) protected area.

CENRO Guimbal was able to conduct the clean-up activity at the coastal areas of Brgy. Buyu-an, Tigbauan, Iloilo and collected a total of 36.4 kilograms of waste.

While, in the Negros Island, CENRO Bago City partnered with the LGUs of San Enrique pave the way of clearing trashes in the coastal areas collecting 17 sacks of trash composed mostly of plastics that entangled in the mangrove trees.

This year's event was celebrated with limited amount of volunteers observing physical distancing adhering safety protocols due to the rising cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).



Esplanade River, Iloilo City



Brgy. Poblacion, Culasi, Antique



Tumalintinan Point, Suvlara, San Lorenzo, Guimaras



Brgy. Buyu-an, Tigbauan, Iloilo



# DENR 6 support sustainable peace, development

Peace and development has been a long cry in the history of the country, thus the President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's Administration launched the Executive Order (EO) No. 70, institutionalizing the whole-of-nation approach in attaining inclusive and sustainable peace, creating a National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC), and directing the adoption of a national peace framework.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, also the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security (CORDS) in Region 6 represented by DENR Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla, Jr. graced the launching of Sentrong Alyansang mga Mamamayan para sa Bayan (SAMBAYANAN-PANAY) that intends to uphold sustainable development, progressive and peaceful society in partnership with various organization, Local Government Units (LGUs) and National Government Agencies for a just and lasting peace throughout the nation.

The launching was held at Alejo Posadas Memorial Elementary School covered court, Brgy. Poblacion, Ajuy, Iloilo with the theme: "Institutionalizing the Whole-of-Nation Approach with the whole government participation, in attaining inclusive and sustainable peace and development, promote social justice and national transformation."

SAMBAYANAN-PANAY is a Security and Exchange Commission (SEC)-registered People's Organization (PO). The event was also a patriotic collective gathering composed of individuals and group from various sectors that aims for socio-political stability and lasting peace in Panay Island.

Meanwhile, the first Panay Peace Summit with the theme, "Sama-sama Buong Bayan para sa Kapayapaan at Karapatan ng Sambayanan" was conducted here in Western Visayas and was hosted by the City of Passi Arena, Passi City last December 10, 2020 and the following day December 11, 2020 at Tapaz Civic Center, Tapaz, Capiz. Because of the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic the audience was limited only to the identified participants for the summit and held a livestream broadcast through Bayanihan Brigade-panay FB account.

Presidential Communication Operations Office (PCOO) Undersecretary Lorraine Marie T. Badoy in her message, reiterated to the people especially to the former rebels and children to never surrender their dreams and but value education that will give them a better future and better country. She also said that the end to the war between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-



SAMBAYANAN-PANAY launching at Brgy. Poblacion, Ajuy, Iloilo



Panay Peace Summit at Passi City, Iloilo on Dec. 10, 2020 and Tapaz, Capiz on Dec. 11, 2020.

New People's Army (CPP-NPA) will only be achieved if people stop the breed of hate from their hearts which destroys the mind and soul of the community

Former rebels Jeffrey Celiz, known as "Ka Eric" and Joy James Saguinoor known as "Ka Amihan" strongly disagrees the motives of the CPP-NPA that in order to achieve peace and gain rights is only by using violence that already claimed the lives not just the Philippine Army and Police but also some civilians and poisoning the minds of youths that eventually destroy their future. They also encourages the youth not to fall prey from the flowery words and recruitment done by the CPP-NPA hence, the youth should finish their studies to ensure a better future.

Just like the SAMBAYANAN-PANAY, the Panay

Peace Summit was also in accordance to the national approach to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC), and attaining peace for the country is also one of the priority programs of Secretary Cimatu.

Further, Secretary Cimatu as CORDS has approved RTF-ELCAC VI TWG Resolution No. 01-2020 last September 09, 2020, which endorses another 86 barangays in Region 6 after having been cleared from Communist Terrorist Group (CTG) influence.

