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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Bay reclamation to worsen floods in Manila, provinces

Expert warns projects will create a dam-like effect and block flow of water

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Implementing the planned reclamation activities on Manila Bay would not only worsen flooding in Manila, but also inundate coastal villages in the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Cavite, a maritime law expert said on Tuesday.

Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines Institute for Maritime Affairs and the Law of the Sea, also criticized the lack of an overall study on the impact of 22 reclamation projects on the bay's ecosystem as well as the communities that rely on it for

their livelihood.

"The environmental impact assessments are currently being done on a project basis, without considering the cumulative impact of these projects," he said during a summit on the effects of reclamation works.

"These projects will create a dam-like effect which [will] impede the continuous flow of water to the bay," Batongbacal said. "While the reclaimed areas themselves may not be flooded, inner parts of Manila and nearby low-lying provinces [will] surely be affected."

In February, the Philippine Reclamation Authority, now under the Office of the Presi-

dent, said that 22 reclamation projects would cover around 22,000 hectares or about 11 percent of the bay.

DENR issues certificates

Despite questions about their environmental impact, Department of Environment and Natural Resources records showed that five projects had already been issued environmental compliance certificates, the Inquirer learned.

These are the 148-ha Manila Solar City, the 419-ha Horizon Manila, the 318-ha Manila Waterfront Project, the 360-ha Pasay City reclamation project, and the 265-ha Pasay Harbour

reclamation project.

Flooding, however, would only be one of several problems arising from reclamation activities, Batongbacal said. Once the filling and dumping push through, the bay's salinity and temperature will also change, along with the production of the waters that many coastal communities depend on for food and livelihood.

"With rivers in Bulacan and Pampanga draining to Manila Bay, certain species thrive in this balance of freshwater and saltwater," he said. "Once the salinity and temperature change, production will surely be disrupted." INQ



DREDGE PASIG RIVER, TOO

I fully support the government's efforts to clean up Manila Bay. I think the dredging of the polluted soil in the bay is a good idea. But can I suggest dredging the Pasig River as well?

I admit I am no authority on the matter, since this is an engineering issue and I am a history teacher. But the Pasig River drains the waste of perhaps 6 million people, and carries the filth of countless factories and oil refineries. This has happened for decades now, so the soil underneath it must be thoroughly polluted.

There is an added benefit of

the river dredging. The Marikina and San Juan rivers, and Laguna de Bay, all flow into the Pasig River. When it rains hard, these waterways flood, and since the Pasig River is shallow, it takes a long time for the river to discharge the excess rainwater. If the Pasig River was dredged and deepened, the waterways draining into it could dump their water faster into Manila Bay. It would not eliminate flooding, but it would bring down the level of floods faster.

JONATHAN FOE,
jonathan_foe@hotmail.com



NAKAMAMATAY ang Manila Bay dahil sa sobrang dumi nito.

Kaya ngayong may babala na huwag mali-go, huwag po tayong maligo rito.

Lalo na sa mga parte nito na sobra talaga ang polusyon.

Tatandaan, hindi basta polusyon meron ang Manila Bay.

Puno ito ng bakteria na bumubuo ng sangkaterbang uri ng coliform.

Dumi o tae ng tao at hayup ang pinakamala-king pinanggagalingan ng coliform.

Pero meron ding galing sa hilaw na karne, gatas na piniga sa mga hayop, juice at iba pa.

Sa Manila Bay, pwe-deng makainom ka ng tubig-dagat o mapasukan ng bakteria ang i-yong sugat.

At diyan ka posibleng magkasakit at mamatay sa coliform.

MAY SARILING COLIFORM

Ang totoo, mismong ang katawan natin ay may coliform, lalo na sa parte ng colon hang-gang sa ating mga bitu-ka.

Hindi tayo mamama-tay sa sarili nating coli-form.

Pero kung nahaluan ng tinatawag na E-Coli na masamang coliform, diyan tayo magkakasa-kit at maaaring mama-tay.

Sa Amerika, 500 ka-tao lang ang namama-tay dahil sa E-Coli.

Konti lang dahil ma-sunurin sila sa batas la-ban sa polusyon.

Pero rito sa atin, anak ng tokwa, ginagawang swimming pool ang da-gat na idineklarang de-likado sa polusyon at E-Coli, lalo na ang uring O157:H7.

Mumog dito, mumog doon at may umiinom pa sa paniniwalang may dalang gamot ang maalat na dagat.

Yaaaak!

