

DATE : 29 MAR 2019

DAY : Friday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



## DENR mobilizing communities in cleaning esteros and rivers draining into Manila Bay

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is taking the Manila Bay rehabilitation works down to the esteros and rivers draining into the bay.

On March 31, simultaneous cleanup of Manila Bay tributaries, dubbed the "Battle for the Rivers and Esteros,"

will be conducted and aims to involve communities and empower them in protecting their own waterways, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said.

"We at the DENR are doing this to mobilize community participation through their barangay executives in the cleanup, rehabilitation, education, and protection activities in the effort to rehabilitate the Manila Bay." **▶6**

## DENR mobilizing communities... ◀1

Bay," Cimatu said.

According to the DENR chief, the first phase involves the cleanup of esteros and waterways, reduction of fecal coliform level and other discharges from establishments, implementation of solid waste management, and planning for the relocation of informal settlers.

"The first activity will involve the regular conduct of cleanup on garbage and debris, removal of silt by dredging, and introduction of bioremediation, infrastructure improvement and other engineering interventions, such as trash traps and silt curtains," Cimatu said.

Bioremediation refers to the use of naturally occurring microorganisms or other forms of life to consume and break down environmental pollutants in

order to clean up a polluted site. The microorganisms can also be deliberately introduced in the site.

Cimatu said there will also be an intensified promotion of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling; provision of adequate receptacles for waste segregation; and conduct of information, education and communication activities.

Two months since the Manila Bay rehabilitation launch, DENR and Laguna Lake Development Authority have already issued a total of 263 notices of violation and 119 cease and desist orders to establishments in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, and Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon provinces) that have violated the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 and other pertinent environmental laws.



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# Manila Standard



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# DENR orders temporary closure of 2 eateries

By Rio N. Araja

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through the Laguna Lake Development Authority, has ordered the temporary closure of two famous eateries—the Aristocrat Restaurant on Roxas Boulevard, Manila and Gloria Maris Restaurant near the Folk Arts Theater—for generating and discharging pollutive wastewater in the Manila Bay in violation of Republic Act 4850 as amended by RA 9275.

LLDA general manager Jaime Medina also issued on Sunday a cease-and-desist order on one of the waste water treatment facilities of The Esplanade [San Miguel by the Bay] located at the Mall of Asia in Pasay City for the same violation.

The LLDA also issued notices of violation against some commercial establishments, such as the Prime Holdings, Sea Residences, Lolo Taba and

Lola Pato Restaurant, and Aliw Inn.

The Manila Bay rehabilitation has kicked off with over 5,000 government employees from the 13 mandamus agencies and volunteers to clean up the bay to make it fit for swimming in December.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu led other Cabinet secretaries in a unity walk from the Quirino Grandstand to the bay-

walk area.

Those who joined the solidarity walk were Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, Public Works and High-

ways Secretary Mark Villar, Philippine National Police chief Oscar Albayalde, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman Danilo Lim, Defense

Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda and Presidential Commission on Urban Poor chairperson Alvin Feliciano.



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# Onus on barangay leaders to conduct coastal cleanups

**DILG says negligent local officials face administrative cases**

By **Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The majority of the barangays in Metro Manila have failed to conduct the mandated weekly cleanup of coastal areas, waterways and estuaries that flow into Manila Bay, according to a ranking official of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

In an interview with the Inquirer on Wednesday, Undersecretary Epimaco Densing III said initial reports showed that about 70 percent of local governments in the National Capital Region near Manila Bay failed to follow the DILG directive in conjunction with the bay's rehabilitation program, which was launched earlier this year.

Interior Secretary Eduardo

Año, in a memorandum issued in January, ordered the officials from 178 cities and municipalities and 5,714 barangays in the Manila Bay Watershed Area to organize cleanup drives every Saturday.

The local governments include those in Metro Manila, Calabarzon and Central Luzon.

#### Post-activity report

Under the directive, concerned barangays are required to submit a post-activity report to their city or municipal environmental officer every Tuesday.

