

03 JAN 2010

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Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

INQUIRER

A-4
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BRIEF
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTIC

03 JAN 2013

DATE

P-1

South Korea told to get trash out of PH by next week

By Melvin Gascon
@melvingasconINQ

A Bureau of Customs (BOC) official said on Wednesday that he had told South Korean authorities to send 6,500 tons of garbage that were illegally shipped to the Philippines back to their country by next week.

John Simon, port collector of the BOC at Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT), said he gave the Korean government until Jan. 9 to take back the first of two shipments of garbage that slipped through Tagoloan port in Misamis Oriental province last July.

"We want to send the message to the world that [the Philippines is] not a dumping ground, and we as a country have the power to send back garbage that was dumped from other countries," he said at a press conference in Quezon City arranged by the environmental group EcoWaste Coalition.

Misdeclared cargo

The BOC is leading efforts to return the 51 containers of garbage that were misdeclared as recyclable plastics, which Simon described as "the biggest shipment of garbage that had arrived in the country."

Documents showed that the shipment was imported from



JAM STA. ROSA

South Korea by Verde Soko Phils. Industrial Corp., and contained, aside from the declared plastics, about 32 tons of trash classified as "special or hazardous waste."

Bilateral meeting

The "special waste" found in the shipment included 2.63 tons of used batteries, 3.3 tons of discarded light bulbs, 25 tons of electrical and electronic waste, as well as 1.3 tons of dextrose tubes.

Simon and EcoWaste made the announcement days after a meeting was held between Philippine and Korean officials

on the handling of the garbage shipment.

Basel Convention

According to Simon, the South Korean government agreed to take back the waste in keeping with its contractual obligation under the Basel Convention, an international treaty designed to reduce the movement of hazardous waste between nations.

"[The] South Korean government sent four representatives here to find out the costs of bringing back the shipment and to validate their earlier findings on the transport of the



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

A-4
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

HEADER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2010

DATE

P-2

South Korea told to get trash out of PH by next week



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PH NO DUMP At a press conference in Quezon City on Wednesday, members of EcoWaste Coalition (left) call for the swift return to South Korea of some 6,500 tons of garbage illegally transported to the Philippines in July last year. A customs official announced that the first of two shipments—which slipped through Tagoloan port in Misamis Oriental province (above)—must be returned to their country of origin by Jan. 9.

jointly inspected documents that covered the dumped garbage from its exporter based in Pyeongtaek City.

The agencies confirmed that the exporter delivered waste to the Philippines that did not go through "proper recycling process" and that its "documents for export were forged."

'Gatekeepers had eyes closed'

The ministry also conducted an investigation after the exporter allegedly violated South Korea's false export declaration law and barred it from shipping more waste, according to the embassy, which did not identify the exporter.

Simon admitted that the shipment slipped into the country "as gatekeepers (the BOC) had their eyes closed."

The Interpol has reportedly started investigating the people behind importer Verde Soko, whose officials, Simon said, had made themselves scarce.

Initial findings showed that Verde Soko faked import documents from South Korea, the shipment did not pass through usual "thorough" inspection, and the company did not have any authority to transport.

"But it appears that despite these glaring discrepancies, they were given a red-carpet welcome. This is very disturbing," Simon said. **INQ**

trash," he said.

Based on BOC estimates, the reexport of the Korean trash would cost around \$47,430, mainly for inland and ocean freight charges.

Exporter probed

The Korean Embassy has said its Ministry of Environment conducted a "legal procedure" on Nov. 21 to have the garbage returned to Korea under its law on cross-border movement and disposal of wastes.

"The government stated that it would take measures to have the waste in question be

brought back to Korea as soon as possible," the South Korean Embassy said in a statement.

The embassy also said its government was investigating the Korean exporter of the trash.

"The government of the Republic of Korea—the Ministry of Environment, the Korea Customs Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—has embarked on the investigation of a Korean exporter which caused a controversy in the Philippines this month," it said.

The embassy said the Ministry of Environment and the Customs Service on Nov. 16



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



PAGE



UPPER
LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

03 JAN 2013

FILE: _____

PAGE 1

DATE

Gov't to return waste shipments to SoKor

The government is set to send 51 shipping containers loaded with some 6,500 tons of waste back to South Korea next week, a Bureau of Customs (BOC) official bared yesterday.

In a press conference organized by environmental group Ecowaste Coalition, Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT) port collector John Simon announced that the containers are set to be returned to their origin in Pyeongtaek City on Jan. 9.

"We expect the 51 garbage-filled containers stored at MICT to be homebound by Jan. 9, provided that all regulatory requirements are readily available. Their expedited re-export is what BOC wants and this is what our people are yearning for," Simon explained.

The BOC official said the re-exportation will cost the government around P2.5 million in expenses.

Simon stressed that the 51 containers of garbage will be sent back to South Korea

after the consignee, Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp., failed to secure an import permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The importer had misdeclared the garbage shipments as plastic synthetic flakes, which arrived in Mindanao last July and October.

Apart from the shipments, Simon said the remaining garbage at the Verde Soko compound in Barangay Santa Cruz in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental would also be re-exported.

The re-exportation order is pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, Republic Act 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.

The return of the containers is part of the agreement entered into by the two

governments during a bilateral meeting between Philippine and South Korean officials last Dec. 27 and 28 in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

- Edu Punz



Trusted Since 1898

The Manila Times

AB
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2013

DATE

Customs to return trash to SKorea

THE Bureau of Customs (BoC) will ship back to South Korea next week tons of hazardous garbage that were illegally discharged at the Mindanao Container Port (MCT) in Togoloan, Misamis Oriental on the pretext that the waste shipment were recyclable plastic synthetic flakes.

Cagayan de Oro (CDO) Collector Floro Calixihan on Wednesday said the decision to return the trash on January 9 was arrived at in coordination with Sunyoung Kim, Embassy of South Korea's minister counsellor.

"It is scheduled to be re-exported to Korea on January 9 as agreed," Calixihan told *The Manila Times*.

"The Collection District of Cagayan de Oro has initiated talks with the South Korean government to fast track the re-exportation of the waste shipments which came from Pyeongtaek City, South Korea," he added.

The MCT in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental is a sub-port of CDO.

Calixihan also said that the South Korean government has assured that it would do its utmost effort to prevent the occurrence of similar incident in the future.

Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero has ordered an investigation on the circumstances surrounding the discharge of the hazardous waste materials at the MCT without the corresponding

permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Customs Memorandum Circular (CMC) 44-2015 prohibits the unloading of hazardous shipment without clearance.

CMC 44-2015 stipulates a "No Importation Clearance, No Unloading Policy" under Republic Act 6969, or the "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990," and the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

The Environmental Management Bureau of the DENR-Region 10 examined the shipments consigned to Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. and found them to contain household hazardous waste. The broker was identified as Mary Claire Booc.

Records showed that Verde Soko, on two separate occasions, brought into the country one shipload containing 5,176.91 metric tons of various plastic and waste materials and another 51 40-foot containers, both misdeclared as plastic synthetic flakes.

Both shipments have been issued the corresponding Warrant of Seizure and Detention for violating Sections 117 and 1400 of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

In a memorandum to Guerrero, Simon explained that on October 24, Verde Soko asked the Customs Intelligence Investigation

Service for the "lifting of abandonment" on their shipment.

