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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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FOR 3 PROGRAMS

DENR SEEKING ADDT'L P3-B FUNDS

By Jhesset O. Enano
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is seeking an additional P3-billion funding to bankroll three programs that the agency aims to begin next year.

The proposed funding includes P1.2 billion for the creation of an enforcement bureau, P1.8 billion for the full implementation of Republic Act No. 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-Nipás) Act and P36 million for the fast-tracking of the issuance of titles for alienable and disposable public lands.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier pushed for the creation of an enforcement bureau, following the death of Bienvinido Veguilla Jr., a forest ranger killed by suspected illegal loggers in Palawan province.

The additional funding would also allow the full implementation of the E-Nipás law, which expands the Nipás Act of 1992 to cover a wider ranger of protected areas under the law, with an additional 94 more legislated areas in the country. INQ



Group lauds DENR for rejecting ECC vs Bacoor reclamation project

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

THE Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) welcomed on Sunday the move of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to set aside a 944-hectare land-reclamation project in Bacoor City.

"We warmly welcome the positive stand of the DENR not to issue an ECC [environmental compliance certificate] to the 944-hectare Bacoor reclamation project. The pronouncement was a welcome development not only for the fisherfolk and poor families whose livelihood and communities are under threat, but also to the ecosystem of our historic natural harbor and the mussel (*tahong*) industry of Bacoor because it will be spared from the destructive impacts of reclamation," Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya national chairman, said in a statement.

Pamalakaya said the project will displace 700 fishing and coastal families in Bacoor, Cavite, on top of the expected adverse environmental impact of such destructive development activity.

The land-reclamation in Bacoor will result in massive flooding in Bacoor and cities in Metro Manila, particularly Las Piñas and Parañaque City.

The DENR's decision not to issue an ECC for the ambitious land-reclamation project came about after Sen. Cynthia A. Villar grilled officials of the DENR during a budget hearing last week.

Villar expressed her stiff opposition to the project, which

will be near the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area, a Ramsar site or a wetland of international importance, under the Ramsar Convention of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization because of its potential adverse environmental impact—including massive flooding that will directly affect Las Piñas City.

Pamalakaya reminded the Bacoor City officials of the Supreme Court mandamus to rehabilitate Manila Bay, on which the local governments are supposed to be cooperating with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in restoring marine life and developing the fisheries and aquatic resources.

"We urge Bacoor Mayor Lani Mercado-Revilla to comply with the DENR's decision accordingly; drop everything that has something to do with the dumping and filling of Manila Bay and its transformation into commercial and business hub. Instead, support the livelihood of thousands of *tahong* growers in a form of subsidy and aid, and be part of the ongoing campaign to restore and rehabilitate the Manila Bay," Hicap said.

"Reclamation is against the wisdom of the [the Supreme Court] decision," according to the former Anakpawis Party-list Representative.

Reclamation projects are issues of concern as pointed out by the operational plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy being implemented by the DENR, as they transform the shoreline of Manila Bay and displace fisherfolk communities.



Villar asks DENR to stop big reclamation in Bacoor

SAYING that Las Piñas City may go under water due to about eight meters (equivalent to a three-storey building) floodwater, Senator Cynthia A. Villar asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to stop the 944-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor, Cavite.

The Bacoor local government partnered with Frabelle Fishing Corp. and Aboitiz for the reclamation project. The plan was among the 22 Manila Bay reclamation projects being processed by the Philippine Recla-

mation Authority.

Aside from the massive flooding that will submerge houses in Las Piñas, Villar also cited its threat to the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, a protected area under the Republic Act 11038 which expanded the National Integrated Protected Areas System.

She said the proposed Bacoor reclamation project will bring about catastrophic damages, including damages to LPPCHEA, which serves as a sanctuary to migratory bird species from as

far as Siberia as to the mangrove forest and marine habitat.

"But how do you protect the wetland park if there would be a reclamation project in front of it?" Villar asked.

In the Senate finance subcommittee B deliberation on the DENR's P25.5-billion proposed 2020 budget, Villar quizzed DENR officials for entertaining the Bacoor reclamation project.

"Why are you entertaining that? What's your reason for entertaining that Bacoor reclamation?" she asked.

Villar, who chairs the Senate envi-

ronment and natural resources committee, said she had worked hard for the declaration of the LPPCHEA as a protected area.

She also cited the petitions she filed before the Supreme Court to stop reclamation projects in the area.

"You want me to go file a petition for Writ of Kalikasan, and you want me to do this again, after spending almost 10 years to stop reclamation, now you are going to do another reclamation in front of us?" she asked.

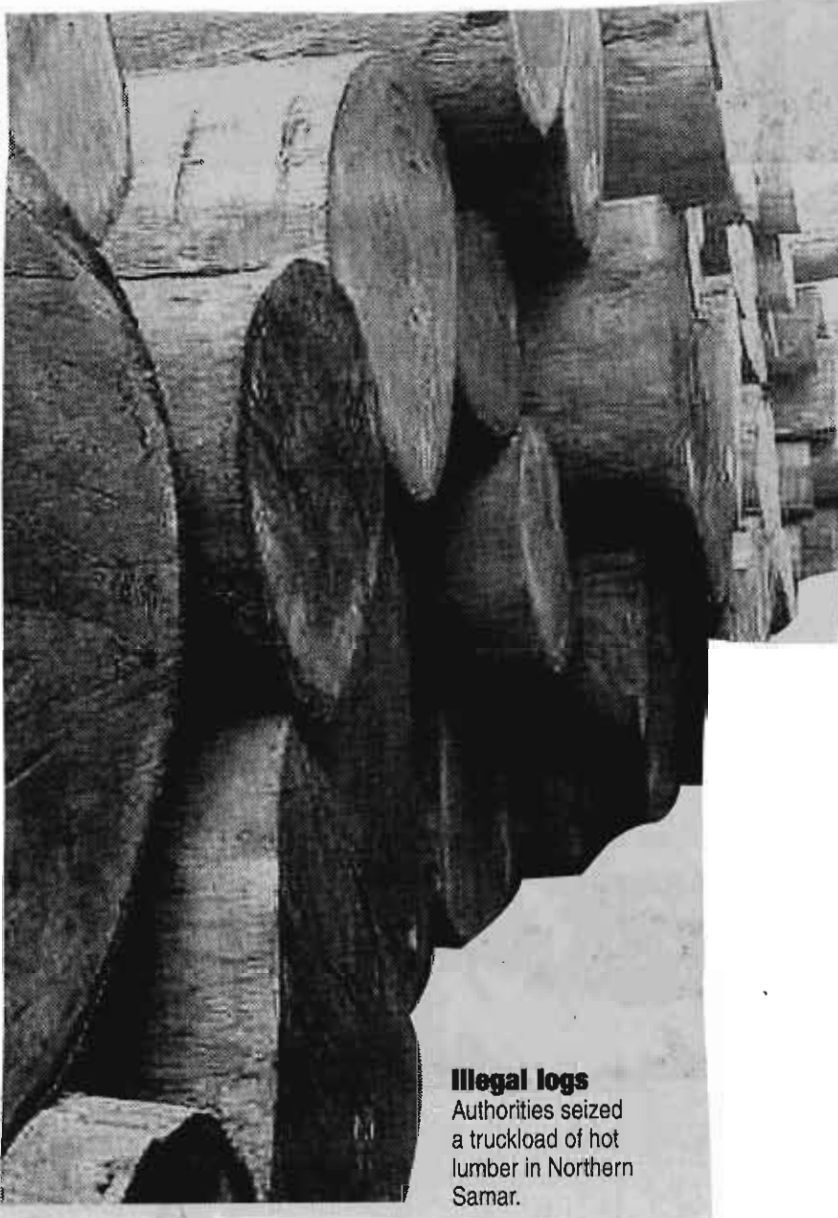
Macon Ramos-Araneta



'HOT' LUMBER. Members of the Real-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office headed by Atty. Lupo Telan are now on their seventh day of searching for and retrieving sawn lumber along the stretch of mangrove areas in Brgy. Dinahican, Infanta, Quezon. Forest rangers Ronald Abuejela and Rexmel Telan reported that they have already towed over 8,000 board feet of premium forest products hidden in the river of the protected mangrove area. The logs were cut in the Sierra Madre mountains by illegal loggers. *Photos by GEMI FORMARAN*



Hot lumber seized in Northern Samar



Illegal logs

Authorities seized a truckload of hot lumber in Northern Samar.

By Elmer Recuerdo

ALLEN, Northern Samar – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) station in Northern Samar apprehended one closed van truck loaded with good lumber without pertinent documents at Balwartico Port, Barangay Looc, Allen, Northern Samar last week.

Joint elements of PCG, Philippine Coconut Authority, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office and barangay officials verified and confirmed that the said truck was loaded with an undetermined number of forest products without pertinent documents in violation of the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

The confiscated items, with a P297,000 estimated market value, was turned over to the chief enforcement officer of Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Catarman for proper disposition.

The apprehended vehicle and forest product were temporarily placed under custody of the PCG.

The PCG is mandated to perform Maritime Law Enforcement, including confiscation of suspected illegal transport of forest products along the country's coastline and ports.



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DENR distributes land titles to 555 families in Region 2

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has recently distributed land titles to a total of 555 beneficiaries in Region 2.

The 524 land titles were distributed in separate occasions in the different provinces. A total of 31 patents were awarded earlier this year.

To recall, on August 1, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ordered all DENR Regional Offices and the Land Management Bureau to distribute land titles in September. Cimatu emphasized the activity shall be conducted in partnership with local government units (LGUs).

In Nueva Vizcaya, 346 free patents were distributed. For the provinces of Isabela and Quirino, a total of 80 and 43 titles were awarded, respectively. While the island province of Batanes distributed 55 land titles.

Cagayan Valley DENR Regional Executive Director Antonio A. Abawag said the Department will continue the partnership with the local government units to facilitate the processing of land titles.

"We commit to strengthen the DENR-LGU partnership in providing secure property rights for every landowner," Abawag was quoted in a statement as saying.

The DENR aims to expedite the processing and issuance of public land patents to qualified individuals. It seeks to achieve security of tenure for poverty alleviation and economic development.

Through the land titles, revenue collection in the form of real-property taxes increases thereby providing inclusive economic growth.

Under the Residential Free Patent Act or RA 10023, any Filipino citizen who has continuously possessed and occupied land, either by himself or through his predecessor in interest for at least 10 years may qualify as a beneficiary.

The law provides for the judicial disposition of untitled public alienable and disposable lands through the more efficient and less costly free patent process. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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PRA has not acted on 344 illegal reclamations: COA

BY PETER TABINGO

GOVERNMENT auditors have slammed the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) for inaction on 344 cases of unauthorized or illegal reclamation of land all over the country, including those that were documented more than 10 years ago.

In the 2018 report on the PRA, the Commission on Audit noted that there are 292 pending applications for titling of completed reclamations filed dating back to 2005 and 2008.

Of these, 183 are awaiting endorsement to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for forfeiture and other legal actions.

Apart from the 292 cases, the PRA has also issued cease and desist orders on 52 other detected unauthorized reclamations, warning proponents against undertaking further development within the area unless necessary clearances are obtained from the agency.

However, titling processes have also remained unresolved.

Flagged reclamation works include port projects, mixed commercial/industrial components, eco-tourism development, and even schools.

Auditors reminded the PRA that delayed completion of legalization processes or of forfeiture of illegally reclaimed lands are a violation of PRA Administrative order 2008-3 which requires timely action to protect the interest of the government.

"The illegal acts of reclaiming shorelands without permit from the National Government

cannot be undone, hence the immediate forfeiture of such property, and subsequent titling thereof in favor of the government appears to be the logical solution which rests with the PRA, DENR, and the Office of the President," the COA pointed out.