The report should include information on the number of attendees, volume of collected wastes and the coverage area, as well as photo documentation.

Densing said officials faced administrative cases if found negligent in performing their duties.

"They will be given a notice to explain... If proven that they had been remiss of their duties, then we will file cases against them," he said. "They have been warned."

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu met last week with chairs of barangays with waterways that flow into Manila Bay to emphasize their role in the bay's rehabilitation.

Cimatu said local government officials, particularly barangay chairs, were responsible for implementing environmental laws.

This Sunday, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will lead a cleanup of esteros and waterways, including the rivers in Tullahan, Pasig, Marikina, Malabon, San Juan and Parañaque. INQ



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# Give financial incentives to Manila Bay cleaners – solon

By **ELLSON A. QUISMORIO**

**G**overnment agencies were urged on Friday to extend financial incentives to people who participate in the cleanup of the Manila Bay, which is famous for both its rich history and its garbage problem.

“You should generate income in the cleanup... that’s the only way to get people involved,” ANGKLA Party-list Rep. Jesulito Manalo said, hinting that volunteerism could only go so far in keeping Manila Bay clean.

“How will people get the income by cleaning up? Get the economics going,” said the solon, who chairs the House Committee on Overseas Workers’ Affairs.

Last January, President Duterte approved the Department of Environ-

ment and Natural Resources’ (DENR’s) P42-billion, three-year rehabilitation plan on Manila Bay.

What followed were viral before and after pictures of Manila Bay showing the results of the initial cleanup.

But some lawmakers who attended the hearing expressed reservations about the sustainability of the cleanup efforts.

“Without business economics, it becomes a vicious cycle,” Manalo said, noting that the mountains of garbage will always come back there in the absence of paid cleaners.

Assistant Secretary Daniel Darius Nicer of the DENR’s Anti-Corruption Office attended the hearing of the panel, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Cua.

Cua appeared to see the wisdom in the maritime sector solon’s suggestion,

and subsequently told the DENR to “make a business model out of it (Manila Bay cleanup activities).

“Once you come up with a sound plan, you can make a business opportunity,” he said.

Manalo underscored the importance of keeping the shores and water of Manila Bay garbage-free, particularly for the maritime sector.

“I’m coming from the maritime perspective... We can’t bring ships here if the propellers will get caught up with garbage. If the ships can’t come here then the cost of goods will rise,” he explained to the committee.

He said government should carry out an information campaign on why the preservation of bodies of water is important.

“If you educate [the people] maybe they will cooperate,” Manalo said.





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# Manila Water

## counting on 100

# deep wells for relief

By **Ronnel W. Domingo**  
@RonWDomingoINQ

Thirteen new deep wells are providing Manila Water Co. Inc. with 15 million liters of raw water daily (MLD), allowing the company to pare down its supply deficit.

In a statement, the Ayala group subsidiary said additional deep wells were expected to further augment supply in the coming months.

Manila Water came under fire after large parts of its concession area in Metro Manila and parts of Rizal province suffered severe water shortages in early March, as demand outstripped supply.

Amid a backlash from customers and possible penalties, the company offered to waive bills of customers for March 6-31. The Zobel brothers of the Ayala group of companies issued a public apology for the supply shortage.

### Subsidence

To help ease the supply deficit, Manila Water earlier asked the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) to reopen deep wells that had been ordered closed and to drill new ones. The NWRB regulates the use of underground water.

Drawing huge amounts of water beneath the earth's surface results in ground subsidence, a phenomenon that has affected many urban areas in the country, including Metro Manila, making them more susceptible to flooding.

"We have approved 100 deep wells for Manila Water and they are expected to provide an aver-



**DEEP WELL IN ANTIPOLO CITY** The National Water Resources Board has allowed Manila Water to reopen deep wells that have been ordered closed and to drill new ones to help ease water shortage in Metro Manila. —PHOTO COURTESY OF MANILA WATER

age of one MLD each," NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David said in an interview.

David said the reopening of the wells was temporary. These need to be closed after some time to allow their underground reservoir to be replenished naturally, he pointed out.