May mga sugat ding sa Manila Bay hinuhu-gasan dahil nga maga-ling daw na gamot ang maalat na tubig.

Sanayan lang, sabi pa ng iba.

Kita n'yo, mga Bro?



ULTIMATUM Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

PATAY KA SA COLIFORM SA MANILA BAY

KLASE NG SAKIT

Sa pagtatanong-tanong natin sa mga doktor kung ano-anong sakit ang ma-kukuha natin mula sa coliform, heto ang ilan sa inilista nila.

Una ang mga sintomas at kasama rito ang pagta-tae, pananakit ng tiyan, pag-susuka at lagnat.

Ngayon ang mga sakit.

May urinary tract infec-tions o UTI, meningitis, pneumonia, impeksyon sa laman tiyan, sinusitis, os-teomyelitis at sepsis sep-sis.

'Yang meningitis ang pinakapopular sa lahat dahil napakabilis itong pu-matay ng tao.

Swerte mo kung mabu-buhay ka makaraan ang isang linggong atakehin ka nito.

At nakahahawa ito, ha, sa laway at kapag nagba-hing ang meron nito.

Itong sepsis, mga Bro, pinahihina nito ang pagda-loy ng dugo kaya nagkaka-diperensya at tumitigil ang mga kidney, atay, baga at utak ng tao.

Palagay mo mabubuhay ka sa kondisyon na 'yan?

Itong osteomyelitis ay impeksyon sa buto mula sa bakteria rin na E-Coli at alam na ninyo ang UTI na sumisira sa normal na pag-ihing pananakit ng pu-son at ari.

MATIGAS ANG ULO

Matigas ang iyong ulo?

Sige, huwag maniwala sa babala na delikado ang Manila Bay.

Maligo ka, magmumog ka, uminom ka ryan at iba-bad mo ang iyong sugat diyan.

Tapos irereklamo mo ang mga doktor at ospital na "nagpabaya o hindi nanggamot sa iyo."

O kaya sina kapitan, mayor at iba pa sa kawalan o kabagalan ng ambulansyang pagsasakyan sa iyo patungong ospital.

At hahanapan mo pa si Pang. Digong ng kanyang pangako na libreng gamot at doktor sa mga pampublikong ospital.

O katwiran mong namatay ka dahil ma-hirap ka lang.

Huwag naman pong ganyan!

MALINIS?

Kung makikita ninyo, ang dami nang nagma-masakit sa Manila Bay.

May mga namamas-yal na sinasaway ang mga nagtatapon ng ka-hit anong klaseng basu-ra sa tubig o sa dalam-pasigan.

Tenk yu sa kanila la-hat.

Pero ang daming ilog, sapa, estero o kanal, drainage, imburnal at iba pa ang nagluluwa ng mga basura mula sa plastik, goma at iba pang solid na basura hang-gang sa mga tae ng tao, kemikal at iba pa.

Grabe talaga ang kawalan ng disiplina sa pagtatapon ng basura.

Marami na ngang ilog, estero, kanal at iba pa na binabakuran ng Department of Public Works and Highways at Metro Manila Development Authority, pinalilipad pa rin ang mga basura para ma-shoot nang ring-less doon ang mga ba-sura.

Marami ring bata ang nagbabahay-bahay para kunin ang mga basura ng mga residente at nabibigyan ng mga barya para baon sa eskwela, pero sa mga ilog, sapa, estero at drainage pa rin itinatapon.

Resulta?

Ang dapat lang na lebel ng coliform ay 100 most probable number pero sa Baseco, Manila, 3,500; Baywalk - 9.2 mil-lion.

Ganito rin sa ibang mga lugar.

O mga Bro, swim-ming o drinking o babad pa more sa Manila Bay?

oOo

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo ay maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa banti-porda@yahoo.com.



KAPITAN NG BARANGAY ANG TANGING PAG-ASA NA MAIBALIK ANG KALINISAN NG MANILA BAY

UMAASA si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa mga barangay leader na gagawin ng mga ito ang kanilang papel para sa Manila Bay rehabilitation sa pamamagitan ng paglilinis ng esteros, ilog at iba pang daluyan ng tubig na dumidiretso sa Manila Bay.

"It is the barangay captains who can solve the problem of Manila Bay," sabi ni Cimatu sa ginanap na pulong sa mga barangay executive na nakasasakop sa river system na dumadaloy patungo sa naturang baybayin.

"The cleanup of the bay rests on them. That is how much I trust them," dagdag pa ni Cimatu.