The shipment was inspected as part of the process, which led to

the discovery that they contained garbage. It was also discovered that Verde Soko was not a recycling plant for plastic when visited

because the machineries found in the plant were incapable of production.

WILLIAM B. DEPASUPLI



JUBILANT Green activists from Buklod Tao and the EcoWaste Coalition welcome the Bureau of Customs' announcement of the impending re-exportation of garbage shipments from South Korea this January, saying that such a development is a victory for environmental justice.

PHOTO BY RUY L. MARTINEZ



SK garbage shipped out soon

By Elmer N. Manuel

The Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT) on Wednesday announced that the Philippines and South Korea have already reached an accord for the return on 9 January to their port of origin of some 6,500 tons of waste that were dumped in Misamis Oriental last July.

MICT Port Collector John Simon said the 51 containers of mostly toxic waste materials will be shipped back to Pyeongtaek City, South Korea.

"The expedited re-export is what Bureau of Customs wants and this is what our people are yearning for," Simon said.

The waste materials will be re-exported after its consignee, Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corporation, failed to secure appropriate import permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The re-export of the said 51 containers is estimated to cost \$47,430, specifically for inland and ocean freight charges.

The consignee also misdeclared the garbage shipments as plastic synthetic flakes.

The re-export of the said 51 containers is estimated to cost \$47,430, specifically for inland and ocean freight charges.

To recall, the garbage shipment arrived at the MICT in July last year. It contained used dextrose tubes, soiled diapers, batteries, bulbs and electronic equipment and other hazardous materials.

The re-export will be in pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act 10863 (Customs Modernization and Tariff Act), Republic Act 6969 (Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act) and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mindanao Business Insight



03 JAN 2010

DATE

Tons of trash back to Korea next week

THE Bureau of Customs yesterday said the tons of undeclared waste shipped to Misamis Oriental in July last year will be shipped back to Pyengtaek City, South Korea on January 9.

"We expect the 51 garbage-filled containers stored at the Mindanao International Container Terminal in Misamis Oriental to be homebound by January 9, provided that all regulatory requirements are readily available. Their expedited re-export is what the BOC wants and this is what our people are yearning for," John Simon, MICT port collector, said in a statement.

The reshipment of the waste,

according to the BOC, was due to the failure of its consignee, Verde Soko Philippine Industrial Corp., to secure an import permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and for misdeclaring the shipment by labeling it as plastic synthetic flakes.

This is in violation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, Republic Act 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act and the Basel Convention on the Control and Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

The 5,100 metric tons of

plastic and other waste materials were dumped in the MICT in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental last July and in another warehouse in Cagayan de Oro city.

Soko Verde was also the consignee of the containers containing wastes that were located in a warehouse in Cagayan de Oro City last October 21.

The waste materials include diapers, batteries, bulbs, and electronic equipment.

Earlier, the South Korean Embassy in Manila said a probe is underway to determine the liability of the Korean exporter and to prevent a recurrence of the incident. — *Ashzel Hachero*



ECOWASTE Coalition announces that the Philippines and South Korea governments have reached an agreement that will ensure the return of some 6,500 tons of mixed wastes stranded in Misamis Oriental to their origin in Pyeongtaek City. The target date of return of 51 containers of garbage is on January 09, 2019. (Alvin Kasiban)

Return of SoKor wastes set Jan. 9

The 6,500 tons of illegally shipped waste materials now stranded in Misamis Oriental will be shipped back to Pyeongtaek City in South Korea on January 9.

Representatives of the Bureau of Customs (BoC) and the environmental group EcoWaste Coalition said an accord was reached by the Philippine and South Korean governments for the return of the 51 containers of the trash to their place of origin.

John Simon, port collector at the Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT), said they expect the 51 garbage-filled containers stored at MICT to be homebound by January 9 provided that all regulatory requirements are readily available.

"Their expedited re-export is what BoC wants and this is what our people are yearning for," Simon said.

Aileen Lucero, national coordinator of EcoWaste Coalition, said the group looks ahead to the "imminent return of the Korean mixed garbage shipments to their source."

The re-exportation of the 51 containers is estimated to cost

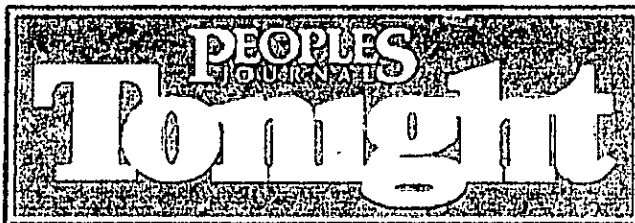
US\$47,430, specifically for inland and ocean freight charges.

As for the bulk Korean garbage shipments sitting at Verde Soko compound inside the Phividec Industrial Estate in Barangay Sta. Cruz, Tagoloan, Simon announced that arrangements will be made to get them re-exported within this month.

The agreement was made following a fruitful bilateral meeting between the two governments last December 27 and 28 at Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, which drew over 35 participants, including a four-member delegation from South Korea led by Mr. Lee Jong Min from the Ministry of Environment.

It can be recalled that a shipload of 5,176.91 metric tons of misdeclared "plastic synthetic flakes" exported by Green Soko Co. Ltd. and consigned to Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. arrived at the MICT in July 2018 without prior import clearance from the DENR.

The same consignee facilitated the importation of additional 51 containers of "plastic synthetic flakes," which arrived at the MICT in October 2018. **(Chito Chavez)**



03 JAN 2010
DATE

Tons of trash to be shipped back to South Korea

TONS of garbage smuggled into the country will be shipped back to South Korea this month at Seoul's cost.

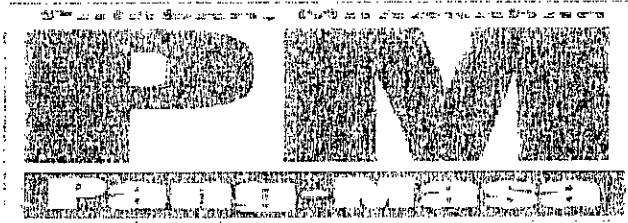
Customs officials on Wednesday said the 6,500 tons of trash which are now in Misamis Oriental will be returned to Pyeongtaek, South Korea on January 9 at an estimated shipping cost of P2 million.

The Philippines and South Korea agreed on this at a meeting held last December 27 to 28.

Officials said the consignee, Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corporation, failed to secure the proper importation permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and also misdeclared the shipment. The firm earlier said the container vans carried soft plastic and not garbage, claiming that the plastics are raw materials for furniture reprocessing. Upon checking, however, authorities said the shipment contained illegal and hazardous waste materials such as used intravenous lines, light bulbs, and old batteries.

They arrived at the Mindanao Container Terminal last July 21, but were only reported in November.

CNN Philippines' Rex Remitio contributed to this report.



03 JAN 2013

DATE

TONELADANG BASURA NG SOKOR IBABALIK NA

Sa Enero 9 ay nagkasundo ang Pilipinas at pamahalaan ng South Korea na ibalik na ang tone-toneladang basura na naipasok sa bansa.