The 86 endorsed barangays cleared of CTG influence were specified in two separate resolutions namely: RTF-ELCAC PLEDS Cluster Resolution No. 2020-01 which endorses 85 barangays, and Area Clearing Validation Board (ACVB) Joint Resolution No. 2020-29 which endorsed Brgy. Binolusan Pequeño, Calinog.

Initially, there were already 74 cleared barangays of CTG influence in the region endorsed by the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF-ELCAC) to the National Task Force-ELCAC. It now has an approved budget amounting to approximately Php1.48-B allocated for their Barangay Development Program intended for FY 2021 implementation.

Cimatu further cited that the barangay chairmen should be mobilized to lead this Barangay Development Program and involve the people. The program is aimed at alleviating poverty, address social injustice, enhance agricultural production and improve the quality of life of the people. This is to bring in inclusive growth to people in cleared barangays and to eventually attain sustainable peace and development in their areas in consonance with the goals of Executive Order No. 70 or the Whole-of-Nation Approach.



Cabinet Officer for Security and Development for Western Visayas, Roy A. Cimatu and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Regional Director Juan Jovian Ingeniero shows off the approved two resolutions that declared the 86 barangays in the region as cleared of CTG influences.



# PENRO Aklan Chief bags awards in ENRA

The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) Aklan, OIC PENR Officer bagged four awards during concluded virtual graduation on Environment and Natural Resources Academy (ENRA)- Management Course Class 404 *Philippine Cobra* last December 09, 2020 hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Central Office with the theme: "Moving Together Towards Excellence".

The success of PENRO Merlene Baldevia Aborka made the PENRO Aklan and the whole region 6 proud for bagging the four awards namely; Class Valedictorian/Topnotcher, Leadership Award, Best Re-Entry Action Plan and Best Performing Team award.

PENRO Aborka is one of the many graduating employees that enrolled in Management Course Class 404 Philippine Cobra. Other courses are also concluded namely; Frontline Course Class 105



Matatag, Basic Course Class 203 *Fortitude*, and Supervisory Course Class 302 *Mangkano*.

The ENRA provides excellent learning opportunities and facilities for environment and natural resources managers and technicians.

## DENR engages youth to protect Earth thru ENR Ambassador

In order to engage the youth in environmental endeavors, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will implement the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Ambassador Project under the Tayo Ang Kalikasan (TAK) program. Led by the Regional Public Affairs Office (RPAO), now Regional Strategic Communication and Initiatives Group (RSCIG), the Department will choose from among the poor but deserving youths/students who will serve as an effective partner and force multiplier in changing the behavior of the people towards environmental stewardship.

This is in line with Republic Act 9512 or the National Environmental Awareness and Education Act of 2008 and Republic Act 8022 or the Youth in Nation-Building Act of 1994.

The chosen ENR Ambassador will then enter into partnership agreement with civic organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs), schools, Sangguniang Kabataan Council, or other established organizations. The RSCIG shall likewise train, guide, and develop the skills of the selected ENR Ambassador and provide appropriate resources to expedite communication and coordination with them. This project will be implemented nationwide for one year.

During this period the ENR Ambassador shall conduct IEC, advocacy, social mobilization and

partnership-building activities, such as, but not limited to, conduct of online meetings, online environmental lectures, posting of environmental articles on Facebook, browsing and conduct of researches using DENR social media accounts and environmental reporting similar to citizen patrol. The ENR Ambassador shall strive to be the role model of the other students/youths in campaigning for a healthy and clean environment.

ENR Ambassadors Project is the brain child of TAK Executive Director Tutchie Gaddi under the supervision of Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D.

Aniporda and Strategic Communication and Initiatives Services (SCIS) Director Hiro V. Masuda.

TAK is one of the ten (10) priority programs of DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimat, namely: Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Ecological Solid Waste Management (ESWM) Act, Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP), Intensified Forest Protection and Anti-illegal Logging, Enhanced Biodiversity Conservation, Scaling Up of Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Program, Improved Land Administration and Management, Geo-hazard and Groundwater Assessment and Responsible Mining, and Manila Bay and Boracay Rehabilitation Clean Up.