Dumalo sa ginanap na dayalogo ang mahigit sa 200 barangay leaders na nakasasakop sa river system

ng Pasig-Marikina-San Juan; Muntinlupa-Parañaque-Las Piñas-Zapote at Malabon-Tulahan-Tinajeros na idinaos sa Bayview Park Hotel sa Manila noong Lunes.

Bukod kay Cimatu, dumalo rin sa pulong ang iba pang opisyal ng DENR at Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Sa naturang dayalogo, ipinaalala ni Cimatu sa mga barangay official ang kanilang tungkulin sa pagpapatupad ng environmental laws partikular na ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 at ang Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

"It is the responsibility of the local government units and the barangay captains to implement the environmental laws correctly," sabi pa ng dating Armed Forces chief.

Nag-alok din ng tulong



ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

si Cimatu sa mga barangay official upang maipatupad ng mga ito ang kanilang mandato at tungkulin kabilang na rito ang isasagawang relokasyon sa mga illegal settler sa kahabaan ng mga esteros at ilog.

Sinabi nito sa mga opisyal na makipagtulungan sa Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development upang matiyak ang gagawing relokasyon sa mga informal settler families (ISFs) bago pa man gibain ang bahay ng mga ito.

"We will give them a chance to self-demolish or move to an appropriate relocation site," sabi ni Cimatu.

Aabot sa 230,000 ang ISFs na naninirahan sa Manila Bay region at 56,000 sa mga ito ang nakatira sa baybayin.

Hinimok din ni Cimatu

ang mga barangay leaders na gamitin ang kanilang "political will" laban sa ISFs na babalik sa mga riverbanks at esteros kahit na nabigyan na ang mga ito ng relokasyon. "If they file a complaint against you, isama ninyo ako," sabi pa nito.

Nagbigay pa din ng tagubilin ang kalihim sa mga barangay officials na makibahagi sa gaganaping "simultaneous cleanup" sa mga esteros at ilog sa paligid ng Manila Bay sa darating na Marso 31. "Once and for all, we will clear the waterways of garbage," anang Cimatu.

Dagdag pa nito: "If barangay captains can harness the power of the people to do it, then there will be a show of force to cleanup. Cleaning Manila Bay will be your most important mission as barangay captains."



27 MAR 2019

DATE

TITLE :

PAGE 1/

Over 23,000 kilos of trash collected from 10 rivers in Central Visayas

By **MINERVA BC NEWMAN**

CEBU CITY—A total of 23,057.55 kilos or 1,439.25 sacks of trash were gathered from the second round of the simultaneous river clean-up in Central Visayas last March 22 from the 10 rivers in the region.

These rivers were the Bulacao River, Luyang River and Butuanon River in Cebu Province; Manaba River, Abatan River and Inabanga River in Bohol; Banica River, Sicopong River and Panam-angan River in Negros Oriental and Señora River in Siquijor Province.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 7 (DENR 7) Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales said there were about 8,164 volunteers from 242 partners that joined the clean-up.

To date, there are 94 public and private partners in Central Visayas that have signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) and memorandum of partnership (MOP) with

the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-7).

Gonzales said the MOA/MOP was part of the Rivers for Life Program that employ concerted actions to encourage all stakeholders to support the cleaning of rivers and waterways.

Of the 94 partners, 83 are private firms located near or along riverbanks while others are local government partners and national government agencies, Gonzales added.

"We recognize the support that we are now getting from our partners, especially the support coming from the local government units and private establishments, for their commitment to help us address the huge volume of silt, wastes and other debris that have affected our river systems in the region," Gonzales added.



PAGE



UPPER
LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

27 MAR 2019
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

BILL LETS YOU SWAP RECYCLABLES FOR RICE

By DJ Yap
@deejayapINQ

A kilo of rice for a kilo of trash.

Aangat Tayo Rep. Neil Abayon offered the incentive in a bill he filed on Monday to boost efforts to segregate recyclable plastics and other garbage and help reduce the country's solid waste problem.

House Bill No. 9170 sets a "minimum exchange value" for one kilo of nonhazardous and recyclable

A2

plastic waste that can be swapped for one kilo of commercial quality rice, groceries and other basic consumer goods, or their cash equivalent.

On the other hand, one kilo of metallic, nonhazardous, recyclable waste can be exchanged for 2 kilos of commercial quality rice or its cash equivalent.

"It is not enough that we appeal to Filipinos to return their plastic bottles and wrappers, and other solid waste to redemption centers. The thought of having to go back to the store carrying a load or bags of recyclable solid waste is not an attractive proposition," Abayon said in a statement.