Ayon sa Bureau of Customs (BoC) ang smuggled na 51 container na basura na nakapasok sa bansa ay ibabalik patungong Pyeongtaek City kasabay nang paghahanda ng regulatory requirements.

Ayon kay Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT) Port Collector John Simon, inaasahan nila na ang 51 containers na puno ng mga basura na nakatambak sa naturang pantalan ay matiyak na wala nang magiging sagabal upang tuluyan ng maibalik sa naturang bansa.

Noong Nobyembre nang nakaraang taon, naharang ng customs ang 1,200 toneladang basura na nakalagay sa loob ng 51 container van na dumating noong Oktubre 21 sa MICT mula sa South Korea.

Ang "misdeclared" na kargamento ay nakaconsigned sa Verde Soco Philippines, na siya rin ang consignee sa mga basura mula sa South Korea na dumating sa pamamagitan ng barko sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental noong Hulyo 21.

Patuloy pa rin ang imbestigasyon kung sino ang nasa likod ng smuggle na basura at nakapasok sa bansa. - *Doris Franche-Borja*



03 JAN 2019

DATE

BOSES NG MASA HILANG SA

TONE-TONELADANG BASURA, IBABALIK SA SOUTH KOREA SA JAN. 9

SA January 9, 2019 itinakda ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) ang pagbabalik sa South Korea ng tone-toneladang mga basura na iligal na ipinasok sa bansa at ngayon ay nasa Misamis Oriental.

Ayon sa BOC, nagkasundo na ang gobyerno ng Pilipinas at South Korea na sa Jan. 9 ibabalik sa Pyeongtaek City ang mga smuggled na 51 container na naglalaman ng mga basura.

Sa ngayon, ani Mindanao International Container Terminal Port Collector John Simon, inaasikaso na

ang lahat ng regulatory requirements para sa pagbiyahe sa mga basura.

Matatandaang, November 2018 nang matuklasan ng Customs ang nasabing mga container na naglalaman ng 1,200 tons ng basura.

Dumating sa MICT port ang nasabing mga kargamento noong October 21.

Misdeclared ang shipment na naka-consigne sa Verde Soco Philippines na siya ring consignee ng mga basura galing South Korea at dumating sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental noong July 21. (BRT)



6,500 toneladang basura balik-South Korea

Ibibiyahe na ang 6,500 toneladang basura na stranded ngayon sa Misamis Oriental pabalik sa pinagmulan nito sa Pyeongtaek City, South Korea sa target nitong petsa na Enero 9.

Sinabi ng mga kinatawan ng Bureau of Customs (BoC) at ng environmental group EcoWaste Coalition na nagkasundo na ang mga gobyerno ng Pilipinas at South Korea sa pagpapabalik ng 51 containers ng basurang ilegal na dinala sa bansa.

Sinabi ni John Simon, Port Collector sa Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT) na inaasahan nila na ibibiyahe pabalik ang 51 containers na puno ng basura na nakaimbak sa MICT sa Enero 9 basta nakumpleto ang lahat ng regulatory requirements.

"Their expedited re-export is what BOC wants and this is what our people are yearning for," ani Simon.

Sinabi ni Aileen Lucero, national coordinator ng EcoWaste Coalition na inaabangan ng grupo ang "imminent return of the Korean mixed garbage shipments to their source".

Mariin din niyang isinulong ang pagpapatibay ng mahihigpit na polisiya para maiwasang maulit ang insidente, gayundin ang pagtugis sa importasyon ng plastic wastes.

Kaugnay naman sa bulto ng Korean garbage shipments na nakaimbak sa Verde Soko compound sa loob ng Phividec Industrial Estate sa Barangay Sta. Cruz sa Tagoloan, ipinahayag ni Simon na inaayos na ang arrangements para maipabalik

ang mga ito sa ngayong buwan din.

Magagunit na isang barko ng 5,176.91 metriko tonelada ng misdeclared "plastic synthetic flakes" na inangkat ng Green Soko Co. Ltd. at naka-consign sa Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. ang dumating sa MICT noong Hulyo 2018 nang walang import clearance mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ang parehong consignee rin ang umayos sa importasyon ng karagdagang 51 containers ng "plastic synthetic flakes," na dumating sa MICT noong Oktubre 2018.

Natuklasan sa inspeksiyon ng

mga opisyal ng Bureau of Customs at DENR ang imported "plastic synthetic flakes" ay "mis-declared, heterogenous and injurious to public health," na ikinagalit kapwa ng Pilipinas at South Korea, kabilang ang protest actions ng EcoWaste Coalition sa labas ng embassy ng SoKor sa Taguig City noong Nobyembre 15 at Disyembre 13, 2018.

Nagpasa naman ang Tagoloan Municipal Council ng resolusyon na mariing kinokondena ang "importation of plastic mixed with hazardous waste materials from South Korea".

Chito A. Chavez



'WAG NANG ULITIN Ipinahayag ng Ecowaste Coalition na nagkasundo na ang gobyerno ng Pilipinas at ng South Korea na ibalik sa susunod na linggo ang 6500 toneladang basura na nasa Misamis Oriental sa Pyeongtaek City, sa isang press conference sa Quezon City kahapon. **ALVIN KASIBAN**

03 JAN 2019



DATE	UPPER HALF
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PAGE	LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Basura ibabalik na sa SoKor

IBABALIK na sa South Korea ngayong buwan ang mga basura nito na iligal na ipinasok sa bansa.

Ayon sa EcoWaste Coalition, Enero 9 ang target date sa pagbabalik sa 51 container van ng basura sa Pyeongtaek City mula sa Misamis Oriental. May bigat itong 6,500 tonelada.

Ang pagbabalik sa basura ay gagastusan ng \$47,430.

Inanunsyo ang pagbabalik sa basura sa isang press conference ng Bureau of Customs, EcoWaste at John Simon, Port Collector, ng Mindanao International Container Terminal.

"We look ahead to the imminent return of the Korean mixed garbage shipments to their source, and to the adoption of stringent policies to prevent their recurrence, including a crackdown on the importation of plastic waste. We need to act decisively to protect our

country from turning into a global dump for plastics and other wastes that China no longer wants," ani Aileen Lucero, National Coordinator ng EcoWaste.

Ibinalik ang basura matapos na mabigò ang Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp., ang consignee, na kumuha ng import permit sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources at misdeklaration ng shipment na idineklarang "plastic synthetic flakes."

Ang mga basura ay ipinadala sa bansa ng Green Soko Co. Ltd. at dumating sa bansa noong Hulyo 2018.

Ang pagbabalik sa basura ay alinsunod sa Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act, at Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal. —Leifbilly Begas



03 JAN 2013

DATE

UPPER HALF

3

PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Okada rendahan sa basura

Kinalampag ng isang kongresista ang Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) at Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) na maglabas ng istriktong regulasyon para maipatupad ang mga batas na may kaugnayan sa pangangalaga ng kapaligiran.

Kasunod ito ng napurnadang pagpapakawala ng mga

lobo ng Cove Manila, isang indoor beach club at nightclub sa Okada Manila at ilan pang sikat na establisimiyento noong bisperas ng Bagong Taon.