It noted that through the years of delay, people and companies behind the illegal activities have reaped benefits when they should be facing sanctions for violating the law.

"The government has not benefited from the 344 reclaimed lands, instead government expenses such as traveling were incurred in conducting inspections and monitoring activities since CY 2005. The illegal reclaimers, however, seem to enjoy all the economic benefits," the audit team said.

The COA recommended that the PRA review its existing policies to include timebound actions, faster implementation of forfeiture proceedings, penalties/fees to be charged pending legalization, and shut down of business operations on illegally reclaimed land.

Likewise, it urged coordination with the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) and the DENR to facilitate acquisition by the government of illegally reclaimed land.

Reacting to the audit observation, the PRA management agreed to make representations with the OGCC to speed up legal options.

At the same time, it blamed the DENR for the delays saying the latter has not acted on its request for comments on the amended memorandum of agreement for the forfeiture of unauthorized/illegal reclaimed lands.



Arenas on Manila Bay



WHILE congressmen and Senator Panfilo Lacson were trading barbs about supposedly mind-boggling sums of pork barrel allocations, and while the Philippine hog industry is experiencing a crisis due to the infestation of the dreaded African Swine Fever (hogs, swine, pigs and pork barrel, ad nauseam), a representative from the third district of Pangasinan quietly refiled a bill to save Manila Bay from a gaggle of reclamation projects.

Rose Marie Baby J. Arenas is on the warpath against the Philippine Reclamation Authority and LGU officials of Manila, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas and Bacoor for having entered into agreements to reclaim a total of 1,440 hectares along Manila Bay.

She further states in the explanatory note of HB 3169 that the PRA, formerly called the Public Estates Authority has a "National Reclamation Plan" which aims to reclaim a total of 38,000 hectares all over the country. Of this nationwide total, the PRA plan calls for the reclamation of some 26,234 hectares of water along the coast of Manila Bay!

That's one-third of Metro Manila's current size of 63,843 hectares. Put simply, PRA wants to increase the size of the present national capital region by landfilling on such a huge area of the bay.

This may be their funny way of decongesting the capital at the expense of what Congressman Arenas wants declared as a national heritage site, and rightly so.

The Supreme Court in its 2008 writ of *kalikasan* required the national government and local government units to "clean up, rehabilitate, and preserve Manila Bay, and restore its waters to make them fit for swimming and other forms of contact recreation."

What reclamation will do is to obliterate the bay as its way of cleaning up the detritus of two generations of neglect. You want a clean Manila Bay?

Fill it up with soil and gravel, and

upon the reclaimed land, build more buildings, albeit "green" as far as their sales brochures would claim. Cleaning and rehabilitating is such a gargantuan task, they might as well create land in the water, and profit immensely as they sell land to developers who would then build condominiums for the uber-wealthy.

With land values in the metropolis having zoomed up to half a million peso levels per square meter, it is cheaper to reclaim the water and create islands for the rich, particularly foreigners, mostly the insanely rich Asians who want havens for their mega-dollars.

"I hope saving it will become a legislative priority."

From a business standpoint, the developers will rake in so much profit, but at the expense of generations of Filipinos who will be deprived of the bay, its fabled sunset, and destroy an entire ecosystem.

Despite pronouncements of President Duterte and despite the intent of the Supreme Court in rehabilitating Manila Bay, developers and their cohorts in city governments as well as national government agencies persist in their grandiose reclamation schemes.

Thus, Congress needs to pass a law that would specifically ban in no uncertain terms, and make it a criminal violation, to allow further reclamation in Manila Bay, Arenas states in the prefatory note to HB 3169.

Apart from the protection of our marine ecosystem which affects food security, the dangers of liquefaction in the reclaimed areas given that the country is on the earthquake belt, my beef against reclamation is that it would actually congest the original inner cities of the capital region further with migration from the countryside.

In a previous article on this paper, I asked what happens to the thousands of workers who would be "imported" from all over the country, to comprise

the brawn of construction work in the reclamation projects.

Having earned more in construction jobs, albeit temporary, than what they could possibly eke out of tilling the soil in their provinces, would these workers go back, or stay in the metropolis? Surely they cannot afford to buy a few square meters of the land they helped reclaim, which is reserved for the mega-rich?

So they will repopulate the urban warrens of poverty in Manila, Pasay, Malabon, Navotas, Caloocan, Parañaque and beyond, renting hovels as they seek menial jobs in the urban jungle.

And yet, the present congestion in Metro Manila which has created monstrous traffic problems, urban squalor, and all sorts of social and economic problems for the country should mean de-populating the cap-

ital area by movement to the countryside. And we should start by moving the national government offices elsewhere, be it in Clark or the valleys west of the Sierra Madre, in the province of Rizal.

Certainly not by reclaiming more land and gouging out the waters of Manila Bay.

President after president has urged Congress to create a National Land Use Policy, defining how best to optimize the use of land as a God-given resource, for the benefit of the majority, for ensuring food security, and for proper zoning. Till now, from the time of Cory Aquino, proposed legislation toward land use has gathered dust in the archives of Congress.

Hopefully, saving Manila Bay, which has contributed to the historical, political, economic and cultural development of the country, and which has become a symbol of its God-given beauty, will become a legislative priority, for the sake of generations of Filipinos yet to come.



BAGO simulan ang rehabilitasyon ng San Juan City River, planong unahin ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang paggiba ng mga tahanan ng informal settler sa paligid ng naturang ilog. Aalisin ang mga bahay na nakadikit sa pampang ng ilog, gayundin ang mga basurang palutang-lutang dito.

Bagama't, maraming natuwa sa hakbang na ito, pumalag ang ilang residente roon dahil sa pangambang walang matirahan.

Ayon kay Environment Sec. Roy Cimatu, lumala na ang sitwasyon ng mga ilog dahil sa naipong mga basura at target umano nilang simulan ang paglilipat sa mga informal settler ngayong taon.

Dalawang kumpanya ang nangakong tutulong sa rehabilitasyon habang ang DENR ang maglilinis ng lugar at magtatanggal ng basura rito.

Giit ng mga residente, hindi nila alam kung saan sila pupulutin dahil walang sinabi ang kagawaran kung saan sila ililipat.

Ayon naman sa DENR, hinihintay pa nila ang ulat ng National Housing Authority (NHA) kung ilan ang maaapektuhang pamilya sa demolisyon at kung saan ililipat ang mga ito.

Sa totoo lang, magiging madali ang rehabilitasyon ng naturang ilog kung paaalisin ang mga nakatira sa paligid nito, pero sana, tugunan din ang pangangailangan ng mga residenteng mapapaalis.

Gayundin, kung sisimulan ngayong taon



BOSES
NI RYAN B. SISON

Mga iskuwater sa gilid ng ilog, bigyan muna ng bahay bago linisin ang San Juan City River

ang pagpapaalis sa mga residente, sana, gawin ding prayoridad ang malilipatan ng mga ito.

Kung wala silang lilipatan, malamang, sa kalye sila maninirahan at kapag nangyari ito, mataas ang tsansa na dumami pa ang mga basura sa ating paligid.

Hindi pa man tiyak kung saan sila ililipat, panawagan sa mga residente, huwag kayong pasaway at manatili sa lugar na ilalaan sa inyo ng pamahalaan.

At pakiusap sa gobyerno, huwag simulan ang demolisyon hangga't walang tiyak na lilipatan ang mga residente dahil kung paaalisin lang sila nang basta-basta, panibagong problema na naman ito.

'Ika nga, lutasin ang problema at huwag nang dagdagan pa!



SBMA to foreclose Ocean Adventure marine theme park

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) is set to repossess the popular marine theme park Ocean Adventure and related facilities due to multiple contract violations and failure to fulfill development commitments.

SBMA Chairman and Administrator Wilma T. Eisma said the agency served a notice of pre-termination of contract on Friday to the Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium Inc. (SBMEI), which operates the marine theme park complex under a lease agreement signed in 2007.

Besides failing to comply with its lease contract, the SBMEI also committed violations like illegal subleasing of property, constructing without permits, improper storing of waste and closing of public roads, the SBMA said.

The company also has arrears of about P25 million on its payment scheme, as well as P7 million on its current billing, SBMA records showed.

"This is actually sad news for us, because Ocean Adventure Park is the pioneer theme park in the Subic Freeport and is a hugely popular tourist destination. However, its multiple contract vio-

lations have been a long-festering problem that must be addressed now," Eisma said.

She explained that the SBMA had notified SBMEI of its violations as early as July and provided guidance to cure the problems, but the company did not submit a satisfactory proposal to correct the violations.

"We wanted them to stay, of course, but there was not much concrete action from their side," Eisma added. "So after months of negotiation and attempts to help SBMEI keep its lease, there is no longer any other recourse but to apply the law and

pre-terminate the company's lease agreement."

The SBMA official said SBMEI's failure to deliver its development commitments not only constituted violations of its contract, "but also prejudiced the SBMA's financial interest because it curtailed the agency's earning potential."

She added that even as the SBMA was willing to reconsider SBMEI's decades-old breach of contract, the park operator along with two other locators came out with a story accusing the Subic agency of not adhering to "ease of doing business" law.



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ILIGTAS ANG ILOG PASIG

MGA ka-idol, noong unang salta ko sa Maynila ay lagi kong nakikita na maraming naliligo at naglalaba sa Ilog Pasig.

Sa linis at linaw nga ng tubig noon sa Ilog Pasig ay maaari kang manalamin bukod sa marami ring nahuhuling isda rito kaya kapaki-pakinabang sa mamamayan.

Noon 'yun dahil ngayon, maski isda ay hindi na mabubuhay sa Ilog Pasig dahil marumi, mabaho at may lason.

Kabilang sa mga nagpaparumi sa ilog ay ang malalaking pabrika na walang pakundangan kung isuka ang kanilang basura sa ilog.

Pinarurumi rin ng squatters ang ilog sapagkat sa mismong mga kanal na dumadaloy rito sila nagtatapon ng basura at umeebak.

Tsk, tsk, tsk, kawawang ilog na masyado nang inabusong at sinalaula ng mga taong nakapaligid dito.

Nadagdag pa sa mga nagpaparumi sa Ilog Pasig ang mga illegal na nag-aalaga ng mga hayop tulad ng



baboy sa pampang.

Matindi ito sapagkat lahat ng dumi at ihi ng baboy ay dire-diretso sa kawawang ilog na nagdagdag sa polusyon nito.

Dapat ay pagbayarin at papanagutin ng pamahalaan ang mga taong nagpaparumi sa Ilog Pasig.

Kastiguhin ang mga barangay captain na nakakasa-kop sa Ilog Pasig na walang ginagawang aksiyon sa mga lumalason dito.

Mabuti na lamang at nandiyan ang mga opisyal ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na laging nakatuon ang pansin sa paglilinis ng kapaligiran, kasama na ang Ilog Pasig.

Iligtas po natin ang Ilog Pasig sa lalo pang pagkasira.