Well-motivated

"However, when that prospect is matched and rewarded, consumers will think twice, especially when the reward is enticing like one kilo of commercial rice for every kilo of plastic waste deposited at the redemption center," he added.

Such incentives would en-

courage waste segregation among consumers, he said.

"They will have a bag or box in the kitchen or sala where they will collect all plastic bottles, wrappers and containers. They will not mix their recyclable waste with their food waste," said Abayon, who is also House minority deputy leader.

He predicted that most households would begin setting aside their disposables in a large bag and go to the nearest materials recovery hub to exchange their junk and waste for cash or goods.

"This is what we envision will happen when this bill is enacted into law. A whole nation actively engaged in segregating and recycling their waste because they are well-motivated to do so," Abayon added.

Collaboration

The bill mandates the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to collaborate with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry to encourage individuals, households, civic associations, parent-teacher associations, homeowners associations, and nonprofits to gather nonhazardous and recyclable solid waste.

These include plastic bottles, wrappers, bags, sachets, metal canisters, damaged and used electrical and electronic devices, discarded hardware and recyclable computer parts.

For the recovery of potentially hazardous waste, an inter-agency collection system will be created, through which individuals may report the exact location and details of the trash.

INQ



27 MAR 2019

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

1 kilong basura palit-bigas

Para matugunan ang problema sa basura, isinusulong sa Kamara ang panukalang pagbibigay ng isang kilong bigas kapalit ng isang kilo ng basura.

Sa House Bill 9170 ni Angat Rep. Neil Abayon, mabibigyan ng incentives ang mga tao na magsegregate ng recyclable plastics at magdadala ng mga basura sa redemption centers kapalit ng bigas, mga de-lata o pera.

Ang bawat isang kilo ng non-hazardous at recyclable plastic wastes ay may katapat na isang kilo ng bigas o cash equivalent, habang ang isang kilo ng metallic, non-hazardous, recyclable waste ay dalawang kilo naman ng bigas o katumbas na halaga sa pera.

Sa ganitong paraan ay mahihikayat ang mga consumers na paghiwalayin ang kanilang mga basura sa kanilang bahay pa lamang at masosolusyunan ang pagdami ng basura.
(Gemma Garcia)



SAY MO ATTORNEY?



By ATTY. PERSIDA RUEDA-ACOSTA
KGG.na Chief Acosta,

May bagong lipat kam-ing kapitbahay. Tuwing umaga, nagsisiga o nagsusunog siya ng mga tuyong dahon at maliliit na sanga ng puno sa kaniyang bakuran. May batas po ba na maaaring magparusa sa kaniyang ginagawa?

**Lubos na gumagalang,
Mon
Dear Mon,**

Pagsusunog ng mga dahon at sanga ng puno

Para sa inyong kaalaman, ang batas na nakasaklaw sa iyong katanungan ay ang Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9003, o mas kilala sa tawag na Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Nakasaad sa Section 48 (3) nito na:

"Section 48. Prohibited Acts- The following acts are prohibited.

3) The open burning of solid waste;"

Ayon sa Rule III ng Implementing Rules and Regulations ng nasabing batas, ang kahulugan ng solid waste ay "all discarded household, commercial waste, non-hazardous institutional and industrial

waste, street sweepings, construction debris, agricultural waste, and other non-hazardous/non-toxic solid waste."

Samakatuwid, ipinagbabawal ng batas ang pagsusunog o pagsisiga ng mga tuyong dahon at maliliit na sanga ng puno sapagkat ang mga ito ay itinuturing na mga solid wastes. Nakasaad din sa batas na ito na ang sinumang lumabag ay maparusahan ng kulong ng isang araw hanggang 15 araw. Maaari rin silang magmulta ng halagang P300 hanggang P1,000. Maaari ring mapataw ang parehong kaparusahan batay sa diskresyon ng korte.

Nawa ay nasagot namin ang iyong mga katanungan. Nais naming ipaalala sa inyo na ang opinyon na ito ay nakabase sa inyong mga naisalaysay sa inyong liham at sa pagkakaintindi namin dito. Maaaring maiba ang opinyon kung mayroong karagdagang impormasyon na ibibigay. Mas mainam kung personal kayong sasangguni sa isang abogado.

Maraming salamat sa inyong patuloy na pagtitiwala.