Ayon kay Aangat Tayo Party-list Rep. Harlin Neil Abayon III, kung hindi naawat ang naturang aktibidad ay konsumisyon ang idudulot nito sa kapaligiran kung kaya't nagpasalamat ito sa mga netizen na nagkaisa para tutulan ang

Balloon Dropping event.

"Those establishments should have known better and failed to do their complete staff work and research because if they had, they would have learned that many local governments have been banning single-use and unrecoverable plastics. DOT, DTI, and DILG should have much better coordination with the DENR (Department of En-

vironment and Natural Resources) against solid waste, especially plastics," pahayag ni Abayon.

Kung hindi aniya naging alisto ang publiko ay hindi napigilan ang pagkakat ng Okada Manila at mga kagaya nitong establisimiyento na magbibigay ng maling halimbawa sa publiko at magdudulot ng perwisyo sa kapaligiran. **(Aries Cano)**



Boracay closure cost: A high of P83B in biz, P28B in wages—PIDS

BY CAI U. ORDINARIO
@caiorinario

THE closure of Boracay cost the Philippine economy and Filipino workers billions in revenue and income between May and October 2018, according to state-owned think tank Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS).

This was the result of a study, titled "The Boracay Closure: Socioeconomic Consequences and Resilience Management," authored by PIDS President Celia M. Reyes; Senior Research Fellow Jose Ramon G. Albert; Research Fellow Francis Mark A. Quimba; and research assistants Ma. Kristina P. Ortiz and Ronina D. Asis.

The study estimated that the aggregate economic loss of the Boracay closure was between P20.8 billion and P83.15 billion, while in terms of income, the loss in compensation would range from P7 billion to P27.9 billion.

"Tourism sectors would be most affected, as well as agriculture and services, albeit slightly. Overall, while the results may not be very significant at the national level, it will still have its direct and indirect effects to

P20.79B, P6.97B

The projected loss in total output and loss in compensation, respectively, from the low-end scenario of the PIDS study, which assumes a 5-percent reduction in tourist receipts due to the closure

people living in the island and in the entire municipality of Malay," the authors said.

"The study recommends the need to craft strategic and harmonized overall plan which lays out the various government efforts to safeguard the welfare of those who will be severely affected by the sudden closure of Boracay," they added.

The authors said that in 2017, Boracay had over 2 million visitors and about half were foreigners. This was a 16-percent growth from the 1.73 million tourists recorded in 2016.

Tourist receipts from Boracay also increased to P56.1 billion in 2017, from P4.9 billion in 2001. This indicated an annual average growth rate of 16.5 percent.

SEE "BORACAY," A2



Boracay. . . CONTINUED FROM A1

The authors estimated that if there was a reduction of 5 percent in tourist receipts due to the closure, the projected loss in total output would be P20.79 billion and the projected loss in compensation would be P6.97 billion.

If the decline in tourist receipts would be higher at 10 percent, the projected losses in total output would be P41.57 billion and the losses in compensation would reach P13.95 billion.

Under the last scenario, where there is a 20-percent reduction in tourism receipts, the projected losses in total output would be P83.15 billion, while the lost income would be

P27.89 billion.

"The projected economic losses for the entire economy for the period May to October 2018 were computed using the multiplier effects of

tourism-related sectors," the authors said.

The authors said that on an industry basis, the largest direct impact was in accommodation services for visitors which could have reached P10 billion, followed by entertainment, recreation services and shopping at P9.7 billion.

The losses of food and beverage serving services, the authors said, may have reached P9.3 billion; transport services, P8.8 billion; and miscellaneous activities, P0.8 billion.

In order to address the losses, the authors said the government must provide some form of assistance, especially to low-income workers. These include workers earning daily wages of around P50 or P150 per day.

Further, the authors recommended that there needs to be either a monthly cash assistance or a one-time lump-sum cash transfer to affected workers.

The results, the authors said, also point toward the creation of a registry of Boracay residents. This will make it easier to identify residents who will be affected by shocks.

The use of a Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) can be used to create the database. Malay, the authors said, is scheduled to implement its CBMS in 2018 but has yet to start data collection.

PUBLIC NOTICE AUCTION SALE

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC
will sell unredeemed pledges for
the months of JUNE & JULY 2018
on JANUARY 18, 2019 at 10 C.
Palanca at Quiapo Manila - 9:00
AM *1 A02 G/F LRT North Mall
Bldg. Rizal Ave. Ext.
Caloocan City - 11:00 AM
- J. Lanuza - Auctioneer



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Manila Standard

BAY
PAGE

UPP
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2013

DATE

Manila Bay worse, ₱3-b rehab eyed

MANILA Bay is worse off a decade after a Supreme Court decision ordering local government units and government agencies to rehabilitate it, and officials of LGUs surrounding the bay may face administrative charges soon.

In an interview with the ABS-CBN News Channel, Environment Undersecretary Sherwin Rigor said authorities began checking sewage pipes that drain into the "very polluted" bay with an average 330 million most probable number (mpn) of fecal coliform for every liter.

That figure is 3.3 million times above the standard 100 mpn that is ideal for swimming, Rigor told ANC. The most polluted part is near the Manila Yacht Club—one of the 12 outfalls in the Manila Bay—where the coliform level is at 1.3 billion mpn, he added.

Rigor said the Department of the Interior and Local Government is "checking on the records of all levels of local government units" to see if there was a "fail-

ure" to implement environmental laws.

"That includes some government officials who allowed the proliferation of informal settlers [because] these are major contributors to the waste discharged in waterways, esteros that end up in the Manila Bay," he told ANC.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources plans to spend some P3 billion to decrease the coliform level in the Manila Bay over the next five years. Silt curtains, temporary toilets and sewage lines will be put up to reduce the average coliform level to 250-270 million by the end of 2019, Rigor said.

"We need to manage expectations... We may reduce it but for this year, SB [swimming] quality, is not possible," he

said.

In 2014, the Manila Bay Coordinating Office had said bay's water quality remained problematic owing to the continued dumping of garbage and untreated wastewater from 86 percent of the 14 million households served by water concessionaires that is still directly flushed out into the water body.

Six years before that or on Dec. 18, 2008, the Supreme Court issued a writ of continuing mandamus directing 13 government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and eventually preserve Manila Bay.

More than 34 million people live within the Manila Bay basin area but its problems affect the rest of the country, the MBCO noted.

Some institutions connected to the drainage near the Manila Yacht Club are the Ospital ng Maynila, Manila Zoo, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, hotels near Roxas Boulevard and the De La Salle University in Taft Avenue, Rigor said. Three other outfalls discharge water with over a billion coliform per liter, he added.



2	<input type="checkbox"/> UPPER	<input type="checkbox"/> PAGE 1	<input type="checkbox"/> BANNER	<input type="checkbox"/> EDITORIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> CARTOON
PAGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOWER	STORY	STORY		

03 JAN 2019

DATE

Local officials na nagpabaya sa Manila Bay kakasuhan

Nagbabala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na sasampahan ng kasong administratibo ang mga lokal na opisyal na nakakasakop sa Manila Bay na hindi kumilos at walang ginawa para linisin ito sa kabila ng naging kautusan noon ng Korte Suprema na sila ang manguna sa rehabilitasyon dito.