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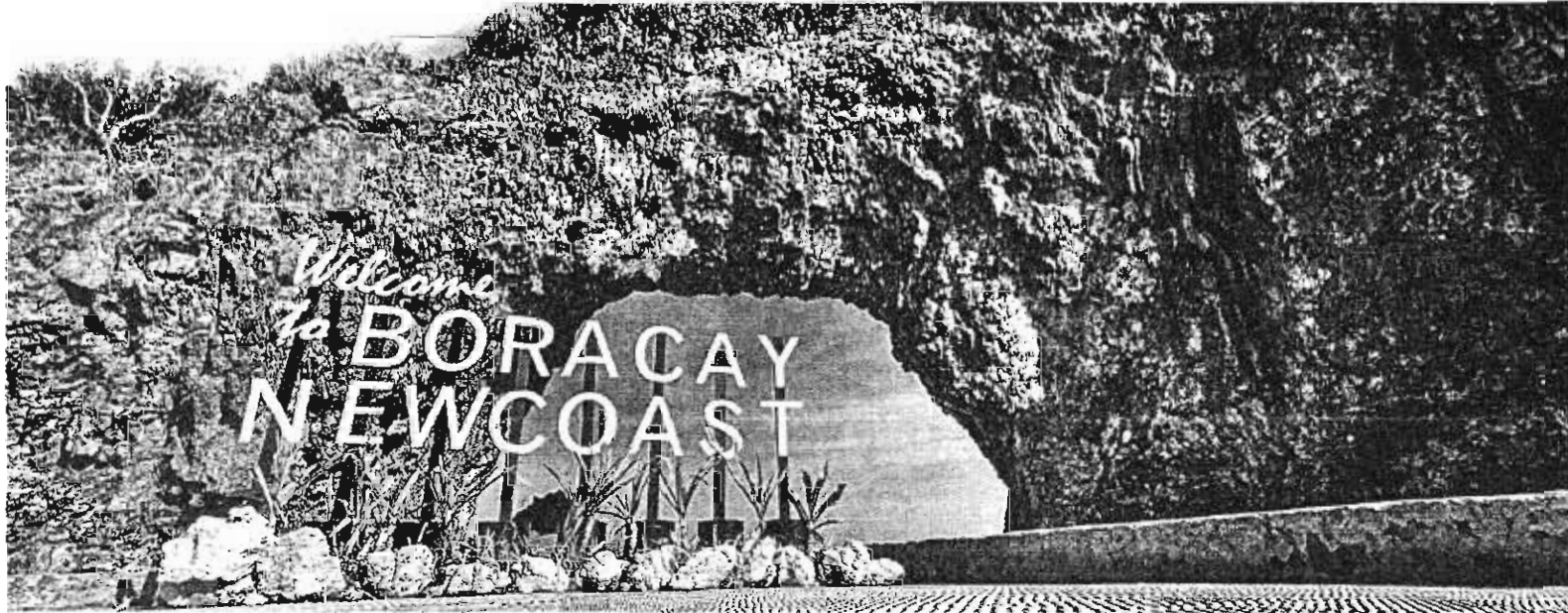


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Gate to paradise Boracay resort welcomes to visit with unique rock formation as a welcome art. Business in the renowned tourist island has returned strongly to exceed its popularity before a massive cleanup project. YUMIE DINGDING



HIGHER MINING TAXES

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND PROPOSED

By Ben O. de Vera
@bendeveraINQ

After leading the Lower House in passing two tax reform measures on corporate income taxation and sin taxes, Albay Rep. Joey Salceda will propose new higher taxes on mining operations, the proceeds of which will be placed in a sovereign wealth fund that the current administration cannot spend.

Salceda, chair of the House committee on ways and means, told reporters last week that with the swift passage in the 18th Congress of the Corporate Income Tax and Incentives Reform Act (Citira) and the excise tax hikes on alcoholic drinks and e-cigarettes, the panel would undertake consultations for his proposed new mining fiscal regime.

Hike in mining taxes

A bill was already approved under the leadership of former House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Among the features of Salceda's proposal included jacking up mining excise taxes to 5 percent from 4 percent.

Another key feature of the mining fiscal regime that Salceda envisioned was the establishment of a sovereign wealth fund.

He said the fund would have to be accumulated during a six-year period and parked with the Bureau of the Treasury as trust fund.

The fund would come from a new 2-percent sovereign wealth tax, he said.

The provision that only the next administration can tap the sovereign wealth fund would minimize opposition from the executive, Salceda said.

Sovereign wealth tax

"That is actually the big idea behind it—it's a self-limiting incentive system. It's like, 'why would I show interest when I have no use for that?'" he said.

Salceda said a sovereign wealth tax was ideal for non-renewable resources like minerals and oil.

Another provision Salceda will push for was an auction of mining contracts, he said.

While the proceeds of these proposed additional taxes on all mineral output will go to the national government's coffers, Salceda said he wanted to put in place measures ensuring benefits to local communities that host mining operations.

According to Salceda, he was already in talks with the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines and its members, the academe and stakeholders regarding his bill.

Salceda was hopeful his mining tax proposal will be passed into law this year so that it would be implemented as early as next year. INQ



Salceda proposes new, higher mining taxes

By **CHINO S. LEYCO**

The chair of the House ways and means committee is preparing a bill seeking to slightly raise the existing taxes on mining and at the same time introduce a new levy that will generate funds for the next generation.

Albay Second District Rep. Clemente Joey S. Salceda said that he will propose a two percent sovereign wealth fund tax on gross revenues generated by mining companies and increase the industry's current four percent excise tax rate to five percent.

Salceda also wants to auction off the mining tenements in the country to raise additional funds, instead of the existing first-come, first-served policy being implemented by the government.

Currently, miners pay the government the 12 percent value-added tax (VAT) that they can recover once the minerals were exported, also there is the 30 percent corporate income tax, as well as four percent excise tax and windfall taxes that include royalties.

But the existing taxes and fees were not enough for the House ways and means chairman, thus he is now proposing

for the establishment of a trust fund under the Bureau of the Treasury, which will be financed by the sovereign wealth fund tax.

Salceda proposed "all collections [from the sovereign wealth fund tax] by one administration can't be used by them. It can only be used by the next administration. At least there's a six-year accumulation."

"A trust fund is way of perpetuating the land... it's a self-limiting incentive system," Salceda said, noting Norway also imposes a sovereign wealth fund tax on their oil reserve.

"They're not repeating resources because you have to wait two-million years for a new induction to produce the next ounce of gold. There should be an intertemporal benefit across generations," the lawmaker pointed out.

But Salceda admitted that he has yet to discuss his mining tax proposal with the chief of the Department of Finance (DOF), saying "it was never discussed, they were like 'it's up to you'."

"Definitely I will put this forward. The least I can do is for him [Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III] not to oppose it," he explained.



New mining tax regime pushed in House

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda is planning to file a bill that seeks to put in place a new tax regime for the mining industry, and set up a sovereign wealth fund for development projects of future administrations.

Salceda, who also chairs the House Committee on Ways and Means, said he is drafting a tax reform bill, which will increase the taxes imposed on mining companies.

"We are working on it already. I'm doing the paper, I'm talking to people, I'm talking to advocates," Salceda said.

Under his proposed bill, Salceda will push for the increase in excise tax rate on mineral production to five percent from the current rate of four percent.

He is also proposing for the imposition of an additional two percent tax on the gross revenues of mining companies, which will be used to create a sovereign wealth fund.

"Essentially, I'm increasing the excise tax by one percent, from four to five. Sovereign wealth fund, two percent of gross (revenues)," he said.

Salceda said there is a need to establish the fund to benefit future generations, especially with minerals being non-renewable resources.

"(It's a) non-repeating resource. Gold in Albay belongs to the Philippines and belongs the next Filipinos. You have to wait two million years for a new subduction to at least produce the next ounce of gold. So there at least should be intertemporal benefits across generations," he said.

As such, he said the proposed sovereign wealth fund accumulated in one administration should only be used by the next one.

This means that if the bill becomes effective next year, the next president can use the fund generated in the last three years of the current administration, while the money accumulated during his or her term will be used by his or her successor.

"It also has some substory, which says 'I can't use it anyway so I won't take an interest in it.' It's a self-limiting incentive system," he said.

Currently, there is a moratorium on new mineral agreements, as provided under Executive Order 79, until a legislation rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms takes effect.

In line with this, the Department of Finance (DOF) earlier proposed a new mining fiscal regime, which was originally part of Package 2 Plus of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CTRP). Salceda's proposal is different from the DOF's.

The DOF's proposal made headway in the House of Representatives during the 17th Congress, but failed to hurdle the Senate.

Given the lack of progress, the inter-agency Mining Industry Coordinating Council earlier deferred making a recommendation to lift the moratorium. The DOF said the mining bill would have to be refiled in the 18th Congress.

— Mary Grace Padin



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House panel eyes additional 3% tax on mining industry

By JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ [@joveemarie](#)

THE House Committee on Ways and Means is drafting a bill imposing an additional 3-percent tax on the mining industry, a leader of the lower chamber said on Sunday.

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda of Albay said the bill will ensure that the government and the people get their fair and rightful share in the profits from mining operations in the country.

This bill is listed among the priority measure of the Duterte administration and the House of

Representatives. "I am proposing to increase by 1 percent or from 4 percent to 5 percent the excise tax on mining," Salceda said.

Currently, Salceda said mining operations are taxed 4 percent.

Salceda said the proposal will also include the creation of sovereign wealth fund, which will

come from a 2-percent tax that will be imposed on the mining industry.

"In essence, [we'll have an] additional 3 percent [excise tax for mining industry]," said Salceda.

According to Salceda, the future generation must benefit from depletable resources or non-repeated resources of the nation.

The 18th Congress envisions the bill as setting up the updated fiscal regime for the mining industry.

House Ways and Means Senior Vice Chairman Estrellita Suansing, who was also the principal author of the bill during the 17th Congress, stressed the need to create a rationalized and single fiscal regime applicable to all mineral agreements to promote fairness.

"This aims to level the playing field, so to speak, considering that

under the current taxation setup, only mining contractors inside the mineral reservations pay the royalty tax," said Suansing.

Suansing said the bill proposes an equitable imposition of royalty on mining operations within and outside mineral reservations, whether small or large scale.

The present law requires payment of royalty fees only in mining sites declared as mineral reservations.

The bill seeks to reduce the royalty rate of 5 percent to 3 percent for mining contractors within a mineral reservation.

Also, Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel of Surigao del Sur has requested the Department of Finance and the ways and means committee to consider the position of the mining sector, as they significantly contribute to the economy of the Philippines.



More taxes on mining eyed

A lawmaker said he will soon file a House bill that seeks to increase excise tax on mining and impose a sovereign wealth tax on the industry.

"Essentially, I am increasing the excise tax by 1 percent from 4 percent," Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, also chairman of the House committee on ways and means, said in an interview over the weekend.

At present, mining operations are taxed 4 percent from 2 percent under the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Act.

The lawmaker also said he will propose for the creation of a sovereign wealth fund for the country by imposing a 2-percent sovereign wealth tax on the mining industry.

A sovereign wealth fund is de-

finied as a state-owned investment fund or entity which comprises of pools of money derived from a country's reserves. Reserves are funds set aside for investment to benefit the country's economy and its citizens.

"Under a sovereign wealth fund, all collections by one administration cannot be used by them. It can only be used by the next administration," Salceda explained.

He noted that under his proposal, all the collections from sovereign wealth tax will be accumulated for six years, which will be automatically appropriated upon notice by the next administration.

"A trust fund is a way of perpetuating the life. The mining industry is extracting non-repeat-

ing resources. It belongs to the Philippines and the next Filipinos because you have to wait 2 million years to at least produce the next ounce of gold, for example. So there's at least should be intertemporal benefits across generations," the solon said.

Salceda said he will discuss his proposal to all the stakeholders.

A recent study made by the National Tax Research Center revealed that the mining industry is a significant driver of an economy, but its progress is proceeding at an extremely slow pace.

The think tank said the industry contributed only an average 0.7 percent to the country's gross domestic product from 2008-2017.

MAYVELIN U. CARABALLO



Addt'l excise tax for mining being studied

ALBAY Rep. Joey Salceda is eyeing to propose higher excise tax for mining as well as additional tax for a sovereign wealth fund.

Salceda told finance reporters in a breakfast meeting in Mandaluyong last Friday that he will push for a three percent increase in mining taxes.

"Essentially, I'm increasing the excise tax by one percent (age point), from four percent to five percent," Salceda said.

"For sovereign wealth, two percent (tax) from zero. All collections by one administration cannot be used by them, it can only be used by the next administration," he added.

Salceda said the collected amount for the sovereign wealth fund can be placed in a trust fund with the Bureau of the Treasury.