Before the activation of the 13 new deep wells, Manila Water said it was able to draw more than 9 MLD from five deep wells in Curayao, Rodriguez, Rizal.

"It is expected that at least

30 MLD from more deep wells will be able to augment supply by the end of March," Manila Water said.

As of Thursday, the company had reduced its supply deficit by one-third to 100 MLD.

### Water from lake

Aside from the wells, more water has been coming from the Cardona Water Treatment Plant in Rizal and from Maynilad Water Services Inc.

The 100-MLD Cardona plant, which filters water from

Laguna Lake, is currently providing 23 MLD. It is expected to be operating at full capacity by August.

Maynilad has committed to share with Manila Water up to 50 MLD from a newly energized facility in Putatan, Muntinlupa City—its second plant in that location. The Putatan facility filters water from Laguna Lake.

### Eight to 12 hours available

Maynilad is expected to provide the full 50 MLD by June.

Water is now available for



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PHILIPPINE DAILY  
**INQUIRER**

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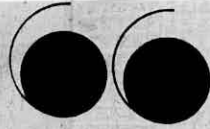
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**It is expected  
that at least 30  
MLD from more  
deep wells will  
be able to aug-  
ment supply by  
the end of  
March**

**Manila Water**

eight to 12 hours—at ground floor level—in 97 percent of its concession area in Metro Manila and parts of Rizal, according to Manila Water.

Company president Ferdinand dela Cruz said only eight barangays were still severely affected by the shortage, down from 61 barangays in early March.

“Our supply deficit (has gone) down, but there are still small pockets (of severely affected areas), sitios or streets with intermittent no-water situations resulting from operational adjustments and pressure management,” Dela Cruz said. INQ



**IN THE KNOW: Risks of groundwater extraction**

Since 2015, groundwater extraction has been prohibited throughout Metro Manila and certain parts of Bulacan and Cavite provinces, in anticipation of the rise in illegal construction of deep wells during dry spells.

In its latest contingency plan to ease the water shortage in the metropolis, however, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has temporarily allowed the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System to use its existing deep wells to augment water supply for its two concessionaires for the duration of El Niño.

The NWRB, which coordinates and regulates all water-related activities in the country, also plans to temporarily reopen deep wells that were previously closed and sealed subject to the agency's

control and monitoring for critical services.

In its commissioned study in 2004, the agency described the groundwater levels in Metro Manila and adjacent areas as "critical."

Groundwater extraction, it said, was a major reason floods were taking longer to subside in the northern metropolis.

Severe extraction is also causing land subsidence and seawater intrusion into groundwater, the study said. Subsidence may damage buildings, bridges and highways due to sudden changes in ground elevation.

The NWRB shut down a total of 1,008 illegal or abandoned deep wells from 2008 to 2013. —INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCES: NWRB.GOV.PH AND OFFICIAL GAZETTE





## 13 more deep wells opened for Manila Water consumers

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA  
and LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

East zone concessionaire Manila Water Co. has started tapping more deep wells to augment supply in its serviced areas.

The Ayala-led water firm said it started operating 13 additional deep wells in its concession area where more than 15 million liters of water per day have been drawn.

The move is seen to bring more water supply upon full operation of more deep wells in the coming months.

Before the activation of the new deep wells, Manila Water was able to source more than nine million liters of water per day from five deep wells in Curayao in Rodriguez.

"It is expected that at least 30 million liters per day from more deep wells will be able to augment supply by the end of the month," Manila Water said.

The company's current demand is about 100 to 150 million liters of water per day.

Manila Water has maximized its allocation of 1,600 million liters from Angat Dam due to higher demand.

To narrow the supply deficit, various sources have been identified to augment supply.

"Aside from the deep wells, additional supply is coming from the Cardona Water Treatment Plant, which delivers 23 million liters per day," Manila Water said.

The cross-border flows from west zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. provide 11 million liters per day and this will go up to 50 million liters by June.

Manila Water's eight- to 12-hour water availability has reached 97 percent.