Sinabi ni Environment Undersecretary Sherwin Rigor, sinimulan na ng DENR ang pagtutok sa Manila Bay Rehabilitation at ang una sa kanilang agenda ay panagutin ang mga local officials na nagpabaya at hindi tumalima sa SC ruling.

Pananagutin din umano ng pamahalaan ang mga LGUs na pinayagan na manirahan ang mga informal settlers sa mga estero, dahil 70 porsiyento ng basura na itinatapon sa Manila Bay ay galing sa mga kabahayan.

Matatandaan na sa desisyon ng SC noong 2008 ay inaatasan nito ang mga government agencies at LGUs na aksyunan ang paglilinis sa Manila Bay kung saan nakapaloob pa sa desisyon ang Operational Plan para sa Manila Bay Coastal Strategy subalit hindi naman ito naaksyunan.

Matapos ipalabas ang SC decision ay mas tumala pa ang kondisyon ng Manila Bay, sa katunayan umano ay 330 million most probable number (mpn) ang fecal coliform sa Manila Bay, mataas ng 3.3 million times na beses kumpara sa standard na 100 mpn. (Gemma Garcia)



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103 JAN 2013

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining town gets P37-M water project

BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO

THE fast-growing population in the upland mining *barangay* (village) of Didipio in Kasibu town, Nueva Vizcaya, has prompted OceanaGold to provide it with a P37-million water system.

The Didipio community has a population of about 4,000 individuals and an estimated 900 households. The natural spring water is the main source of the community's drinking water as outlined in OceanaGold's 2017 Mine Rehabilitation Fund Committee report, Water Resource Study for Barangay Didipio.

With this, OceanaGold, which operates the Didipio Mine, is working with the community for the construction of the P37-million Didipio Water System Proj-

ect (DWSP) due for completion in 2019.

David Way, OceanaGold general manager, said the DWSP includes water storage, treatment and supply infrastructure that would provide the community with safe, potable water.

He said the system would have the capacity to provide water for up to 11,000 individuals or about 2,400 households.

"It has been our commitment to work with host communities, government and other stakeholders to address concerns around

the mine's impact on water, local challenges with water access and use, and how we can contribute to better watershed management," Way said.

He also explained that while the nature of the mined ore at Didipio allows for extraction using grinding and flotation processes with water, they do not use cyanide or mercury for gold and copper recovery.

He said regular mine tours are conducted where visitors are allowed to walk through during grinding and flotation, where the mined ore is ground to very fine particles to separate the gold and copper from the waste material or mine tailings.

The mine tailings generated from the processing plant are stored at the tailings storage facility (TSF) while the water from the TSF is further processed in the

water treatment plant, which is an automated facility, Way explained.

He said that using a flocculation and coagulation process, the water storage plant significantly reduces total suspended solids to 70 parts per million (ppm), well below the government standard for Class D water at 150 ppm.

"We also built a paste-backfill plant where approximately 30 to 40 percent of the mine tailings are mixed with cement and used as backfill material for the underground voids, which reduces the volume of tailings delivered to the TSF," he added.

Quarterly checks and compliance with standards

The Didipio Mine also undertakes a quarterly Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure at the TSF

to measure solids and naturally occurring heavy metals in the water and samples are tested by a government-accredited laboratory.

Didipio's TSF is constructed to standards that exceed Philippine guidelines and meet International Commission on Large Dams (Icold) guidelines, and the Category High C Australia National Committee on Large Dams (Ancold) guidelines.

According to Engineer Mario Ancheta, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) director, they conduct a quarterly audit of the TSF and engineers from GHD supervise all construction.

In addition, Ancheta said, Engineering Geology Ltd., an independent third party, also conducts an annual review of TSF construction to ensure it continues to meet the Icold and Ancold design criterion.

The Didipio Mine also minimizes the use of freshwater resources by recycling process water.

"Data from 2014 to mid-2018 shows we have recycled an average of 87 percent of processed water. Since we commenced commercial production, we have consistently increased the amount of water that recycled in the process plant," Way said.

This year, he said the Didipio Mine successfully commissioned the Didipio Water Recycling and Purification Plant, which treats sewage water and maximizes recycling of water resources at the mine site.

"The [Didipio] operations conduct daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly water quality monitoring in line with all the requirements of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources," Way added.



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BS
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BAHNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2013

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
PUBLIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

NLuzon DENR offices unite vs environment threats

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan: The three regional offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Northern Luzon have strengthened their convergence efforts to combat illegal activities that threaten the environment.

In an inter-regional meeting, the environment regional offices of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley and Cordillera Administrative Region intensified their strategies in ensuring the protection and preservation of natural resources, including minerals and wildlife.

Lawyer Gil Aromin, director of DENR-Region 1 (Northern Luzon), said the mutual complementation and collaboration would unify and streamline efforts and resources toward achieving overall protection of the environment and natural resources in northernmost part of Luzon.

"The inter-regional convergence is one of our initiatives pursuant to the commitment of DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu to President Rodrigo R. Duterte to stop illegal environmental activities," Aromin said.

The regional environment chiefs agreed further to include the monitor-

ing checkpoints for forest products in Sta. Praxedes, Cagayan; Bangui, Ilocos Norte; and Luna, Apayao. Also, the prohibition of transport of wildlife and mineral products will be enforced.

"Mobile checkpoints will also be established in strategic places to intensify monitoring of forest products, wildlife and mineral resources," Aromin said.

It was also agreed that the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources officer whose jurisdiction covers the monitoring station will supervise the activities of the checkpoint and will submit report to concerned regional head.

Meanwhile, the administrative adjudication of the apprehended or seized forest products, wildlife and mineral products and transportation used, tools and equipment, including filing of complaints against the perpetrators, will be conducted by the Community Environment and Natural Resources office concerned.

On the other hand, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau will assist in the apprehension and evaluation of mineral resources to be transported. **PIA**

'Buildings account for 40% of greenhouse emissions'

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

A key driver of energy demand, buildings currently account for close to 40 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and 36 percent of all energy consumption, according to a new report of the United Nations environment agency.

In the report of the United Nations Environment Program, titled "Towards a Zero-Emission, Efficient and Resilient Buildings and Construction Sector," co-authored by the International Energy Agency (IEA), UNEP warned that "dramatic action will be needed by governments, cities and business if the global buildings and construction sector is to cut its carbon footprint in line with international agreements."

"It's critical we have a big change over the next couple of years in how we do buildings and construction," said Joyce Msuya, deputy executive director of UNEP. "We only need to look at the current norms and quality of many buildings to see that we can do so much better."

She emphasized that "we need to raise the bar in energy-efficient, green buildings and far better practice in construction."

According to the report, the de-

velopment of new techniques, tools, products and technologies such as heat pumps, better windows, stronger insulation, energy-efficient appliances, renewable energy and smarter design has enabled emissions to stabilize over the past years.

There are other encouraging signs, the report said, as several property, construction, cement and steel-manufacturing firms are among the 500 companies (representing trillions of dollars in revenue), which have aligned their emission reduction targets with the Paris Agreement; and the 71-member private sector network, the World Green Building Council non-profit organization, is advocating for all buildings to emit zero net emissions by 2050.

Environmentalists said there is huge potential to reduce the current level of emissions, but action has been too slow. To meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, the Global

Alliance for Buildings and Construction, hosted by UNEP, is targeting a 30 percent energy use improvement in the buildings and construction sector.