"Norway imposes (a sovereign wealth tax) on their oil and I think we should also use that on our oil if we have oil. It's a non-repeating resource, the gold... belongs to the Philippines and belongs to the next Filipinos," Salceda said.

"Because you have to wait two million years... to at least produce the next ounce of gold, for example. So there at least should be intertemporal benefits across generations," he added.

According to a report released earlier this year by the National Tax Research Center, the tax research arm of the Department of Finance, the mining industry is a significant growth driver of an economy, but the progress

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of the industry in the Philippines is proceeding at an extremely slow pace.

"The limited economic and fiscal contribution of mining industry may be due to limitation in the current fiscal policy framework and development program of the national government," the report said.

"The proposals to establish a new mining fiscal regime are timely and highly justified in order to realize the gains and benefits from the mining industry," it added. — *Angela Lorraine Celis*



No sign Duterte will end ban on open-pit mining — spokesman

By Arjay L. Balinbin
Reporter

PRESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte is not likely to lift the ban on open-pit mining — a method widely used by miners here and abroad — anytime soon, his spokesman

said on Thursday last week.

“I think he will maintain the ban. *Ayaw niya ng* open-pit mining. *‘Yun ang kanyang* policy... (He does not like open-pit mining, that is his policy),” Presidential Spokesperson Salvador S. Panelo said in an interview.

Antonio N. Apostol, officer-in-charge of the Mines and Geosci-

ences Bureau’s Lands Geological Survey Division, told reporters at the sidelines of a Sept. 24 news conference that “there is a lot of pressure because business people have a lot of influence, and it’s a political decision.”

Rodolfo L. Velasco, head of the MGB’s Mine Safety, Environment and Social Development division,

said in the same conference that the lifting of the ban will depend on the recommendation of the current environment secretary, Roy A. Cimatu.

The ban on open-pit mining was imposed by the late former Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez, an environmental advocate, in April 2017. She was

supported by Mr. Duterte, who rejected a proposal by the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) to lift the ban in November 2017.

Mr. Velasco said that the ban has had a significant negative impact on the attractiveness of the country for mining investors.

He noted that the most significant project that was put on hold is the \$5.9-billion Tampakan project in South Cotabato, touted as one of the largest gold prospects in the world, which Ms. Lopez rejected in 2016. Its operator is Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) which was able to secure declaration of mining feasibility and was steps away from starting operations.

Mr. Apostol said that open-pit mining is safer than underground mining, and that the government can easily regulate mining companies using this method since work is very visible.

Rocky G. Dimaculangan, vice-president for communications of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, was sought for comment on Sunday but had yet to reply as of early evening.

Meanwhile, Albay 2nd District Representative Jose Ma. Clemente S. Salceda, chairman of the House of Representatives Ways and Means committee, reiterated to reporters late last week that a bill he will file that will raise the government’s take in miners’ revenues will also provide for a sovereign wealth fund.

He said the bill seeks to raise miners’ excise tax to five percent from the current four percent, on top of the additional two percent sovereign wealth tax on firms’ gross output.

“There’s a new tax, a sovereign wealth tax... *Ang in-adjust ko lang ‘yung* excise tax,

from four *ginawa kong* five (percent). *‘Yung* sovereign wealth *ginawa kong* two from zero,” Mr. Salceda said.

Currently, he said that mining firms pay the regular 12% value-added tax, 30% corporate income tax and four percent excise tax.

Also included in the draft bill, he added, is a proposal that new mining tenements should be awarded via auction on a “first-come, first-served” basis.

“[The bill seeks to] provide for the auction. Second, sovereign wealth plus two (percent), excise tax (increase) by one percent[age point], everything [else] the same. Just increase the excise then add another two for sovereign wealth and the sovereign wealth cannot be taxed by the incumbent president administration that collected it,” he explained.

Looking back, Executive Order No. 79 in 2012 stopped approval of new mining permits until a new legislated revenue-sharing scheme is enacted. Several measures have since been filed in both the Senate and the House of representatives overhauling the tax regime of the industry. Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III and Majority Leader Juan Miguel F. Zubiri have each filed bills increasing the government’s revenue share from mineral products; while three bills have been filed in the House of Representatives. — with **B. M. Laforga**



CARAGA REGION: SURIGAO CITY

Miners urged to allot more for communities

The Environment department has urged mining companies in the Caraga Region to allot more resources in promoting sustainable and resilient communities.

"I urge the mining sector in this region to keep on investing in its role as a catalyst for economical sustainability and environmentally resilient communities," Environment Assistant Regional Director Ben Ali Decampong said at a mining symposium in Surigao City last week.

The Caraga Region hosts a chunk of mining companies in the Philippines since it is rich in minerals such as gold, silver, copper, nickel, iron, chromite, iron and limestone.

Of the 50 metallic mines in the Philippines, 25 operate in the region, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

One of two nickel processing plants and one of two gold processing plants in the country are in Caraga.

At the symposium, the Chamber of Mines in Caraga said mining companies should be more involved in helping promote and develop communities and the economy as a whole. — Vincent

Marief Galang



Bohol dam feasibility study gets NEDA OK

TAGBILARAN – The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) has endorsed for funding the feasibility study for the proposed Bohol Northeast Multi-Purpose Dam.

According to Bohol second district Representative Erico Aristotle Aumentado, what remains to be done

is the decision of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) on how to fund the project. The mode may be either solely government-funded, with official development assistance (ODA), or through Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

With the project given the green

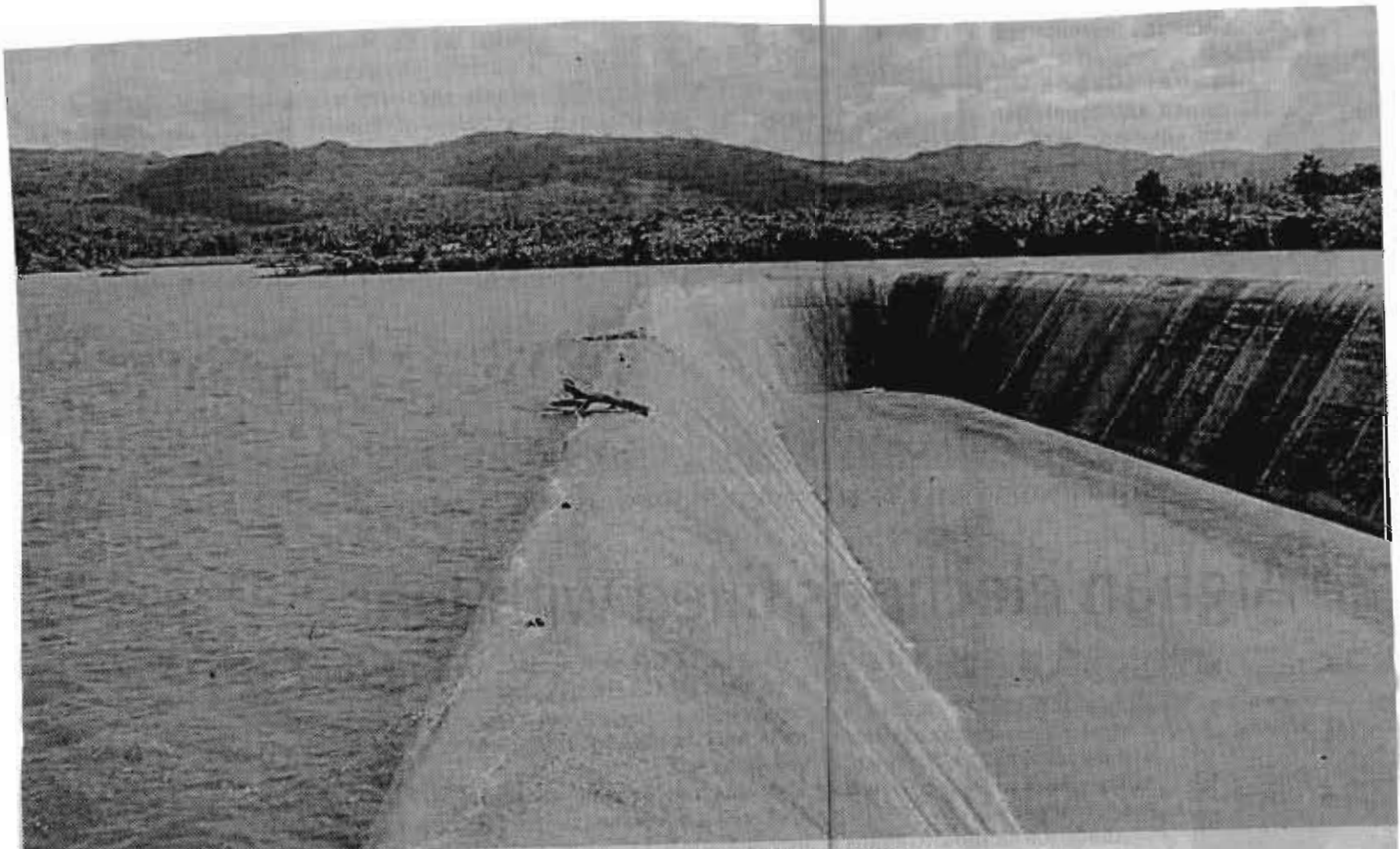
light, Aumentado said Boholanos can look forward to the year-round irrigation of some 19,000 hectares of rice land soon.

The bulk of farmers who will benefit from the dam are mostly from the second district of Bohol owing to the topography that makes the area a

natural catch basin.

Aside from irrigation, the project will also supply 10 megawatts of hydroelectric power as well as potable and household water. There is even a provision for water sports facilities which may be another tourist attraction for Bohol.

Dave Albarado



THE bulk of farmers who will benefit from the dam are mostly from the second district of Bohol.



Marine protected areas key to sustainable fishing in PH

BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

CORON, Palawan: The effective management of marine protected areas (MPA) in coastal communities across the Philippines would help achieve sustainable fishing that could ensure the livelihood of small fisherfolk, as well as food security, an expert said.

Establishing MPAs plays a critical role in protecting marine biodiversity, ecosystem function and sustaining healthy coastal communities, according to Rene Abesamis, a marine expert from Siliman University who works on research focused on helping reverse the decline in fisheries and biodiversity.

"Marine protected areas are really important because they are excellent to manage fisheries and also preserve or restore biodiversity. This is really important for people who are highly dependent on marine resources both for food, livelihood, through tourism, and also for other ecosystem services," Abesamis said.

There are about 1,800 MPAs across the country, including the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Marine Park and Apo Island, which has become a premier tourist destinations because of their abundant marine life.

MPAs directly benefit adjacent communities because it has

turned people "purely dependent on fishing" into workers strongly supported by tourism, said Abesamis, who received his Masters in Tropical Marine Ecology and Fish Biology and PhD in Marine Biology from James Cook University.

SPECIAL REPORT

"Even without the tourism benefits, there are places in the Philippines wherein fishers themselves recognize the benefits of a marine protected area and they have committed not only to protect that marine protected area from fishing but also to manage the fishing outside, agreeing to use only non-destructive, sustainable fishing methods," he added.

Abesamis said connectivity among MPAs, or the linking of local populations through the dispersal larvae, juveniles, or adults, improves the chance of survival of marine life resources. "Fish, for example, when they reproduce, they produce small baby fish that is a larva that can be transported by currents... and because of that life stage, those babies can now be transported from one MPA to the next. When that happens, your multiple marine protected areas in a network are affecting each

other through the exchange of their young and when that happens, there's a greater chance for those babies to survive to adulthood living in those different MPAs," he explained.

"By creating that network, you give those young fish a chance to live their lives, continue to adulthood and then reproduce inside those MPAs. If your network is working that way, meaning the reserves are close enough to each other and the network is dense enough, you create the synergistic recovery effect which is what you will need to really sustain fisheries and enhance biodiversities over that large scale."