## PENRO Antique celebrates Dulungan Month

Saving wild animal species are important as protecting ourselves from acquiring coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that has endangered the public health worldwide. And one of the initiatives to start protecting our wild animals' species such as hornbills is to promote its conservation.

The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENRO) Antique joined the local government unit (LGU) of Antique in the launching of the Dulungan Month at Brgy. Flores, Culasi, Antique last August 03, 2020.

By virtue of Provincial Ordinance 2020-208, the provincial government of Antique declared the month of August as Dulungan Month to increase awareness on the biological, ecological and cultural importance of Dulungan.

Dulungan is a local name for Walden's Hornbill (*Rhabdotorrhinus waldeni*). It is an endemic species of hornbill in the Philippines considered as Critically Endangered (CR) by International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.

The activity was participated by the different provincial offices, national government agencies and non-government organizations with limited number of participants to observe social distancing.

The preservation of wild animals such as hornbills will maintain the ecological balance of our ecosystem. This will also prevent transmission of zoonotic diseases that causes the emerging COVID-19 which has infected over 20 million people worldwide.

Meanwhile, a resident from Brgy. Paningayan, Culasi turned-over a male juvenile Dulungan in the afternoon after the launching of Dulungan Month Celebration. The hornbill is in good condition however it was brought to Mag-aba Rehabilitation Center in Mag-aba, Pandan, Antique for veterinary check-up prior to its release to the habitat.

Enhanced biodiversity conservation is among the top ten priority programs of Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimat./DENR6





# Migrator birds connect world, highlights NOCWCA

The World Migratory Bird 2020 with the theme, "Birds Connect Our World" highlights the importance of migratory birds in conserving and restoring the ecological connectivity and integrity of ecosystems.

The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENRO) Negros Occidental highlighted the importance of the Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area (NOCWCA) as declared 7th Ramsar Site and 4th East Asian Australasian Flyway Network Site in the Philippines. The NOCWCA is a contiguous wetlands area with a coastline of 109.52 kilometers which covers seven (7) Municipalities (Pulupandan, Valladolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, Hinigaran, Binalbagan, Ilog) and three (3) Cities (Bago, Himamaylan, Kabankalan).

It is a haven for both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species that includes 1 threatened species of Marine Mammals, the Irrawaddy Dolphins, three (3) species of marine turtles, the Green Sea Turtle, the Olive Ridley Sea Turtle and Hawksbill Sea Turtle. At least 80 species of birds including the endemic and threatened Philippine Ducks and globally-significant population of Black-Tailed Godwits, Great Knots, Herons, Sandpipers, Egrets, Bitterns, Stilts and other species of waterbirds are also present in the area. NOCWCA also supports 1.5% of the global population of the Endangered Great Knots and 2.1% of the near-threatened subspecies of Black-Tailed Godwit. NOCWCA serves as a habitat for more than 20,000 waterbirds at a time, making it a crucial site for bird conservation.

In line with this, an on-line media event was organized, in which a series of Infographics were produced and posted on the official facebook page of PENRO Negros Occidental. An Audio Video Presentation was also produced and posted that exhibited the salient features of NOCWCA and the programs and projects that had been done to protect and conserve the biodiversity of the area. Moreover, Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) materials were also produced from the formed Infographic Posters to be distributed to the different stakeholders of NOCWCA.

This event was organized for the purpose of continuously assuring the public that the effective protection, management and conservation of the NOCWCA are of utmost priority and also to continue increasing the community's awareness through the aforementioned activities with strict adherence to health protocols to fight against the threat of COVID-19 virus.



## Visayan Drongo Rediscovered in Guimaras

Visayan Drongo rediscovered in Guimaras Province, this avifauna species revealed that recently live in the lush forest cover of Surarik Watershed.

It was reported as the second species rediscovered extinct in the province, following the Black-Winged Kite, documented during the Critical Habitat Assessment last CY 2018 at Barangay Dagsaa-an, Buenavista.