What will make things even more challenging, the report said, is that the number of new buildings is anticipated to grow rapidly in the coming years, especially in urban areas of Africa and Asia.

"Buildings are a key driver of energy demand, and developments within the sector such as the growing uptake of air conditioners are having a big impact on energy and environmental trends at the global level," said Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency, an autonomous intergovernmental organization.

The new report highlights a major gap between the amount of money spent on energy efficient solutions and the rapidly growing amount invested in building construction and renovation.

"If we don't make buildings more efficient, their rising energy use will impact us all, whether it be through access to affordable energy services, poor air quality or higher energy bills," Birol warned.

In particular, the data raise a red flag over the sharply rising demand for cooling systems and air conditioners; linked with improving living-standards in developing countries coupled with rising temperatures in many parts of the globe, due to climate change. Since 2010, the energy used by cooling systems has increased by 25 percent and there are now more than 1.6 billion air-conditioning units in service.

One of the commitments of the Paris Agreement is for countries to develop and scale-up their own national climate action plans but, to date, only 104 plans mention specific actions to enhance energy-efficiency in buildings, building codes and energy certifications. Very few tackle the issue of construction materials such as steel and cement and the carbon emissions involved in their manufacturing.

Another area of action recommended by the report is the need for building standards to evolve towards buildings that are more resilient in the face of climate change and extreme weather events, such as storms and hurricanes, floods, high winds and soaring temperatures.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Manila Standard

BCE
PAGE

UP
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2010

DATE

SMC-Meralco consortium investing P99b in coal plant

By Alena Mae S. Flores

THE joint venture of SMC Global Power Holding Corp. and Meralco PowerGen Corp. plans to spend P99 billion to put up a 1,200-megawatt coal project in Mariveles, Bataan.

Mariveles Power Generation Corp., the joint venture firm, said in an environmental impact statement submitted to the Environmental Management Bureau it would construct and operate the Mariveles Coal Power Plant project in two phases, each with a 600-MW capacity.

The proposed project will be built on a 150-hectare property within the Mariveles Economic Zone of the Au-

thority of the Freeport Area of Bataan in Barangay Biaan, Mariveles.

The project is expected to use imported coal from Indonesia and locally available coal from Daguma and Semirara coal mining operations.

Daguma Agro Minerals Inc., a unit of San Miguel Corp., the parent firm of SMC Global Power, will supply the Daguma coal.

The coal project will start upon completion of all needed permits and other regulatory requirements. Completion is expected by 2022.

"The MPGC as the proponent commits to provide overall policy and guidance with regards to the implementation of the project. MP-GPC shall ensure that all necessary mitigating measures including budgets and agreements with other concerned national and local government agencies are included in all contracts to prevent and/or minimize the negative impacts of the project

and enhance the project impacts," the company said.

MPGC will supply 528 MW to Manila Electric Co. pending approval of a power supply agreement by the Energy Regulatory Commission. Hearings on the PSA were suspended previously because of the project's lack of an environmental compliance certificate.

San Miguel has several power projects in the pipeline which also include hydro, solar and battery storage projects.

Meralco PowerGen, the power arm of Meralco, is waiting for approval of its PSA for the 1,200-MW Atimonan ultra supercritical coal project in Atimonan, Quezon.

Meralco PowerGen together with partner New Growth BV, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Electricity Generating Public Co. Limited of Thailand, is set to complete the 455-MW San Buenaventura coal-fired power plant in Mauban, Quezon by September.



Lead paint phase-out eyed by end-2019

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

Concerned groups have affirmed their unity to promote compliance to the national phase-out target for lead-added industrial paints by Dec. 31, 2019.

The environmental group EcoWaste Coalition and the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers (PAPM) made the affirmation through a joint statement to mark the fifth anniversary of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Administrative Order No. 2013-24 issued on Dec. 23, 2013.

Also known as the Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds, the policy directs the phase-out of lead-containing paints used for industrial applications by yearend.

"After completing the phase-out of lead-containing architectural, household and decorative paints last Dec. 31, 2016, paint makers are now setting their sights on meeting the phase-out target for paints intended for industrial applications that still contain lead additives," said Vergel

Dyoco, technical committee chairman of PAPM and Technical Service Department Manager, Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines Inc.

"Our paint manufacturers are investing resources to find feasible replacements to lead-based raw materials in order to abide by the 2019 deadline for phasing out lead-added paints used for cars, aircraft, boats, appliances, metal sheets and other industrial uses," he said.

For his part, Manny Calonzo, EcoWaste Coalition adviser, said, "The completion by December 2019 of the phase-out goal for lead-containing industrial paints will be a historic milestone in our common mission to eliminate lead paint, a preventable source of childhood lead exposure, in all paint categories."

"The world will be watching as the Philippine paint industry transitions to full lead-safe paint production by 2020, a meaningful achievement that we all can be proud of because of its tremendous benefits to human health as well as to the economy," he added.

As stated in a 2018 resource pack published by the World Health Organization, United Nations Environment and the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance): "Lead is especially dangerous to children's developing brains, and can cause reduced intelligence quotient (IQ) and attention span, impaired learning ability, and increased risk of behavioral problems. These health impacts also have significant economic costs to countries."

The Lead Paint Alliance, which includes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, PAPM, Pacific Paint (Boysen), EcoWaste Coalition and IPEN (a global NGO network campaigning for a toxics-free future) among its partners said: "The weathering, peeling or chipping of old lead paint releases lead into dust and soil, in and around homes, schools and other locations. Dust contaminated with lead can also be brought into the home on the clothes of those who work in industries where such dust is generated, including paint factories where lead continues to be used."



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



14
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2019

DATE

ZERO WASTE LIFESTYLE SIMULAN NGAYONG 2019

HINIKAYAT ni Senadora Loren Legarda ang lahat na simulan na ngayong Taong 2019 ang zero waste lifestyle ng bawat mamamayang Filipino partikular ang hindi paggamit ng plastic materials.

para maipaalala sa mamamayan ang kahalagahan ng kalikasan.

VICKY CERVALES

Ayon kay Legarda, sa pag-sisimula ng bagong taon dapat na ugaliin na ang zero waste lifestyle para sa kapakanan ng inang kalikasan at ng mga susunod na henerasyon.

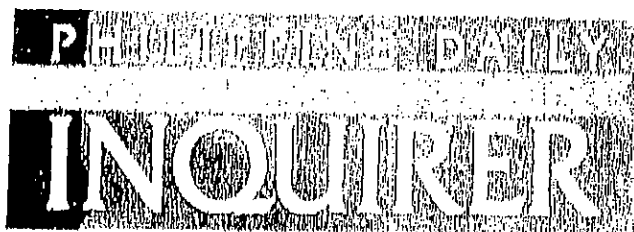
Ipinaliwanag nito na ang zero waste lifestyle ay makatutulong para maibalik ang sigla ng kalikasan partikular na ang pag-recycle ng mga basura at ang hindi paggamit ng toxic waste materials para mabawasan ang banta sa kalikasan.

Kasabay nito, hinikayat pa ni Legarda ang gobyerno na gawin ang kanilang mandato at mga programa para mapursige ang mamamayan para sa zero waste lifestyle ngayong 2019.