Abesamis lamented that only 0.5 percent of the municipal waters across the country had been declared as MPAs. Republic Act 8550, or the "Fisheries Code of 1998," targets 15 percent.

"Philippine laws encourage us to protect 15 percent of municipal waters, but we cannot do that with one large MPA. It's unrealistic, as large MPA can be very difficult to manage and to get the support from locals to do that might be difficult," he said.

The marine expert added that 90 percent of existing MPAs are small, and only 3 out of 10 are functional.

Abesamis said there had been



a decline in the establishment of MPAs.

"I think that it's probably because people think that establishing an MPA, at least five or six MPAs in one municipality is enough. People have been contented to say that they have an MPA [and] sometimes it's been taken for granted," he explained.

"If you have an MPA, but you still practice destructive fishing outside, that's not going to do much for the entire system," Abesamis added.

He said alliances among local government units allow "greater ecological effects" through using MPAs, which has also become a "rallying point" for many other conservation initiatives.

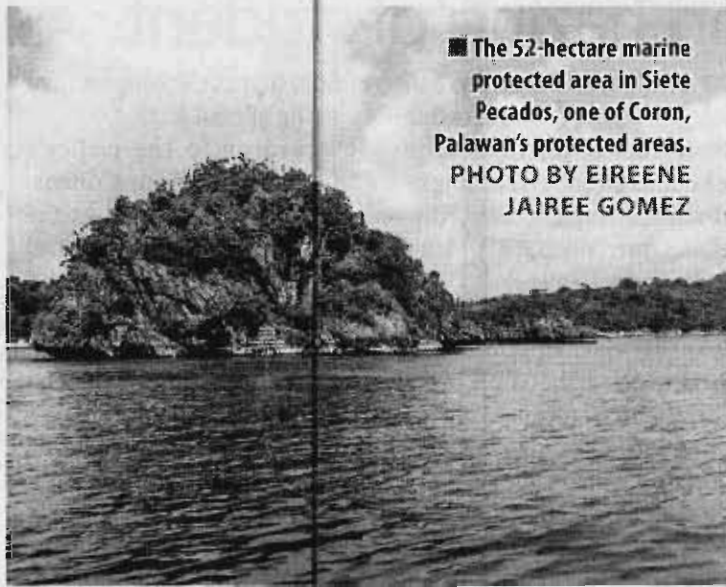
From fishing to tourism

The livelihood of residents in Siete Pecados, one of the protected areas in Coron, Palawan, has changed a 52-hectare MPA was established in 2005.

Cliff Richard Astor, head of Tagumpay village, admitted that there were instances in the past when fishers used illegal methods to augment their low yield.

That has changed.

"People here have accepted that we need to change the reality requiring us to help in preserving



■ The 52-hectare marine protected area in Siete Pecados, one of Coron, Palawan's protected areas. PHOTO BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

and protecting Siete Pecados," he said.

About 80 percent of the people in Sitio Mauinit shifted from fishing to tourism-related livelihood, Astor said.

In 2015, the local government of Coron and the United States Agency for International Development signed a memorandum of agreement for the implementation of a comprehensive master plan to further protect aquatic and cultural resources of the MPA in Siete Pecados.

Since then, the island has become a popular snorkeling spot because of its coral reefs and diverse tropical marine life.

Last year, 32,460 tourists vis-

ited Siete Pecados. The income generated from tourists helped fund regular patrol and monitoring operations, according to Siete Pecados park manager Jose Mazo.

"The lives of the people here have definitely changed. If it wasn't for the MPA in Siete Pecados, fisherfolk might be still pushing illegal methods of fishing leaving the future generations with countless challenges in terms of livelihood and food security," Mazo said.

Siete Pecados has become the benchmark for creating marine parks in Coron and other local governments in the Calamianes Island in Palawan.



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Protection of migratory species key to thriving regional ecosystems

THE Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) highlighted the importance of transboundary cooperation among Asean member-states in protecting wildlife and migratory species, and their habitats in the region.

"Species know no national boundaries and so the responsibility of protecting them is not borne by one country alone. This makes subregional cooperation paramount," ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim said.

Lim spoke about Asean's joint efforts in reducing threats to biodiversity at a recent plenary session of the Eighth Annual Conference on Environmental Science held at Mindanao State University on its Tawi-Tawi campus in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

She cited the collaboration between the Malaysian and the Philippine governments to protect the population of marine turtles moving across their boundaries. This was formalized by the bilateral agreement to establish the first transboundary protected area in the region, the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area, which aims to ban the collection of turtle eggs and introduce al-

ternative livelihood projects to involved communities.

Another important project in the region, she noted, is the Asean Flyway Network, which aims to conserve migratory water birds and their habitats in the coastal and inland wetlands along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF).

The first phase of the project began in 2018, with support from Japan-Asean Integration Fund and the Singaporean government as the country lead.

The project facilitated networking and collaboration among countries through the annual meeting of the Asean Flyway Network. National planning workshops were also conducted to identify priorities and challenges.

The Asean region lies at the heart of the EAAF, one of the major flyways in the world, which supports the annual migration of 50 million water birds.

Among the birds flying this



TITLE: Protection of migratory species key to thriving ^{reg'l.} ecosystems PAGE 1/ 2/2



ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim speaks before the participants of the Eighth Annual Conference on Environmental Science at the Mindanao State University. ACB

route is critically endangered spoon-billed sandpiper, which breeds in northeastern Russia and winters in Southeast Asia.

As a result of the destruction and degradation of wetlands in which it resides, its global population has been rapidly declining. The number of spoon-billed sandpiper is estimated between 240 and 456 individuals based on recent counts from the International Waterbird Census.

The Asean Biodiversity Outlook 2, citing findings by the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association, reported that Nan Thar Island in Rakhine State and Gulf of Martaban in Myanmar, both along the 8,000-kilometers EAAF, are critical

wintering grounds for the species. Lim said the network of coastal and inland wetlands along this

flyway is an interconnected system crucial for the survival of migratory water birds.

“Cooperation in the Asean is the most effective approach to conserving and protecting these migratory flyways,” Lim said.

The ACB also showcased the milestones and achievements of the Asean Heritage Parks Program in an exhibit during the three-day conference.

Organized by the Philippine Environmental Science Association (Pesa), the conference gathered experts, government officials, students and members of the academe and the private sector for research updates and discussions on key environmental agenda. Pesa is a consortium of higher education institutions in the Philippines.



EDC, PPA partner to protect 21 rare native tree species

BY LENIE LECTURA

[@lectura](#)

ENERGY Development Corp. (EDC) has partnered with nongovernment organization Philippine Permaculture Association (PPA) to protect and propagate 21 rare and threatened native tree species in Nueva Ecija.

Under EDC's Binhi program, 152 seedlings from these species were planted in the premises of Cabiokid Foundation Inc., a 13-hectare permaculture development site and integrated farm that serves as PPA's demonstration farm.

Binhi is the only corporate-led program to identify and propagate 96 rare and threatened native tree species. Through the program, EDC has reforested over 9,500 hectares with these indigenous species.

Binhi now has over 150 partners nationwide that help propagate these tree species.

PPA promotes knowledge on

permaculture for sustainable agriculture. Permaculture is the practice of integrating people and the environment to create diverse, stable and resilient agricultural systems. It comes from the combination of the words "permanent" and "agriculture."

Some of the species planted include *yakal-saplungan*, *yakal-malibato*, *malabayabas*, *betis*, *apunan*, *pianga*, *kamagong*, *kamagong ponce*, *ipil*, *tindalo* and *supa*. These species have dwindled in number in the wild and are no longer familiar to the younger generations.

EDC is one of the world's largest geothermal producers and the country's leading renewable-energy company with an installed capacity of 1,471.8 MW.

EDC is a subsidiary of the First Gen Corp., the country's largest clean energy company, with a portfolio that included natural gas, geothermal, solar, wind and hydro.



BOARD TALK

MANA Mo (3)

This is my third annual article on MANA Mo (Maritime and Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month), which we are supposed to celebrate every year in September, following a proclamation issued by President Rodrigo Duterte in 2017.

It is now the end of September 2019. What have we done to celebrate MANA Mo this year—or even just to remind ourselves of what we are as a nation—a MAN?

Have public knowledge, attitude, and positive action on our being a MAN improved? I suggest DepEd or a research organization measure and monitor those parameters because public participation is needed for us to face the challenges and tap the opportunities associated with our “MAN-hood,” including dealing with the West Philippine Sea (WPS) issue, sustainably using our marine resources, etc. Creating public awareness of our being a MAN must start with our young population.

Last year, as member of the Board of Advisers of the Philippine Navy, I directed the development of the first Mobile Marine and Naval Centrum (MMNC), which the DOST and Secretary Fortunato dela Peña supported. That’s aimed mainly at our youth but even senior citizens enjoyed our interactive exhibits that presented marine and naval facts, including the challenges that we face as a MAN and what we are doing about them. Local organizations may now invite and host the MMNC’s visit to their communities by contacting the Citizens Support Your Navy Foundation, Inc.

This year, one event that I participated in was the general



MAPPING THE FUTURE

CORAZON P.B. CLAUDIO

membership meeting on Sept. 20 of the Maritime League (ML), which was organized by our President, Commodore Chuck Agustin, AFP (Ret.). Experts and scholars, such as Jay Batongbatal, director of UP’s Institute of Maritime Affairs and the Law of the Sea, made us understand better the contemporary issues and developments on the South China Sea (SCS), the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone, and other MAN-related topics.

Col. Rommel Cordova of the Philippine Army discussed his research on China’s Strategy on the SCS and how we might define strategic approaches for the Philippines.

One common observation is that our WPS strategies seem to focus on the political and military aspects, with little attention to the economic aspect—a challenge to the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), which includes many business leaders.

Early this year, I proposed inclusion of marine and maritime

issues in the priority concerns of the MAP National Issues Committee chaired by Eddie Yap. So far, MAP members’ attention to MAN-related matters is just slowly increasing because other issues, such as the traffic situation, seem more urgent. Soon, Sr. Associate Justice Antonio Carpio will discuss with us the WPS issue. Thereafter, we hope more MAP members will become actively involved in addressing it and other issues and concerns arising from our being a MAN.

At our ML meeting, we also discussed the management of our inland bodies of water, which include the Laguna Lake, the largest of them, with an estimated water holding capacity of more than two billion cubic meters. We could use it to strengthen our water security. Sadly, we cannot do so now due to its high level of siltation with soil erosion from deforested areas and pollution from domestic, agricultural, and industrial sources around the Lake. Cleaning and dredging the Lake have become emergency measures not only to address water shortage but also to avoid flooding in the Laguna Lake region that covers areas from Laguna to Batangas and Quezon.

In response to the recent water crisis, MAP’s Board created three new committees in July. I was asked to chair one of them, MAP Sustainable Development Committee, which would focus on the reforestation of the Laguna Lake Watershed (LLW), an area that was about 382,000 hectares.

Reforestation this big area poses many challenges that include the informal settlers’ is-



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sue. MAP alone, even with its more than 1000 top management leaders and practitioners, cannot easily address the challenges that need the participation and cooperation of all. Hence, I accepted this big responsibility on the condition that I could invite partners outside MAP to help run the program that we now refer to as MAP & Partners' PRD-LLW (Program on Reforestation with Development for the Laguna Lake Watershed).

With the support of our governor-in-charge, Dick DuBaladad, we invited partners from both the public and private sectors to work with us through 19 task forces on topics ranging from policymaking to recognition of best reforestation initiative.

We have two project models: Model 1 on reforestation with development on public, ancestral domain, and private lands and Model 2 on river stabilization. We now have several project proponents for sites within the LLW, as well as outside, such as Zambales and Palawan.