From 61 hard-hit barangays, Manila Water said only eight barangays are dependent on water tankers.

Earlier, the water concessionaire said it would implement a one-time bill waiver related to consumers' consumption in March which will reflect in next month's billing.

The bill waiver consists of two parts. First, all Manila Water customers will no longer pay the minimum charge, which represents 10 cubic meters covering water, environmental and sewer charges.

The typical minimum charge ranges from P76 per month for low-consuming customers to P656 for industrial customers.

Secondly, severely affected areas or those who experienced no water service for at least seven days will not be charged for the whole month.

Former public works secretary Rogelio Singson pushed for the creation of the Department of Water to avoid a water crisis in the future.

Singson said the government should appoint someone who will be in charge of water management.

Former Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman and administration senatorial candidate Francis Tolentino also called for the creation of an agency that will be tasked to address water issues, including conservation measures and regulation of use and cost.

"The water crisis is really a cause for concern," Tolentino, former political adviser to President Duterte, said.

"We are already experiencing water rationing in parts of Metro Manila," he added.

The former Cabinet secretary cited the current situation in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte where several areas are affected by El Niño.

Under Tolentino's proposal, the water department will consolidate the functions of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, Local Water Utilities Administration, National Water Resources Board and National Irrigation Administration.

- With Robertzon Ramirez



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# Put an end to plastic waste

The trend of banning plastic has already actually taken off globally, with countries like New Zealand and institutions like the European Union making similar commitments

The advent of the discovery of plastic – a wonderful invention that made life convenient in terms of storing away food and keeping things safe and clean – is now becoming the scourge of the planet.

Over the course of time since its invention, plastic has become a terrible waste problem because it has damaged all creatures who depend on the ocean for food and resource – from birds to human beings.

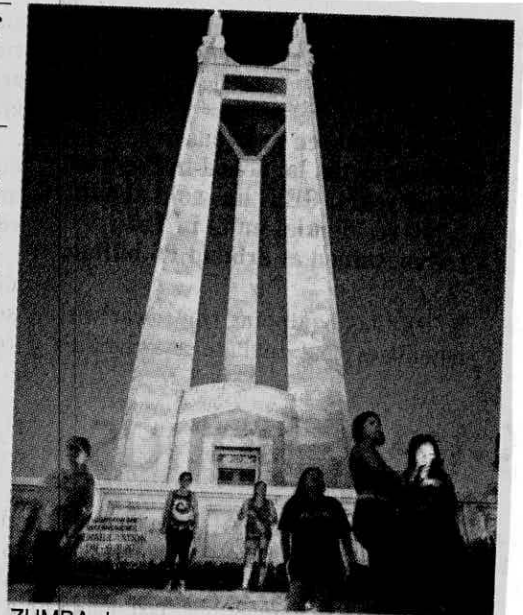
During a forum on the Campaign Against Plastic Pollution, the United Nations (UN) had discussed the dangers and the perils of the uncontrollable plastic waste and raised awareness of the impact plastic pollution has on human and

environmental health.

“It is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the sea. Microplastics are now confirmed in table salt, in fresh water each person on the planet is believed to have plastic in their bodies,” the UN said in a statement.

This is not the first time the UN has put the scourge of alarming plastic debris at the head of its priorities. In 2010, the “Greening the Blue” campaign was launched to raise awareness of the importance of sustainability throughout the UN system and encourage staff members to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Here in the country, we have also seen the emergence of awareness on the dangers of plastic to the



ZUMBA dancers perform in front of the Quezon Memorial Shrine before lights were switched off for the Earth Hour environmental campaign in Manila last year.

AFP

environment, as House Bill 8692, or the Ban on Single-use Plastic Products was filed at the House of Representatives in January this year.

The measure calls for a total ban on single-use plastics, as well as a phase-out plan for plastics already in use. While the bill still has to go through the approval process by Congress, it has already gained traction.