Aniya, kinakailangan pa rin ang role ng gobyerno partikular na ang local government



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
PUBLIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



03 JAN 2013

DATE

EDITORIAL

Deadly LPA

Did we underestimate Tropical Depression "Usman"?

The weather disturbance was first classified as a tropical depression, the lowest among five tropical cyclone categories of the weather bureau, and was later downgraded to a low pressure area (LPA). But, though relatively weak, it brought a huge amount of rain that ended up causing so much destruction and a high death toll not only in Bicol and Eastern Visayas, but also in Calabarzon, Mimaropa and some provinces in Mindanao.

Almost a week since Usman hit the country during the holidays, at least 85 people have died in what was supposed to be a time of joy and cheer. Torrential rains and landslides buried homes, killed people while they slept, damaged infrastructure and produce, and drove as many as 191,000 people to temporary shelters.

Officials of Northern Samar, one of the country's poorest provinces, aired an appeal over the New Year to national agencies for help as the province reeled from its worst flooding in three decades. "We are appealing to our (national) agencies for immediate assistance. We have not seen this kind of disaster in 30 years. This is the worst ever," Vice Gov. Gary Lavin said.

In Catarman, officials recorded 300 millimeters of rain over a 10-hour period, its heaviest rainfall in 20 years. In Legazpi, Albay, meanwhile, residents were dismayed that their city was still inundated by floods despite a P2.1-billion flood-control system that is managed by the national government.

The last weather disturbance of 2012 made landfall on Dec. 29, just as Filipinos were busy with holiday merrymaking and preparing to welcome the New Year.

As early as Dec. 24, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) had issued a warning that the weather disturbance could trigger flash floods and landslides. "We keep reminding the public to continue to be on guard as this weather may bring floods and landslides in our areas. We should not let ourselves be caught off guard in these days of festivities," said Pagasa weather specialist Ariel Rojas days before Usman hit Borongan, Eastern Samar.

Still, despite the timely alerts and preemptive evacuations by local officials, the extent of Usman's devastation appears to have been unexpected. Its eventual downgrading to LPA might have given people a false sense of security; many mountain-side residents were reported to have refused to evacuate after Usman was reclassified as an LPA.

"They (victims) must have relaxed after Usman was declared an LPA... they didn't know that the rains would be more dangerous than the storm," said Manuel Damo, chief of the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office in Tinambunan, Albay.

"We have disaster protocol when it comes to typhoons [and] storms, but none for [low pressure]," echoed Claudio Yucot, Bicol civil defense director.

The Bicol region sustained the most number of fatalities—69 as of recent count; some of the victims were buried by landslides as they slept in their homes. In a remote area in Sagnay, Camarines Sur, 30 bodies have been retrieved and at least 20 more are believed to be buried. Scores are still missing in that province and in Albay.

The magnitude of the damage to lives and property should prompt officialdom to wake up from the stupor of their holiday break, get back to work and take swift action to alleviate the suffering of the affected residents. It is incumbent upon both national and local officials to put in place a quick but sustained rehabilitation effort to help victims get back on their feet and rebuild affected areas.

The country is not lacking examples of major calamities where rehabilitation dissipated as soon as the calamity has disappeared from the news headlines. Five years on, for instance, many of the thousands of victims of Super typhoon "Yolanda" have yet to get decent housing.

Some experts are blaming climate change for Usman's unusually heavy rainfall. That reality, in a country prone to typhoons, should also prod a more serious and sustained implementation of policies and protocols on disaster mitigation, and a citizenry that is kept abreast about the dangers not only of natural calamities, but also of larger, longer-term changes in the environment. But for now, the government's most urgent task is to give aid and relief to Usman's many victims, who are starting the year in misery, anguish and want.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENTAL DAILY INQUIRER

B-4
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2010

DATE

A movement's vision, mission

COMMENTARY

ERNESTO M. ORDOÑEZ

On Dec. 27, leaders from various groups met to discuss the vision and mission of the Movement for Water Security (MWS). Two of them were the pioneering nongovernment organizations that form part of the legislative executive-private sector steering committee President Duterte created for the National Water Roadmap and Summit. They are the Agri Fisheries Alliance (AFA) and Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI).

The other committee members are from Congress and six departments: DA, DENR, DPWH, DILG, Neda and the Office of the Executive Secretary.

Though progress has been made, some critical recommendations from seven water subsector presummits held nationwide have not been acted upon. This is because the national summit was postponed twice. It is now scheduled for the water month of March this year.

To improve the delayed water initiative implementation, the AFA and PCCI have decided that a broader private sector initiative is needed.

The Dec. 27 meeting started with the concept of water security. UN-Water defines this as "the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining liveli-

hoods, human well-being, and socioeconomic development."

Three elements from this should be included in the draft MWS vision: "a nation where the quality of water is ensured, the quantity of water managed, and competent water governance provided."

The first is quality. A majority of the 73 people who die daily from water-related causes is due to poor quality. Water.org reports that nine million Filipinos have no access to safe water. Unesco states: "Intestinal worm infestation in the Philippines goes up to 67 percent, higher than most countries in Southeast Asia."

The second element is quantity. There is water nowhere and everywhere.

Nowhere, because much of this water is no longer available from our 5.7 million hectares of denuded forest. Our water harvesting is only 4 percent, compared to India's 60 percent in certain areas. During droughts, we do not have enough water for daily personal needs and agriculture for food security. Irrigation water is often not provided efficiently.

Everywhere, because the 300,000 lost mangroves and the denuded forests are main causes of damaging floods. An example is the report that 20 of Lope De Vega's 22 villages are now under water due to Usman.

The third is governance. Our 34 government water-related agencies are not coordinated. They should have a united approach, which should in-

clude private sector participation.

To fulfill this vision, a draft MSW mission should include increasing and synergizing water initiatives of the business sector and civil society, and add working closely with government.

First step is for each NGO to list all its water initiatives and rationalize them to achieve synergy and strategic direction. The NGOs can then discuss common areas of interest, fill in gaps, decrease overlaps, and formulate a coordinated water strategic plan for a given area.

For example, the Girl Scouts of the Philippines can get support from business organizations. They can discuss with farmer and indigeneous people organizations the best ways to do reforestation. It can then coordinate with and help from government.

This is best done in a local setting. Consultations should be done with the priority 18 Multisector River Basin Management Councils. They already have water master plans.

With a clear MWS vision and mission, specific objectives can be formulated with the appropriate key result areas done on the local level. INQ



The author is Agriwatch chair, former Secretary of Presidential Programs and Projects, and former Undersecretary of DA and DTI.
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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



03 JAN 2013

DATE

Cleaning our litter



FLORENCIO FIANZA

IT IS 2019 and like everyone else, I am hoping that the New Year will be better than the past year.

Fortunately for old fogies like me who wore a uniform, there is reason to be hopeful. We are expecting the implementation of the increase in our pensions which will go a long way in ameliorating the lives of many retirees especially those who are battling various medical conditions associated with people who are advancing in years. I really hope that we will not be disappointed. After all, if the government can easily set aside P8 billion for two small municipalities, there must be funds to make the lives of those who served and fought for the country better in their remaining years.