We have chosen to reforest mainly with bamboo plants, with added indigenous trees to ensure forest diversity. We chose bamboo, which has about 80 species in our country, because some species grow fast enough to allow harvesting of some poles less than a year after planting time. We need such speedy growth because we are dealing with fast-growing risks such as the water crisis and climate change.

Bamboo is also adaptable to various locations—from coastal to uplands—and it may

be planted with other plants and trees. It can produce much biomass up to about 100 years. It has many uses but our priorities are for food, construction (structures, furniture, and fixtures), energy and transport including bridges, and textile.

Bamboo can also contribute to our climate change risk reduction efforts. It has high ability to sequester carbon and to withstand adverse weather conditions such as typhoons.

Some of us in the PRD-LLW working group have taken a study tour of the bamboo industry in China and have been involved in bamboo planting for many years. In addition, we count on the help of additional experts on bamboo and indigenous trees on various tasks—selection of species, procurement of seedlings, training of people etc.

The phrase "with development" means that we shall not only reforest to avoid soil erosion; we shall also try to help in the sustainable development of local communities in our project sites. Hence, we have social scientists and development workers in our group for support services.

We welcome support in cash and in kind. The Development Bank of the Philippines is the first to offer grant and loan funds through the help of Board Director Rollie Metin, former DENR undersecretary who understands well the risks of deforestation. We hope to have more of them.

But the long-term success of our PRD-LLW depends not only on our MAP and Partners' group and sources of support. It also depends much on our youth who

will eventually continue our work.

To promote understanding of reforestation and its sustainable development context, we are developing a mobile centrum on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with emphasis on those dealing with water, climate action, life on land and reforestation, and inclusive development with no more poverty. We will translate the SDGs into interactive exhibits that will be educational and enjoyable for young ones, as well as young once.

Serge Ramos III, general manager of PCI Tech Center, and May Pagsinohin, executive director, Philippine Foundation for Science and Technology, have joined our task force on this project.

We welcome other environment-caring individuals with at least two of three Ws—wealth (theirs or their contacts'), wisdom, and willingness to work—to join our PRD-LLW that now has 170 viber group members. Our style is "work hard and play hard," with lots of prayers in between. Our next meeting is on Oct. 12, when top experts on bamboo and indigenous trees will give educational presentations. INQ



The author, a life member of MAP, serves as director/trustee of several boards, including that of the Asiapro Foundation, Philippine Business for the Environment, PFST/Science Centrum, and TOWNS Foundation. She is a core member of the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development. Feedback at <map@map.org.ph> and <droraclaudio@gmail.com>. For previous articles, please visit <map.org.ph>.



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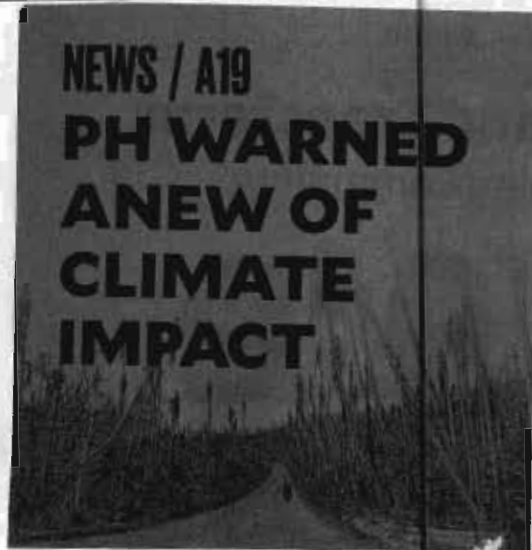
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PH warned anew of climate impact

By Jhesset O. Enano
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Extreme sea level rise as the oceans further heat up and more intense cyclones threaten coastal communities around the world, including those in the Philippines, said a United Nations report that looked into the impact of climate change on the ocean and the cryosphere.

Released last week, the special report by the UN-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned of even more drastic consequences that the world will face due to the unabated warming of the ocean and the rapid thawing of the cryosphere, or the frozen parts of Earth.

While these impacts will be felt globally, the Philippines—an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean with far less adaptive capacity than developed nations—will surely bear the brunt of these extreme events, said Lourdes Tibig, the lone Filipino contributor to the report.

"Whatever permafrost thawing that had happened, it will affect us even if we are far away because it results [in] what we call as major contributions to sea level rise," she said in an interview with the Inquirer during the report's Philippine launching on Thursday.

"There could be areas that will be permanently inundated, especially the low-lying ones. Productive agricultural areas near the coast could also be saline because of the intrusion of sea water," she added.



FURY OF 'YOLANDA' A road in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, lined by damaged coconut trees in the aftermath of the 2013 typhoon.

Without proper preparedness and access to resources, more human lives could also be put at risk, due to more severe tropical cyclones, similar to Super typhoon "Yolanda" (international name: Haiyan) that battered Eastern Visayas in 2013. "More intense storms may become the new normal," Tibig said.

The report also projects that more extreme El Niño and La Niña would also likely intensify existing impacts, with drier and wetter events in several regions worldwide.

"With the ordinary [El Niño], we already find difficulty in adapting to it. What more if it becomes extreme?" Tibig said.

With these projections, coastal communities may suffer from a "triple whammy," or compounded hazards that can happen simultaneously, with the threats of extreme sea level rise, El Niño and stronger storms ahead, she noted.

The report was the third to be released by the IPCC, a UN-backed body that assesses the science related to the changing climate.

More than 100 scientists from 36 countries worked on this report on the ocean, citing nearly 7,000 scientific papers and eliciting more than 31,000 comments during the reviews.

The report observed that the global ocean, which is considered a major carbon sink, has already taken up over 90 percent of the world's excess heat since the 1970s. Scientists noted that its rate of warming has doubled since 1993.

Marine heat waves, or periods of extremely high ocean temperatures, have already adversely

impacted marine organisms and ecosystems, as well as "critical foundation species," including corals, seagrasses and kelp.

Tibig said these could ultimately threaten the country's livelihood and food security, as many Filipinos depend on the ocean and the seas for catch.

"There could be decreasing fish catch potential because fish usually stay away from warm waters and seek colder temperatures," she said. "The common observation now is that our fishermen need to go farther out to sea for better catch."

With this grim scenario, abrupt changes in the ocean and cryosphere can still be dealt with through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions globally, the report said. In managing these risks, "transformative governance" is needed, which would integrate a variety of strategies and benefits to help reduce the risks posed by compounded events.

For the Philippines, Tibig said policymakers should listen to the science in the report and push for more integration of climate actions that would go beyond the time frame of their political positions.

"The government should really push for more ambitious targets in terms of adaptation and mitigation, because adaptation is not enough," she said. "Ecosystem-based adaptation... should be in conjunction with mitigation or reduction of emissions."

The special report should also push the government to invest more in research and studies to fully understand the risks faced by the country, particularly for coastal areas threatened by sea level rise, said Denise Fontanilla, associate for policy advocacy of the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities.

"There's such a lack of research and information," she said. "We need to know what the impacts truly are of climate change on our coastlines and coastal villages. [Right now,] we see a huge gap in the collection of data." INQ



DoF looking for alternatives to German climate-change study loan

THE government is seeking alternative funding for a \$36-million loan it was hoping to obtain from Germany that had to be foregone after Malacañang ordered the cancellation of aid talks with countries that voted for a United Nations human rights investigation of the Philippines.

The Department of Finance added that \$190 million worth of ongoing loans were not affected by the order, which covered only aid programs where negotiations were ongoing.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said that the \$36 million it was planning to borrow from Germany prior to the moratorium was meant to fund climate change studies.

Mr. Dominguez said certain multilateral institutions have "signified their interest" to step in and provide loans to replace the 21 million euro program for the Metro Manila Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), which was intended to be funded by France, one of the countries voting for the UN investigation of the Philippines' handling of the drug war.

"In any case, multilateral development financial institutions (MDFIs) and other bilateral partners have signified their willingness to finance the 21 million-euro project loan," he was quoted as saying in the statement.

Undersecretary Mark Dennis Y.C. Joven who also heads the Finance Department's International Finance Group

(IFG), will be reviewing the affected projects and find alternate sources.

"We are currently in exploratory talks with our other bilateral partners on how they can assist the Philippine government in funding the grants that were previously under negotiation but were suspended on orders of the President," Mr. Dominguez said.

He said other financing schemes affected are technical assistance grants, the loss of which will not "significantly affect" the infrastructure program. He also said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) will be reviewing relations with countries that backed the UN resolution.

Last week, the President's spokesman Salvador S. Panelo confirmed that the

memo dated Aug. 27 exist after denying it earlier. The memo orders to reject loans and grants from countries who backed a UN investigation on President Rodrigo R. Duterte's war on drugs.

However, Mr. Dominguez clarified that ongoing grants worth \$197.03 million will not be affected by the suspension as the order only proposes to "suspend negotiations for and signing of, all loan and grant agreements with the governments of the countries that co-sponsored and/or voted in favor of the aforesaid resolution, pending the assessment of our relations with these countries."

The ongoing grants from the pro-investigation countries include \$172.4 million from Australia, \$4.8 million from

Italy, \$1.11 million from Spain, \$9.74 million from France and \$8.98 million from Germany.

France, Germany and Sweden were non-members of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) but were co-sponsors of the resolution.

The 18 countries that voted for the resolution are Australia, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Fiji, Iceland, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Slovakia, Spain, Ukraine, the UK and Uruguay.

On July 11, the UNHRC ordered its human rights office to prepare a comprehensive report on human rights violations in the Philippines connected to the drug war. — **Beatrice M. Laforga**



TITLE: Oceans rising faster, ice melting more

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Oceans rising faster, ice

melting more

NEW YORK—Climate change is making the world's oceans warm, rise, lose oxygen and get more acidic at an ever-faster pace, while melting even more ice and snow, a grim international science assessment concludes.

But that's nothing compared to what Wednesday's special United Nations-affiliated oceans and ice report says is coming if global warming doesn't slowdown: 3 feet of sea rise by the end of the century, much fewer fish, weakening ocean currents, even less snow and ice, stronger and wetter hurricanes, and nastier El Niños.

"The oceans and the icy parts of the world are in big trouble and that means we're all in big trouble, too," said one of the report's lead authors, Michael Oppenheimer, professor of geosciences and international affairs at Princeton University. "The changes are accelerating."

These changes will not just hurt the 71 percent of the world covered in oceans or the 10 percent covered in ice and snow, but it will harm people, plants, animals, food, societies, infrastructure and the global economy, according to the special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The oceans absorb more than 90 percent of the excess heat from carbon pollution in the air, as well as much of the carbon dioxide itself.

These seas warm more slowly than the air but trap the heat longer with bigger side effects—and the report links these waters with Earth's snow and ice, called the cryosphere, because their futures are interconnected.

"The world's oceans and cryosphere have been taking the heat for climate change for decades. The consequences for nature and humanity are sweeping and severe," said Ko Barrett, vice chairman of the IPCC and a deputy assistant administrator for

research at the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The report found the following:

■ Seas are now rising at one-seventh of an inch (3.66 millimeters) a year, which is 2.5 times faster than the rate from 1900 to 1990.

■ The world's oceans have already lost 1 percent to 3 percent of the oxygen in their upper levels since 1970 and will lose more as warming continues.

■ From 2006 to 2015 the ice melting from Greenland, Antarctica and the world's mountain glaciers has accelerated and is now losing 720 billion tons (653 billion metric tons) of ice a year.

■ Arctic June snow cover has shrunk more than half since 1967, down nearly 1 million square miles (2.5 million square kilometers).

■ Arctic sea ice in September, the annual minimum, is down almost 13 percent per decade since 1979.

This year's low tied for the second lowest on record. If carbon pollution continues unabated, by the end of the century there will be a 10 percent to 35 percent chance each year that sea ice will disappear in the Arctic in September.