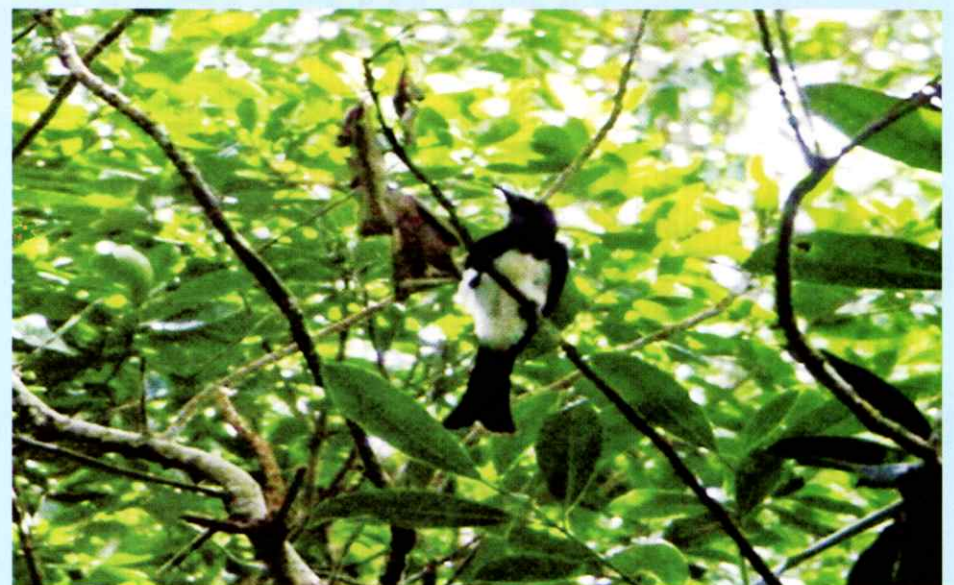
DENR Provincial ENR Office (PENRO) Guimaras Protected Area Management and Biodiversity Conservation Unit provided technical assistance in the assessment of the natural resources including flora and fauna at Surarik Watershed at Barangay Poblacion, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras last November 18 – 20, 2020.

For the record there are almost seven species of avifauna recorded in the area. The bird looked like a *Balicassiao* been documented by BMS Staff Norielle Diamante.

A confirmation made on the species locally named as *Balicassiao* and identified as the Visayan Drongo or

the *Dicrurus (balicassius) mirabilis* on December 2, 2020.

PAMBCU Chief Rhett Arthur Diana in coordination with Mr. Philip Godfrey C. Jakosalem of Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Incorporated, one of the author of Photographic Guide to the Birds of Negros, Panay and Cebu verified as to the identification of said species.





# The joy and the pain of being frontliner

By Deo Alfred Venus

The world experiencing the greatest crisis in the history that put up the world into chaos. And our country is in intensified battle against the deadly Corona Virus Disease 19 (COVID 19). Millions of people are afflicted, fatality are getting higher as the time pass by, and the most affected among all are our brothers and sisters who are less fortunate, Filipino people are also affected, such as loss of jobs and hunger that brought the world into global crisis. Our government has to declare the entire country into Public Health Emergency which obliged its people to observed strict home quarantine and precautionary health protocols were declared some of those are observing physical distancing of at least 1-1.5 meters, washing of hands frequently, wearing of mask are obliged, disinfection of public and private buildings, disinfecting household chores, social gatherings are banned and staying at home is the most important. To the Filipino, family means the world, safety must be observed first amidst this global pandemic, as an environmental frontliner who is in call of duty during the enhanced community quarantine and who played vital role in protecting the environment against the illegal wildlife traders and enforcing during a forest fire occurrence.