Sociology is not my field but sometimes the way we do things define us as a people. Take the case of our driving habits. We have one of the worst driving cultures in the world. We demand solutions and blame almost everyone else for our traffic woes except ourselves. If only motorists can be more patient and obey traffic regulations, a lot of our traffic troubles could be avoided. But almost everyone wants to be exempted from following traffic regulations. Where else is the world could you see drivers routinely disregard traffic lights or cities fencing roads because it is the only way to keep drivers on their lanes to prevent undisciplined drivers from swerving all the time?

The funny thing is that we drive like the way we do only when we are in our country. When we go overseas, we become the epitome of how a driver should behave on the road—courteous and always following regulations.

Another bad practice that we cannot seem to stop is our inability to clean our litter during All Saints Day or when we attend large gatherings like rallies. This is not the only instance. We also see this in bus passengers throwing their litter on the road. The worst display of this bad practice is when people go to cemeteries and leave tons of trash when they leave the place. Another is Christmas and New Year when people go to the Rizal Park in Manila to celebrate the occasion for the whole day. They leave so much garbage that several trucks are needed to collect the waste.

“It may be difficult, but it can be done.”

Just before Christmas, my daughter-in-law suggested a photo shoot for the family. So we went to Camp John Hay to do it. Because of the number of the people around, it was a bit difficult to find a place but we soon settled on one secluded place. We soon found out, however, that the place was full of trash of all kinds. There was paper and discarded plastic bottles. To top it all, the place smelled of urine and we had to be careful not to step on you know what. John Hay has deteriorated so much compared to the old days. The place that we happened to select was located along the old John Hay hiking trails.

I used to bring my young children to hike these Camp John Hay trails called red, white and blue trails during weekends. Those are now gone. In their place are litters everywhere which the management cannot seem to clean.

Boracay was like that until the

President demanded action. Now, people can go back to Boracay and enjoy the place. At least the beach is now clean and healthy, devoid of sewer and trash. Maybe this is what is needed—force people to clean their trash.

During the Football World Cup in Russia, the world did not only watch the games on TV but also witnessed how a people should behave. This was about the Japanese who went to Russia to cheer for their team. They occupied one part of the stadium and were boisterous and noisy as everyone else. The difference is that after every game, the Japanese took out their rubbish bags and cleaned the place before leaving. They left the stadium exactly the same way as they found it—clean. This elicited a lot of cheers and admiration. For the Japanese, this has become standard practice. They did this also during the last Olympics games.

It will probably take a small miracle for us to be able to emulate that, if we can at all. We have to remember also that the country has another distinction. We are the third-worst plastic polluter in the world after China and Indonesia. We have a long way to go. We have barely scratched the surface with the cleaning of Boracay. If we Filipinos want to be accepted in the community of nations as one of those up-and-coming progressive countries that we have been trying to be, we have to start with the basics and start learning how to clean our trash instead of leaving them behind for others to do the job.

To think that the country has many very aggressive non-government organizations all wanting to clean up the environment which is fast degrading characterized by disappearing forest covers and polluted urban waterways. Manila Bay, one of the most beautiful in the world because of its spectacular sunsets, is dying together with the Pasig River which is as filthy as ever in spite of attempts to clean it.

This is not encouraging but let us work on it. It can be done.



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The Manila Times

25
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

RATNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

03 JAN 2010

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

Changing the way we think to create the world we want

"HUMANS are greedy. Humans are selfish. Humans are competitive materials," I declared in an auditorium full of "Generation Z" audience attending the YOUth To Be Summit 2.0, considered to be the boldest and the grandest gathering of young people in the oldest Catholic university in the Philippines.

People would debate over the inherent goodness of human nature — agreeing that humans can be both selflessly giving and, at the same time, cravenly cruel. We are, then, able to identify the deep positive needs and capacities in human nature that we can tap for all to thrive. And it matters. It really matters. How we think about who we are has tremendous power over how we act.

Four months ago, in one of my columns, I tackled that behavior change plays a key role in tackling climate change as part of my studies on climate change and sustainability together with 50 other professionals attending the Academy of Change (AoC).

However, in the context of cli-

mate change and sustainability, tackling behavior change is as complex as inevitable because it requires a change of lifestyle. And a change of lifestyle demands, first and foremost, a change of mindset. One cannot change a lifestyle without having a change of mindset.

Let me share with you six human traits we can count on.

Cooperation

We have to admit that we learned in our years of experience that how we lived for most of our time, we thrive within communities that work for everybody. We are unique among all animals in our capacity to share. Neuroscientists once related that when human beings cooperate, our brains' pleasure centers are stimulated as when we eat chocolates.

Only humans can form a shared goal to which we can all be committed, and know together that we are all committed, and then form shared plans to reach the goal.

driven to make his imprint on the world."

Meaning

We, human beings, are creatures of meaning, seeking ways to give our days value beyond ensuring our own survival.

In facing environmental problems and the climate change crisis, we can count on our deeply human need to feel that our lives count for something big and we can emphasize that one way human beings have met this need is by striving to be good ancestors — enhancing our children's and their children's futures. One journalist once wrote to his young daughter and suggested that we can each find meaning in thinking about what we will say one day when our children or grandchildren ask us: "Granddad, what did you do to stop climate change?"

Imagination

More than any other creature, human beings are able to change. The key to human nature at every level

Empathy

Unlike sympathy, *Cambridge English Dictionary* defines empathy as the capacity or ability to imagine oneself in the situation of another, experiencing the emotions, ideas or opinions of that person.

Cooperation is made possible by empathy, and it, too, seems to be a capacity deeply carved into us. Empathy, in turn, is made possible by our being able to see from another's perspective.

Time and again, we know that the most important factor determining happiness is our relationship with other people. We are reminded that we evolved to find pleasure in being kind, not only is kindness pleasurable, but it — not sexuality, not violence, not money — has become our forbidden pleasure.

Fairness

In striving to create a social context that elicits our best, we can

from brains to minds to societies is what neuroscientists call plasticity — our ability to change in the light of experience. And this quality depends on our extraordinary imaginations.

We can learn about our environment, we can imagine different environments; and we can turn those imagined environments into reality.

Human beings' unique capacity for imagination enables us to envision and make the changes we must in order to draw for the other five essential qualities. And it is this imaginative self that takes pleasure in the challenge.

If humans are all this — cooperative, empathetic and sensitive to fairness — if we need to feel efficacious, seek meaning and are naturally imaginative, then why in the world do we mindlessly participate every day in a social ecology that generates so much destruction and misery for so many?

That's the big question!

Clearly, with all the above going for us, human beings have what it takes to seize today's historic challenges. But, only if we get real.



ALL ABOUT
CHOICES

LUDWIG O.
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also count on a sense of fairness. It lives within most of us, for we know and learned a long time ago that injustice destroys communities, the bonds of trust on which our individual survival depends.

We know that if consequences for unfair action are not imposed, the behavior might worsen and break down group cohesion. Humans are a lot more likely to find the courage to impose sanctions on a transgressor if we know that others are observing us.

Efficacy

Efficacy, according to the *Cambridge English Dictionary*, is the ability to produce the intended result. A social philosopher once said: "Humans cannot tolerate absolute passivity. Humans are