■ Marine animals are likely to decrease 15 percent, and catches by fisheries in general are expected to decline 21 percent to 24 percent by the end of century because of climate change.

And for the first time, the international team of scientists is projecting that "some island nations are likely to become uninhabitable due to climate-related ocean and cryosphere change."

The IPCC increased its projected

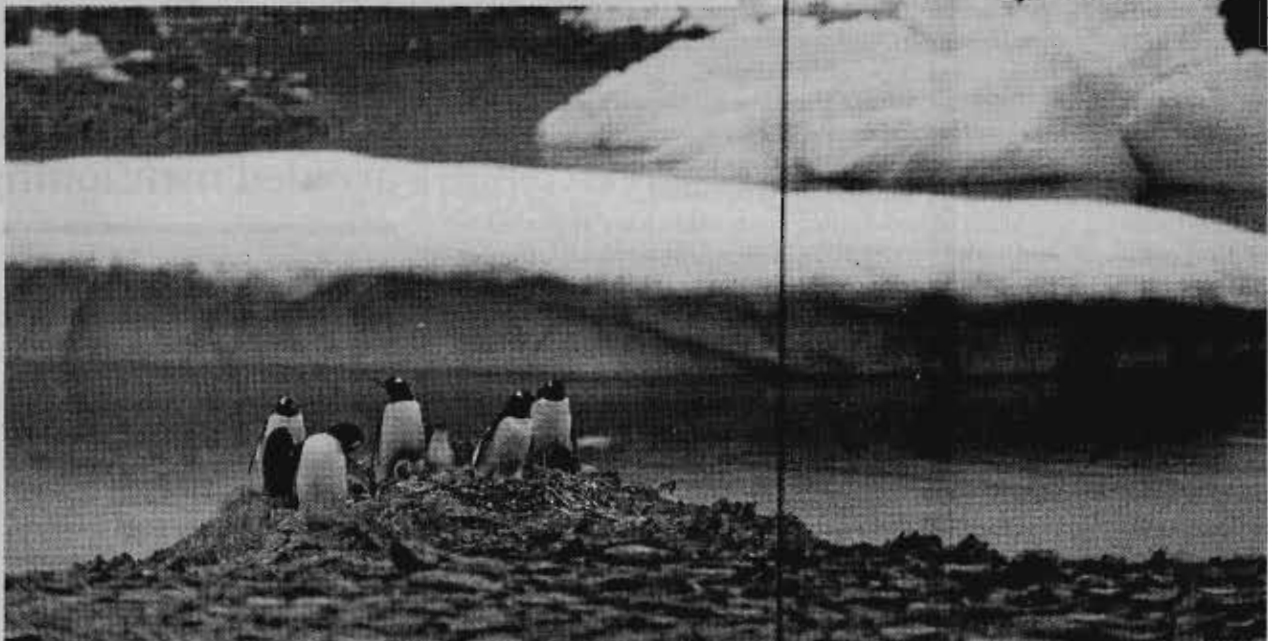
TITLE: Oceans rising faster, ice melting more

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NEW CLIMATE REPORT

GENTOO penguins stand on rocks near the Chilean station Bernardo O'Higgins, Antarctica, in this January 22, 2015, photo. Airbnb is offering a handful of tourists concerned about the environment a chance to help participate in scientific research on how to help preserve it with an all-expense paid trip to Antarctica. The Antarctic Sabbatical, as the travel company is dubbing it, will give five people the opportunity to study how widely microplastics have infiltrated the region. AP/NATACHA PISARENKO



end-of-century sea level rise in the worst-case scenario by nearly 4 inches (10 centimeters) from its 2013 projections because of increased recent melt of ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica.

The new report projects that, under the business-as-usual scenario for carbon emissions, seas by the end of the century will rise between 2 feet (61 cm) and 43 inches (110 cm) with a most likely amount of 33 inches (84 cm). This is slightly less than the traditional 1 meter (39 inches) that scientists often use.

"Sea level continues to rise at an increasing rate," the report said. "Extreme sea level events that are historically rare [once per century in the recent past] are projected to occur frequently [at least once per year] at many locations by 2050."

And sea level will rise two to three times as much over the centuries to come if warming continues, so the world is looking at a "future that certainly looks completely different than what we currently have," said report coauthor Hans-Otto Portner, a German climate scientist.

The Nobel Prize-winning IPCC required nations meeting last week in Monaco to unanimously

approve the report, and because of that the group's reports tend to show less sea-level rise and smaller harms than other scientific studies, outside experts said.

"Like many of the past reports this one is conservative in the projections, especially in how much ice can be lost in Greenland and Antarctica," said National Aeronautics and Space Administration [Nasa] oceanographer Josh Willis, who studies Greenland ice melt at length and wasn't part of the report. "We're not done revising our sea-level rise projections and we won't be for a while."

Willis said people should be prepared for sea rise to be twice these IPCC projections.

The oceans have become slightly more acidic, but that will accelerate with warming. In the worst-case scenario, the world is looking at a "95-percent increase in total acidity of the oceans," said study coauthor Nathan Bindoff of the University of Tasmania.

Even if warming is limited to just another couple of tenths of a degree, the world's warm water coral reefs will go extinct in some places and be dramatically different in others, the report said.

"We are already seeing the demise of the warm water coral reefs," Portner said. "That is one of the strongest warning signals that we have available."

The report gives projections based on different scenarios for emissions of heat-trapping carbon dioxide. One is a world that dramatically decreases carbon pollution — and the worst case is where little has been done. We are closer to the worst-case situation, scientists said.

Outside scientists praised the work, but are disturbed by it.

"It is alarming to read such a thorough cataloging of all of the serious changes in the planet that we're driving," Texas A&M University climate scientist Andrew Dessler, who wasn't part of the report, said in an e-mail. "What's particularly disturbing as a scientist is that virtually all of these changes were predicted years or decades ago."

Its authors emphasized that this report doesn't doom Earth to this gloomy outlook.

"We indicate we have a choice. Whether we go into a grim future depends on the decisions that are being made," Portner said. "We have a better future ahead of us once we make the right choice." AP



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Nestlé, P&G say they will miss targets deforestation

CHICAGO — The world's two largest consumer goods companies, Nestlé SA and Procter & Gamble Co., have acknowledged they will fall short of goals to use only those ingredients that do not contribute to deforestation in their products by 2020.

Nestlé, known for products such as KitKat bars and Haagen-Dázs ice cream, says on its website that in 2010 it "made a commitment to no-deforestation" by 2020. But on Saturday, a Nestlé spokeswoman said the company now believes it will stop short of that target.

Nestlé now predicts "over 90% of our key agricultural commodities to be verified deforestation-free by the end of 2020, up from 77% at the beginning of 2019," the spokeswoman said.

Procter & Gamble, meanwhile, states on its website that it aims "to establish zero deforestation in our supply chain by 2020."

But on Sunday, a spokesman for the company, which uses palm oil in its Tide detergent and Olay skin-care products, said it too would fail to meet the goal by next year.

Advocacy groups like Greenpeace have previously said they were skeptical of promises made by consumer companies.

The environmental record of global corporations was in the spotlight at the UN Climate Action Summit last week, and some investors have called on companies to step up deforestation efforts after more than a month of fires in the Amazon rainforest.

Hundreds of companies have made 2020 zero deforestation pledges, according to the group. Ignacio Gavilan, CGF's director of sustainability, told Reuters its member companies had underestimated increasing demand for consumer goods and lax government forest regulations.

PepsiCo, Inc., Mars and Mondelez International, Inc. told Reuters they had no-deforestation pledges and declined to provide specifics on any related goals for 2020 or beyond. Cargill, Inc., which sources ingredients like corn and soybeans, said on a conference call with reporters in June that it and the broader food industry will not make 2020 zero deforestation pledges.

Unilever Plc and General Mills, Inc. — two other large members of the CGF — did not respond to requests for comment. Kellogg declined to comment.

Coca-Cola Co., a CGF member that did not make the pledge, said it is still trying to reduce deforestation in its supply chain. — Reuters



IAN BENEDICT
R. MIA

GREEN LIGHT

Schools and the youth: Pedestals for environmental protection

THE clock strikes noon. I'm walking along a pavement sprinkled with lush greenery and carefully placed blocks of stone and tiny lamps. I pass by a building covered with vines from top to bottom—a commune with nature I rarely see in city buildings. Within a hallway, I'm led to a bigger space with shoots of bamboo dangling from the ceiling. Towards the corner, a mural depicting Mother Nature's beauty and charm captivates my eyes. When finally reaching my destination, I'm greeted by smiles and welcoming hands as we begin the day's activities.

I was fortunate to co-facilitate a workshop with MakeSense Philippines in Foundation University, Dumaguete City that teaches college and senior high school students how to create their own social initiatives. After the workshop, the students had brilliant ideas on plastic waste solutions, solid waste management, and solving unintended teen pregnancy, among many others.

The workshop also came in at the right time for the students as they are beginning to be more aware and proactive with the issues facing their local communities. As Dumaguete City becomes more urbanized, they experience the same issues as other cities, ranging from air pollution to the improper disposal of plastic and other wastes.

The role of schools

One thing I learned in the workshop was that schools should be among the forefront of providing opportunities to the youth to engage in social initiatives. These are not only limited to community engagement requirements, but also to the core curriculum and basic classroom activities.

When speaking with the youth of

today, I can confidently say that they are more aware and creative than any of the previous generations. Schools just have to give them the chance and the right environment to unleash their creative potential—not just their academic aptitude.

Gone are the days of pure classroom instruction, paperwork or recitation—the youth of today need to move, and they need to be taught how to move fast. It is not enough anymore that schools teach the youth how to articulate themselves and engage in intellectual discourse. In the world of forms that we live in, action and engagement reign supreme.

The youth and tomorrow

The protection and restoration of the environment is the defining issue of today's generation. Across the world, the youth are getting more and more involved with movements going against inaction and passivity on environmental issues. The likes of Autumn Peltier, Isra Hirsi, Xiuhtezcatl Martinez and Greta Thunberg—all youth below 20 years of age—have already jump-started global movements of their own. They are inspiring the youth like me to create ripples of positive change, wherever we are and however simple or complex it may be. No one is ever too small to make a difference.

In FU, the youth have the same sentiments. They hunger for change and they want it fast. They are taking matters into their own hands and are starting to create initiatives in their local communities. One group of students I talked to wanted to create a machine that would recycle plastic bottles as well as incentivize with cash those who donate the plastic bottles. Initiatives like these are something that schools need to support—and it needs to be done fast. The students need to be ex-

posed and engaged with the innovation ecosystem within their local communities and beyond.

Biosphere consciousness

I recently watched a documentary by social and economic theorist Jeremy Rifkin where he says that the world is now entering a state of 'biosphere consciousness' or simply put, a spike in the increase of environmental awareness across the world.

If schools—among many other actors in the ecosystem—could provide more opportunities for students to engage with this changing world order, then we can have better chances of supporting and advancing it.

One way this can be done is by teaching the youth how to create their own social initiatives. It does not have to be only for the environment, because when we refer to the planet's biosphere, everything under it is involved, from politics, culture, economics and technology, to name a few.

While the clock is ticking for the environment, together we will need to move faster than ever. Schools and the youth are among the pedestals for such change.

Mr. Ian Benedict R. Mia is a research and technical assistant of the Center for Business Research and Development of De La Salle University. He blogs about his insights and experiences on sustainability through berdeboy.blog. He also volunteers for non-profit organizations such as Alexa Mira Society, Inc. and MakeSense Philippines. Contact him at ianbrmia@gmail.com. The views expressed above are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the official position of DLSU, its faculty, and its administrators.



A CALL TO ARMS

BURNING OF RAINFORESTS MAKES REFORESTATION MORE URGENT

MADRE DE DIOS, PERU— Destruction of the forests can be swift. Regrowth is much, much slower. But around the world, people are putting shovels to ground to help it happen.