Life is paramount and national welfare for health is essential. Our less fortunate brothers and sisters are doing such things to sustain the needs of his/ her family. Home quarantine brought them to do things such as farming to earn money and they were able to convert forest land

into agricultural area. Some effects of this activity are damaging the forest covers in the forest land and loss of wildlife habitat. Forest fires and illegal activities in the forest the ECQ is rampant. I, myself experienced the threat brought by this pandemic COVID 19, being an environmental frontliner, as PENRO Aklan Enforcement Support Staff, I need to enforce in the area where forest fire/ illegal activities occurred. Hardwork, perseverance and bravery are some of the characteristics that I have to portray in the battle of environmental degradation amidst COVID 19. Enhanced Community Quarantine are imposed in the entire country, public transportations were stop, all local borders were temporarily close to observed strict compliance of home quarantine, and this are some factors that brought us in struggle during enforcement in the area reported. As part of the compliance following the protocol of the local government unit we need to get a travel pass and there are some times that we experienced being bullied. Discriminations is rampant, and as a frontliner we need to be brave regardless of who we interact or where we enforce just to save the environment who feed the humanity.

There are also some good effects of this home quarantine to our nature, such as less production of solid waste, people are used to plant vegetable and fruit bearing trees that contributed more oxygen, and air pollution in urban areas are depleting that brought our environment in rest of pollution.

"Bayanihan" is notable for every Filipino, everyone is in helping hand in this global battle. We need to be strong and physically fit being frontliners for the joy will be the product of these hardwork that we have done. And that joy, will be soon enjoyed of all humanity after this global pandemic.

The one who served and continue battling to this disease are the one who are in the front line. They are the one who lead its people in implementing the law, and the one who provide basic health care and necessities. There is only one word to describe our frontliners that would be "HERO" and as an environmental frontliner I am proud and loud that we will win this battle. It is fulfilling that I have contributed to the general welfare. One environmental principle states that everything is connected to everything else, what is happening right now is a product of human negligence. Nature can stand alone without human but human cannot stand alone without our nature. That is why we need to protect our nature for nature is the one who provides everything for us. And I believed in such reason that the nature could provide medicine/ vaccine on this deadly disease known as the COVID19. Let's cooperate to the mandate of our authority and let us put everything to the lord. As the whole world is in healing, our nature is in continuous healing too. Let's fight this COVID 19 together.

## A Volunteer's Credo: The Millennial Realization

Peace John I. Panaguaiton / CENRO Bago City, Negros Occidental

Year 2020 will be the year of great realization. When the robotic routine we were so accustomed to seem to take a halt, only then did we realize life is so much more. The call of nature for the human species to act seemed to have fallen on deaf ears and we have taken its preservation for granted. We felt so entitled to exploit its resources that we forgot all of our means are finite. Now the tables have turned and nature has expressed its wrath. We were slapped in the face with a nemesis of unforeseen damage in the guise of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Economies were struck down, mighty conglomerates forced to take a step back, governments were challenged and human are once again made to realize that we are but a speck of dust in this vast universe. We are helpless! But when all else fails, what do I do to survive? That is a question we need to ask ourselves.

Working in the government service entails both professionalism and an unspoken creed to serve beyond your inherent duties. I, for one, have personally responded in the forefront of this battle. In times like these, one's innovation and creativity is challenged. One should remember that you always have something to offer. It might be big or small, but it matters all the same.

When the province of Negros Occidental was placed under enhanced community quarantine and social movements are restricted, that innate compassionate spirit seemed to stir my gut into volunteerism. It felt so fulfilling and rewarding when I was involved in the relief aid operations in the far flung areas of Don Salvador Benedicto and Murcia. These communities' chances of receiving relief assistance get overlooked. Food packs and essential hygiene kits were distributed among families and members of Indigenous communities. Somehow, we were able to extend a few days' worth of sustenance to these marginalized groups.

More so, the agricultural sector suffered a great loss when transportation of fresh produce stopped during ECQ. Purchasing truckloads of fresh produce and distributing them to personnel of checkpoints, members of urban communities and former and present DENR personnel was like hitting two birds with one stone. All these and more, while maintaining the flow of credible information unabridged for the public to stay informed. Coordination and collaboration with various partners are also observed to widen the network of volunteers while observing the minimum health standards.

But all volunteerism comes at a price. While

interacting and distributing assistance to others, I know that I am exposing myself to risks of contracting the virus. During this heightened situation, I had to forego seeing my family and loved ones to reduce the likelihood of local transmission. While most DENR employee observes work from-home, I had to report to the office to make sure all modes of communication are channeled properly. Indeed, those times were rather challenging to me.