**Ang inyong Lingkod Bayan,
DR. PERSIDA V. RUEDA-ACOSTA, DSD
Punong Manananggol Pambayan**



Empower LGUs to prevent water crisis — Tolentino

By Paul M. Gutierrez

WITH the national government already taking steps to address water supply problems as a result of El Niño, senatorial aspirant Francis Tolentino on Monday said that proposals to resolve the water crisis should involve and empower local government units "that are at the frontline of this problem."

Tolentino said he agreed with proposals floated regarding the establishment of an "apex water body" to coordinate water resource management policies and programs in the country, but stressed that any law creating such an agency should also empower LGUs so that they can take a more proactive role in ensuring their constituents have ample supplies of the precious resource.

"As with any urgent issue affecting the country, whether it be disaster response or peace and order, coordination between the national government and our LGUs is critical to ensure that the problem is properly addressed," stressed the former mayor and Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)

Chair.

Tolentino revealed that a 1998 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and National Water Resources Board (NWRB) study projected that nine major cities, including Metro Manila, Davao, Baguio, Angeles and Bacolod, are already or may experience water constraint by 2025 due to resource degradation, increase in population, and rapid urbanization.

"Ngayon pa lang, nararamdaman na ang problema sa Maynila. We have to really work to ensure that this problem does not affect other cities in the country as well."

"Kailangan talaga magusap at magtulungan ang LGUs at national government. I remember reading a few years back that water is a local problem that requires a local response, and as a former mayor, I can understand that viewpoint, kasi pag may problema sa patubig, and unang tina-takbuhan ng mga tao ay ang mayor," explained Tolentino.

"So any law creating this water agency should factor in the major role LGUs play in water resource management. It should treat LGUs like partners because the LGUs are at the frontlines."

Tolentino said that one of his priorities if he were to be elected to the Senate would be to ensure that all national laws would take into consideration the role of local governments in their implementation.

According to Tolentino, "kailangan kasi tingnan ang batas sa mata ng mga LGUs natin. Kaya ba nila gawin ang role nila? May pondo ba sila para gawin and sinasabi ng batas? These are things that should be given more weight."

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles last week revealed that cabinet agencies in a high-level inter-agency meeting on water security had agreed to endorse two draft bills for approval and submission to the Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC), one of which would establish a government agency that "will act as the apex body for the water resources sector."

"This agency will consolidate and reconcile water-related policy, planning, and programming mandates of the different agencies involved in water resource management. It will likewise ensure the efficient allocation of water resources across sectors," said the Palace official.



TOLENTINO: LGUs ISAMA SA SOLUSYON SA WATER CRISIS

DAPAT katuwang ng gobyerno ang lokal na pamahalaan sa opisyal na pagtugon sa krisis sa tubig, ayon kay senatorial candidate Francis Tolentino.

Sang-ayon din umano si Tolentino sa panukalang "apex water body" upang maging tagapag-ugnay sa pangangasiwa ng lahat ng gawaing may kaugnayan sa tubig ngayon, ngunit iginiit nito na kailangang bigyan ng poder ang mga lokal na opisyal para maigarantiya ng mga ito ang kasapatan ng tubig sa kani-kanilang mga nasasaku-

pan.

"Kagaya ng alin mang mga usapin sa bansa, pagtugon man 'yan sa sakuna o sa peace and order, ang pakiki-ugnayan sa pagitan ng national government at ng ating mga LGU ay mahalaga upang magarantiya na ang problema ay agarang matugunan," giit ng dating alkalde at Metro Manila Development Authority Chairman.

Binanggit din ni Tolentino ang resulta ng isang pag-aaral ng Japan International Cooperation Agency at ng National Water Resources Board noong

1998 na nagsasabing siyam na lungsod sa bansa, kabilang na ang Metro Manila, Davao, Baguio, Angeles at Bacolod, ay dumaranas na o daranas ng kakulangan sa tubig pagdating ng taong 2025 dahil sa pagkasira ng mga pagkukunan ng suplay, paglobo ng populasyon at mabilisang urbanisasyon.

"Ngayon pa lang, nararamdaman na ang problema sa Maynila. Kailangan natin na puspusang pagtrabahuan ito upang matiyak na ang problemang ito ay hindi tatama sa iba pang mga syudad sa bansa."

"Kailangan talagang mag-usap at magtulungan ang LGUs at national government. Nagsa-bi na ang ilang eksperto na ang tubig ay isang lokal na usapin na nangangailangan ng isang lokal na pagtugon. Bilang isang dating mayor, batid ko na ang unang tinatakbuhan ng tao kapag may problema sa suplay ng tubig ay ang mayor," paliwanag pa ni Tolentino.