They labor amid spectacular recent losses—the Amazon jungle and the Congo basin ablaze, Indonesian rainforests burning. Between 2014 and 2018, a new report said, an area the size of the United Kingdom was stripped of forest each year.

Rebuilding woodland is slow and often difficult work.

And it requires patience: It can take several decades or longer for forests to regrow as viable habitats, and to absorb the same amount of carbon lost when trees are cut and burned.

And yet, there is urgency to that work—forests are one of the planet's first lines of defense against climate change, absorbing as much as a quarter of man-made carbon emissions each year.

A recent study projected that if 0.9 billion hectares of new trees were planted—around 500 billion saplings—they could absorb 220 gigatons of carbon once they reached maturity. —AP



Mga pabayang lider, bingi sa sigaw ng nasisirang kalikasan at mga nagugutom



"Naririnig ba natin ang dalawang magkaugnay na sigaw, ang sigaw ng kalikasan at mga dukha?" Ito ang tanong ni Papa Francisco sa World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation noong ika-1 ng Setyembre 2019.

Hindi dukha ang kalikasan at tao dahil likas na mayaman ang dalawa. Nilikha ng Diyos ang mga ito na puspos ng Kanyang pagpapala.

Hindi gusto ng Diyos na masira at tuluyang mamatay ang Kanyang mga nilikha. Pero, bakit tila habang tumatagal ay nasisira at tuluyang namamatay ang maraming bahagi ng kalikasan at tao?

Bawat isa ay may kani-kanyang tinig, tinig na maaaring gamitin para sa tama o para sa mali.

At isa sa mga tinig na nais mapakinggan ay ang mula kay Greta Thunberg.

Kamakailan, nagsalita si Greta sa United Nations, sa harap ng mga kinatawan ng iba't ibang bansa at tinalakay nito ang global warming at climate change.

Isang batang babae si Greta, pero mata-pang siyang nagsalita para sa kanyang mga ipinaglalaban.

"This is all wrong. I shouldn't be standing

here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to me for hope? How dare you!"

Kinagalitan niya ang mga pinuno ng mga makapangyarihang bansa ng mundo.

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing." dagdag pa nito.

Samantala, noong sumunod na araw, binagtas ng 'Kariton ni Kiko' kasama ang siyanti na volunteers ang San Isidro Labrador sa Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City.

Napakaraming maralitang tagalung-sod sa mga kalye kahit madaling-araw 'yun. Naroon ang mga batang harmog, nagtiinda ng sampaguita at hindi mabilang na "kariton families".

Walang reklamo ang mga ito, pero makikita sa kanilang kalagayan na karamihan sa kanila ay nagugutom pero walang pambili ng pagkain.

Isa-isa namin silang kinausap at kinumusta, ayon sa kanila, madalas ay itimutulog na lang tila ang gutom.

Sa kaunting panahon na nakausap namin sila, lamang-dama namin ang lungkot sa kanilang bawat salita.

Sa patuloy na pagpapabaya ng simpleng mamamayan at lider ng bansa, muli nating maririnig nang sabay ang sigaw ng kalikasan at sigaw ng mga dukha.



Fundraising for Boracay dragon boat paddlers' kin

By **TARA YAP**

A global fundraising has been launched for the families left behind by the seven dragon boat paddlers who died last week off the coast of world-famous Boracay Island in Malay town, Aklan province.

"While the devastation is immense for the lives lost, their families are left scurrying to find a way to give the deceased team members proper burial," a statement read on GoFundMe website.

Majority of the seven young professionals who joined Boracay's dragon boat team were from other parts of the country. Transporting their bodies back to their hometowns has been a financial challenge.

The seven members of the Boracay Dragon Force and Boracay Dragon Flies who perished when the dragon boat capsized during a routine training were Mark Vincent Navarrete, Rose Antonette Supranes,

John Vincent Natividad, Comar Acob, Richel Montuya, Johann Tan, and Maricel Tan.

"Like all dragon boat teams, we are a family. We are now a family in mourning. We are appealing for your help," wrote Remy Aquino-Nation, the team's vice president who started the online fundraising after the September 25, 2019 tragedy.

Malay Town Councilor Nenette Aguirre Graf particularly mentioned husband and wife Johann and Maricel Tan, who left behind son Joaquin.

"It's really heartbreaking. The son lost both of his parents," expressed Graf while speaking to Manila Bulletin in a phone interview.

Meanwhile, the seven fallen Boracay paddlers were honored Saturday in Singapore. There was a minute of silence while each of their names were called out before the start of a dragon boat race.



NANANAKOT ang ilang kompanya ng gamot na ititigil o pababagalin nila ang importasyon ng mga gamot na kailangan ng mga maysakit sa bansa kung ibababa ng pamahalaan ang presyo ng kanilang gamot.

Ganito kahalang ang kaluluwa ng mga kompanya ng gamot.

Sa pahayag na ito ng mga kompanya ng gamot, hindi baleng magkandamatay-matay ang mga maysakit na Filipino basta hindi matapayasan ang kanilang malalaking tubo.

Ang tanong ngayon: papayag ba ang pamahalaan na igaganito ng mga kompanyang lagnis ang mga sakit at kalusugan ng mga mamamayan?

120 URI NG GAMOT

Ayon sa Department of Health, kasalukuyan ang konsultasyon sa mga kinauukulan, kabilang na ang mga kompanya ng gamot, kung paano maibaba ang presyo ng 120 uri ng gamot na ibinebenta sa Pilipinas ng mga kompanya.

Ang gagawin ay lilitimahan ang pinakamataas na presyo ng mga gamot upang magkaroon ng kakayahan ang mga mamamayan na bumili ng kailangan nilang gamot laban sa kanilang mga sakit.

Halimbawa, ang presyo ng 5 milligramong tableta ng Amlodipine na may halong Bisoprolol na panlaban sa high blood ay nasa P29.53.

Mungkahi ng DOH, iba ang presyo nito sa P19.53.

Ibababa naman ang presyo ng Flegorafinib na gamot sa colon cancer mula sa P3,570 sa P2,167.84.

Ayaw ng mga kompanya ng gamot na magkaroon ng pagbabago sa presyo.

GENERIC ANG RESETA

Kalakip ng panukala ng DOH ang pagrereseta ng lahat ng gamot sa ngalang generic ang mga ito.

Sa totoo lang, may batas na para rito at nais lang na istriktong pairalin ng pamahalaan sa pamamagitan ng DOH.

Kaya naman, nariryan ang pagsulpot ng mga parmasyang "Generic" ang tatak.

Kapag generic kasi, rnga Bro, ang itilagay, mawawala ang mga brand ng mga gamot o



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

PAGGAWA NG GAMOT DAPAT IPURSIGE NG GOBERNO

tatak ng mga kompanya sa kanilang gamot.

'Yun bang === maliwasan ang sobrang presyo ng mga gamot.

Alalahaning isa sa nagpapamahala sa presyo ng gamot ang sobrang advertisement ng mga kompanya ng gamot sa media at sobra-sobrang pagbibigay nila ng mga pabor sa doktor at ospital para magamit ang kanilang mga gamot.

Nagbubuhos ang mga kompanyang gamot ng malaking salapi para panuhol sa mga doktor at ospital para gamitin ang kanilang gamot laban sa gamot ng kanilang kakumpitensya o patayin kaya ang produkto ng iba.

Kung matutunan nang husto ng mga mamamayan ang pagbili at paggamit ng mga generic na gamot, hihina ang negosyo ng mga swapang na kompanya ng gamot.

Kaya ayaw na ayaw nilang magreseta ng puro generic ang mga doktor at ospital.

MALAKING HAMON

Sa gitna ng pagkakait ng mga kompanya ng gamot sa mga Pinoy ng apordabol na presyo at tamang reseta, dapat na maging hamon ito sa pamahalaan.

Parahon nang pagbuhusan ito ng atensyon ng pamahalaan upang hindi maging biktima ng kaswapanang ang mga mamamayan.

Dito natin naalaala na meron nang pag-uusap sa pagitan ng pamahalaan at drug manufacturers na Bumbay, sa tulong ng Indian government, na magtayo ng kanilang pabrika ng gamot sa Pilipinas.

Nasaan na nga kaya ang programang ito?

Ngayon inaman, sa inisyatiba ng Department of Science and Technology, lumalabas na maraming halamang gamot ang pupwedeng gawin laban sa iba't ibang sakit gaya ng diabetes at dengue, bakit hindi buhusan ng tamang pondo ang ahen-syang ito ng pamahalaan upang higit nitong magampanan ang pagdiskubre ng mga gamot na

makukuha sa ating mga kalupaan at karagatan?

Isa pa, ang daming matatalino at magagaling na graduate sa parmasyutika at doktor o kaya'y beterano na sa paggawa ng gamot, bakit hindi ipunin ang lahat ng ito ng pamahalaan para gumawa ng gamot at magtayo ng pagawaan ng gamot sa loob ng ating bansa?

PANGSIPSIP NG KANSER

Sa pamamasyal ng mga kasamahan natin sa bansang Tsina na may modernong ospital, makabago na ang sistema sa paggamot ng kanser.

Ipinapasok lang ang mga karayom na tubo sa mismong bukol o kanser mismo saka sisipsipin ang sakit at hindi na kailangang magtagal ang pasyente sa ospital.

Makaraang masipsipan ng kanser ang pasyente, konting pahingalang, pinauuwi na.

Bakit hindi pasimulan ng pamahalaan ang pag-angat ng ganitong mga makinarya at ipuwesto kahit man lang sa mga regional hospital?

Kung magagawa ng mga mambabatas ang pumilas ng milyon-milyon o bilyon-bilyong pork barrel na kanilang pagkakitaan, hindi ba higit na paglaanan ng mga ito ang ganitong klase ng gamit at makina para panggamot sa kanser?

O kayorig mga riasa DOH, hindi kayo dapat na matakot sa banta ng mga kompanya ng lagnis.

Dapat na kayo ang mianguna na bukas sa pamahalaan na maglaan na ng malaking badyet para pagdiskubre ng mga gamot na sariling atin at pagbili ng mga makabagong makinarya at teknolohiya laban sa mga killer disease gaya ng kanser, diabetes, high blood at atake sa puso.

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



Filipina chef Louise Mabulo addresses the audience during the ceremony for the 2019 UN Champions of the Earth Award in New York last Thursday.

Pinay chef receives UN Young Champion of Earth award

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has officially honored Filipina chef Louise Mabulo and other environmental

on a panel with celebrity chef Massimo Bottura as part of a series of talks held at the UN on the sidelines of the Climate Action Summit.

The 21-year-old awardee lamented that a third of all

changemakers from around the world with the 2019 UN Champions of the Earth Award.

Mabulo, a joint winner for Asia and the Pacific, sat

food produced is wasted.

"But once you do something, people come together to help," Mabulo said.

She built The Cacao

Project, growing climate-resilient cocoa and restaurant business, which serves homegrown food made by farmers in the local community, following a typhoon which destroyed 80 percent of agriculture in her hometown of Camarines Sur.

"My venture was founded on research on what food is more resilient in our community – and that turned to be cacao," she said. "Once people realize and celebrate the value of food, individuals can make big changes," she added.

The awards ceremony, held in New York on Thursday, came days after UN Secretary-General António Guterres called on the

world to take urgent action on climate change and make concrete commitments to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Presenting the awards were actor and environmental activist Alec Baldwin, 2011 Champion of the Earth Angelique Kidjo and UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Dia Mirza.

The Champions of the Earth award – the UN's highest environmental honor – is presented every year to outstanding leaders from government, civil society and the private sector whose actions have had a positive impact on the environment.

This year's awards ceremony recognized laureates in the categories of inspiration and action, policy leadership, entrepreneurial vision, and science and innovation.