One might ask, why did I go through all the lengths of volunteering when I was not compelled to do so? Perhaps, the answer lies deeper than the façade. When all else fails, I believe that survival is not just a personal thing. One needs another to stay afloat one more day. That's what Bayanihan is all about. You see the needs of others; you help out and are comforted by the fact that your actions will have a ripple effect to the nation. When the news media outlets report a staggering 33,000 infection cases and counting, may we stop and reflect as to what we have done to help. As what the late John F. Kennedy said, ask not what your country can do for you, rather, ask what you can do for your country. In this ever so challenging pandemic, if you will not help out, who else will? Who else?





Left: DENR 6 Assistant Regional Director Raul L. Lorilla (second from left) gladly received the bike rack from Antique PENRO Officer Andres T. Untal (first from right). The simple turn-over was witnessed by cyclist Rhoda April Enicola (first from left) of the DENR 6 Human Resources Development Office. Right: Sample of bike rack built at PENRO Antique (left) and the one donated to McDonalds-Antique (right-bottom).



## PENRO ANTIQUE DONATES BIKE RACK

*Think of bicycles as rideable art that can just about save the world – Grant Petersen*

Cycling has been the most sought-after exercise and mode of transportation since after lockdowns were eased in various parts of the country. In the Philippines, increase in bike sales has been noted since many people are now shifting to “bike-to-work” transportation mode.

Employees of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have joined the bandwagon and are now having fun trying this new commuting scheme. “Aside from burning calories, biking to work makes one happier,” one employee observes.

Indeed, biking to work allows one to observe his surroundings, to listen to the birds and be able to wave or smile at passing cyclists – these all help reduce stress from work and it saves money from commuting. It is a healthier, cheaper, and a greener alternative.

Thus, the Provincial ENR Office (PENRO) in Antique had donated bike rack to the DENR regional

office. As an active cyclists himself, PENR Officer Andres T. Untal personally delivered and turned-over to Assistant Regional Director for Management Services Raul L. Lorilla the bike rack made of iron scraps which the PENRO employees has collected.

“This is a good example of re-using scraps. I would like to commend the efforts made by the PENRO employees headed by PENRO Untal for this brilliant project,” said regional executive director Francisco E. Milla, Jr.

Furthermore, PENRO Antique in collaboration with Antique Mountain Bikers Association, Inc. (AMBA) had also turned-over a bike rack to Mc Donalds, San Jose Antique Branch. This initiative aims to encourage LGUs and business sectors to install bike racks in their establishments to cater the increasing number of bikers throughout the province.

## “KANTALIKASAN”, EMB 6 ENVIRONMENTAL SONG WRITING COMPETITION



The Environmental Management Bureau Region 6 through the Environmental Education and Information Unit spearheaded by its Chief, Mr. Rabbie Chris H. Carvajal, launched the “Kantalikasan”, an environmental song writing competition on November 20, 2020 at Smallville 21 Hotel, Iloilo City in celebration of the three (3) major environmental events for the month of November, the National Environmental Awareness Month, National Clean Air Month and National Climate Change Consciousness Week.

Kantalikasan aims to inspire the Filipinos to care more for the environment and to deliver the message across the country through music. Open for all ages, the said competition was participated by both youths and adults who have talents in singing and song composing. Entries were all original and have showcased the creativity of Ilonggos.

Winners of the contest were; Stephany Mijares and Trisha Louise Sianson with the piece “Tayo’y Magkaisa” as First Place who received a cash prize of Php20,000; Maebelle Rose Moncera with the song “Mahalin ang Kalikasan”, Second Place who received a cash prize of Php15,000; and Mark Janscen Bautista with “Tubig, Lupa at Hangin”, Third Place and received a cash prize of Php 10,000. All participants were given promotional materials and certificates.

Through the contest, aspiring singers and composers were given a chance to expose their talents and further use it in promoting a cleaner, greener and safer environment.

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