"Kaya dapat ituring ang mga LGU bilang katuwang dahil sila naman talaga ang nasa harap ng labang ito."

Isa umano sa kanyang



Tolentino: LGUs isama sa pagresolba sa water crisis

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order, ang pakiki-ugnayan sa pagitan ng national government at ng ating mga LGU ay mahalaga upang magarantiya na ang problema ay agarang matugunan," giit ng dating alkalde at Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman.

Binanggit din ni Tolentino ang resulta ng isang pag-aaral ng Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) noong 1998 na nagsasabing siyam na lungsod sa bansa, kabilang na ang Metro Manila, Davao, Baguio, Angeles at Bacolod, ay dumaranas na o dadanas ng kakulangan sa

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Isa umano sa kanyang mga prayoridad kapag nahalal sa Senado, ayon kay Tolentino, ay ang pagtitiyak na lahat ng batas ay nagsasaalang-alang sa papel ng mga lokal na pamahalaan.



27 MAR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

PROTECTING PEOPLE'S HEALTH

ANOTHER LA UNION TOWN BANS COAL-FIRED PLANT

ARINGAY, LA UNION—The town council here has banned the construction, development and operation of a coal-fired power plant, making this coastal town the second in La Union province to make the prohibition after the surfing capital, San Juan.

"We basically adopted the resolution passed by San Juan [town council]," said Councilor Rachell Martinez, principal sponsor of the resolution unanimously approved during the council's regular session on March 20.

On March 11, San Juan closed the town to coal-fired power plants in a bid to preserve biodiversity and protect the health of residents.

Hazardous

Both councils said such power plants had been proven to produce hazardous pollutants that destroyed the environment and affect people's health and livelihood. Officials of the two towns also called on other local governments in the province to adopt the same declaration "for the protection and conservation of the environment" and prevention of health hazards.

Martinez said the declaration was their contribution to calls to make a "coal-free La Union."

Since 2017, residents, led by the Koalisyon Isalbar ti Pintas ti La Union (Coalition to Save the Beauty of La Union), had been opposing the P80-billion, 670-megawatt power plant project

proposed by the Global Luzon Energy Development Corp., in the coastal villages of Carisquis and Nalvo Sur in Luna town.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources had issued an environmental compliance certificate for the project.

Shared coastline

Although Aringay is 60 kilometers south of Luna, it will still be directly affected by the proposed plant because they share the same coastline, Martinez said.

Based on 2015 data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, Aringay had a population of 47,458 people.

"We are in a coastal area and we are also an agricultural town. We are within the radius of the areas that could be affected by the coal-fired plant," Martinez said.

Church support

In a manifesto read in all Masses in the province last month, San Fernando Bishop Daniel Presto called on the government to drop its plan to build the Luna plant.

Presto said the temporary economic benefits from the operation of the power plants were "not acceptable trade-offs for long-term degradation of the environment."

In January, a group of surfers belonging to Manila Surfers Association staged a protest action to express its support to La Union people's opposition to the proposed plant. —GABRIEL CARDINOZA INQ



El Niño: Cebu allots P20M to aid farmers

Province now under state of calamity as losses from drought reach P100 M

By Nestle Semilla
and Dale Israel
@inquirervisayas

CEBU CITY—The provincial government of Cebu will set aside P20 million from its calamity fund to assist towns and cities severely hit by the dry spell, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) said.

On Monday, the provincial board placed Cebu under a state of calamity as the drought destroyed P100 million worth of agricultural and fishery products.

The declaration, contained in a resolution approved by the provincial board on Monday, stemmed from the recommendation of the PDRRMO, which conducted an initial survey on the state of water sources, crops and livestock in the province.

Vulnerable

“The El Niño phenomenon is on its initial stage. Further damage on agricultural crops, livestock, fishery and water supply will be prevented if appropriate interventions and assistance are immediately provided to these vulnerable sectors,” the resolution read.

Board Member Jovito Ouano, who authored the resolution, said the declaration was necessary to “provide assistance to affected sectors [and] minimize the adverse effects of El Niño.”



EARLY HARVEST Farmers in Barangay Mohon, Talisay City, are forced to harvest their palay early to cut losses from the drought that has been ravaging farms in Cebu province.

The PDRRMO, in a report, said the dry spell was just starting yet the damage on agriculture and fishery sectors had reached P100 million.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration station on Mactan Island observed an 80-percent drop in average rainfall in Cebu in February and March.

Weather specialist Netherlen Saletrero said the dry spell was expected to worsen in

April and May.

Corn farms hit

Baltazar Tribunalo Jr., PDRRMO chief, said P20 million from the P59-million calamity fund could be used to help farmers affected by El Niño.

He said 27 of 51 local governments in Cebu had declared agricultural losses from the drought. Corn farms, he said, lost P25 million.

Worst hit by the drought

were the cities of Mandaue, Danao, Carcar and Toledo and the towns of Asturias, Alcantara, Aloguinsan, Alcoy, Argao, Balamban, Dumanjug, Sogod, Dalaguete, San Remigio, Sibonga, Tuburan, Tabuelan, Daanbantayan, Medellin, Bantayan, Carmen, Madridejos, Santa Fe, Consolacion, Compostela, Boljoon and Minglanilla.

Water supply

The dry spell had also affected one of the two major dams maintained by the Metropolitan Cebu Water District (MCWD), which services more than 183,000 households and establishments in the cities of Cebu, Mandaue, Talisay and Lapu-Lapu as well as the towns of Consolacion, Liloan, Compostela and Cordova.

The MCWD said its Buhisan Dam, located in an upland village in Cebu City, had “zero production” starting this week. The dam used to supply 6,000 cubic meters daily to at least 6,000 households.

Water production in the MCWD Jaclupan Dam in Talisay City also dropped to 19,000 cu. m from 33,000 cu. m due to the absence of rainfall, said MCWD spokesperson Charmaine Rodriguez-Kara.

The drop in water supply prompted the MCWD to schedule water interruptions in its franchise area. INQ

JUNJIE MENDOZA



Coke, Parañaque move for zero waste

Coca-Cola Philippines, the Parañaque City government and the National Solid Waste Management Commission recently celebrated the 18th year of the enactment of Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 – a law that enforces the proper management of waste at the barangay level.

Led by officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Parañaque City Mayor Edwin Olivares; and environmental and solid waste management officers from Malabon, Muntinlupa, Taguig, Pasay, Valenzuela, Las Piñas and San Juan; the celebration, aptly themed, "National Zero Waste Month: We and Alternative Technologies, Partnering for Proper Waste Management," gathered stakeholders, including civic and private sectors, who are at the frontlines of tackling the country's waste problems.

"This is an important milestone for all of us who are working towards the realization of a World Without Waste. The

Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 introduced waste management long before anyone thought it was needed. Today, as there is more consciousness about the impact of waste, Coca-Cola is at the forefront of finding solutions, both at the community and company levels, to effectively reduce waste and complete the sequence of recycling the resources and turning them into entirely new materials that we can use," said Winn Everhart, president and general manager of Coca-Cola Philippines.

In the long run, the company hopes to strengthen and uplift the recycling system in the Philippines – from the collection at the household and community levels, to the recycling of these materials and innovations in packaging at the industry level.

The essence of the zero-waste lifestyle

is much more than just reducing the use of packaging products – it is being able to breathe new life to the materials and resources that have already served their original purpose.

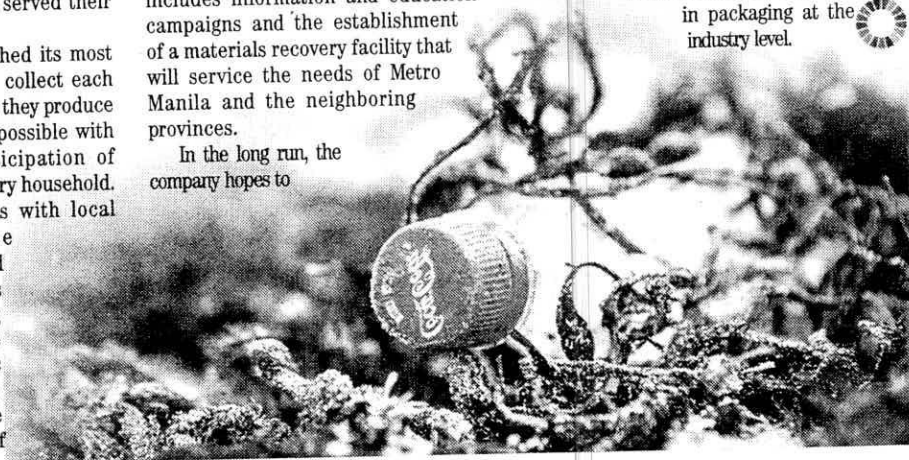
In 2018, Coca-Cola launched its most ambitious goal to date – to collect each and every bottle and can that they produce by 2030, a feat that is only possible with the cooperation and participation of various stakeholders and every household. Starting with partnerships with local government units, the beverage brand has rolled out activations in various regional festivities, including Sinulog, Dinagyang, the Davao Regional Athletic Meet and the Araw ng Davao, that help in the collection and recycling of recyclable materials.

Furthermore, together with other members of the

Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability, Coca-Cola is investing in a multi-pronged program that includes information and education campaigns and the establishment of a materials recovery facility that will service the needs of Metro Manila and the neighboring provinces.

In the long run, the company hopes to

strengthen and uplift the recycling system in the Philippines – from the collection at the household and community levels, to the recycling of these materials and innovations in packaging at the industry level.



SODA maker Coca-Cola Philippines and the local government of Parañaque are partnering to promote a zero-waste world by encouraging the public to recycle.



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A5
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PAGE 1
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The destruction of the environment: An unfolding tragedy for humanity

BY JON HALL

UNITED NATIONS: Late last year the World Wide Fund for Nature released their "Living Planet Report for 2018." WWF's estimates were stark: populations of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians have, on average, declined by 60 percent between 1970 and 2014.

The Earth is estimated to have lost about half of its shallow water corals in the past 30 years. A fifth of the Amazon has disappeared in just 50 years, and 2018 marked the worst level of deforestation in history.

This is a tragedy for nature. And an unfolding tragedy for humanity: the destruction of the environment is threatening the planet's life support systems that we all rely on every day for our air, water and food.

The impact on people's lives is already apparent with 3.6 billion people facing water scarcity at least one month a year, and 3.1 billion people drinking water with a risk of contamination.

The "2019 Global Risks Report" from the World Economic Forum identified "Major biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse (terrestrial or marine)" as both one of the most likely and most serious global risks with "irreversible consequences for the environment, resulting in severely depleted resources for humankind as well as industries."

Fortunately, there is already a

good deal of work underway to develop "nature-based solutions" that harness the power of nature to tackle social and economic challenges.

UNDP has been working around the world with partners to trial these ideas and many have significant implications for human development work. Environmental concerns often hit the poorest the hardest.

Not only are poor communities most vulnerable to crop failure or flooding, because of climate change for example, but they are also less resilient — or unable to recover from — such natural disasters.

Moreover, protecting nature is of critical concern to those who care about equity between generations, and it is clear from the data that the challenges faced by the current generation dwarf in comparison to those that the next generation will face if most environmental indicators continue their current trajectory.

For World Wildlife Day, the Human Development Report Office has released guidance to both inspire and assist UN country teams to investigate how nature-based solutions could help a nation's human development.

The material looks at solutions that can help tackle climate change, improve the management of land and water (both fresh and marine) and help maintain biodiversity directly. We use case studies to show how nature-based solutions can help promote human

development and help wildlife.

One example from Namibia looks at the broader development benefits national parks can bring to a country and those who live near them.

Namibia has some of the world's most spectacular national parks and wildlife. Indeed, one-half of the country falls within national protected areas or communal or private conservancies.

But protected areas often struggle to receive adequate funding, often because there is an undervaluation of their economic benefits, resulting in underinvestment by the government.

UNDP's economic analysis indicated that the protected area (PA) system contributed up to 6 percent of Namibia's GDP. And this was only counting park-based tourism without including the value of other ecosystem services.

The study showed that further investment in PAs could lead them to contribute up to 15 percent of GDP in the medium-term.

Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism used the figures to negotiate a 300 percent increase in the state budget for park management and development.

Working with UNDP, the government has strengthened the national park system in several ways and developed important national policies.

Perhaps the most important was the Tourism and Wildlife Concessions Policy, regarded as

one of the world's best models for protected area concessions, and probably the only one with such a strong emphasis on, and provision for, supporting the livelihoods of rural people living in and around protected areas.

Another example — looking at the importance of the bio-economy — comes from Colombia, a nation that shelters more than 10 percent of the planet's biodiversity.

A Colombian company has begun extracting blue dye from the fruit of the Jagua Tree (*Genipa americana*). The new product is for many purposes better than chemical based dye.

The benefits are being shared with both the Colombian state and local communities who supply the fruit from which the dye was developed. And so the Jagua Fruit, a resource that used to have no economic use, began to generate income and improved livelihoods for local communities.

If the world is to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals there must be a greater focus on development that allows both people and the planet to prosper.

We hope that the next generation of national human development reports from across UNDP program countries will embrace and promote the nature-based solutions needed for that to happen. **IPS**

Jon Hall is Policy specialist at the Human Development Report Office, UNDP