Aside from banning establishments like restaurants and retail stores from using plastic, the bill also disallows the manufacturing, importing and selling of single-use plastics – plastics products include straws, cups, sachets, shopping bags and food containers. The ban would take full effect one year after the bill is passed.

Additional provisions to the bill include creating local recycling centers and establishing awareness

programs for recycling. It also calls for the “collection, recycling, and proper disposal by the manufacturers of single-use plastic products already in circulation.”

We believe that there is still a lot of hope for the passage of the bill, since it could make a significant impact on the waste produced in the Philippines as it “seeks to ban single-use products and to encourage manufacturers and consumers to use more sustainable and environmental-friendly products.”

The trend of banning plastic has already actually taken off globally, with countries like New Zealand and institutions like the European Union making similar commitments. It also comes on the heels of studies by the UN stating that a plastic ban is one of the most effective combatants to pollution.

So it's high time that the Philippines joins the better bandwagon.



BW FILE PHOTO

CENTRAL VISAYAS: CEBU CITY  
**Cebu CENRO needs 500 volunteers  
for tree-planting program to compensate  
affected trees due to BRT project**

A GREENING program intended to compensate for the 2,182 trees that will be earth-balled to pave the way for the Bus Rapid Transit project in Cebu City will be in full swing next month and at least 500 volunteers are needed. City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) head Ma. Nida C. Cabrera said they will plant 350,000 trees in identified forest lands. The schedule is: April 6 in Barangay Buhisan, April 13 in Barangay Tabunan, and April 27 in Barangays Buhisan and Quiot. She added that about 12,000 trees will also be planted in some barangays covered by the BRT route. The BRT project will require the "harvesting or cutting" of 197 trees out of the 2,182 identified trees affected by the project. These 197 trees are the ones that have minimal chance of survival. Those that will be earth-balled will be placed in river-parks and open spaces. — *The Freeman*



## Earth Hour's false message



FROM WHERE  
I STAND  
ERIC  
JURADO

ON SATURDAY, March 30, cities in the Philippines and around the world will turn off their lights to observe "Earth Hour." Iconic landmarks from Paris' Eiffel Tower to Makati's skyscrapers will be darkened to encourage reduced energy use and signal a commitment to fighting climate change.

While a one-hour blackout will admittedly have little effect on carbon emissions, what matters, organizers say, is the event's symbolic meaning. That's true, but not in the way organizers intend.

We constantly hear that the debate is over on climate change—that man-made greenhouse gases are indisputably causing a planetary emergency. But there is ample scientific evidence to reject the claims of climate catastrophe. And what's never mentioned? The fact that reducing greenhouse gases to the degree sought by climate activists would, itself, cause significant harm.

Politicians and environmentalists, including those behind Earth Hour, are not calling on people just to change a few light bulbs, they are calling for a truly massive reduction in carbon emissions—as much as 80 percent below 1990 levels. Because our energy is overwhelmingly carbon-based (fossil fuels provide more than 80 percent of world energy), and because the claims of abundant "green energy" from breezes and sunbeams are a myth—this necessarily means a massive reduction in our energy use.

People don't have a clear view of what this would mean in practice. We, in the industrialized world, take our abundant energy for granted and don't consider just how much we benefit from its use every minute of every day. Driving our cars to work and school, sitting in our lighted, air-conditioned homes and offices, powering our mobile phones, computers, and countless other labor-saving appliances, we count on the indispensable values that industrial energy makes possible: Hospitals and supermarkets, factories and farms, international travel and global telecommunications. It is hard for us to project the degree of sacrifice and harm that proposed climate policies would force upon us.

This blindness to the vital importance of energy is precisely what Earth Hour exploits. It sends the comforting-but-false message: Cutting off fossil fuels would be easy and even fun! People spend the hour

stargazing and holding torch-lit beach parties; restaurants offer special candle-lit dinners. Earth Hour makes the renunciation of energy seem like a big party.

Participants spend an enjoyable sixty minutes in the dark, safe in the knowledge that the life-saving benefits of industrial civilization are just a light switch away. This bears no relation whatsoever to what life would actually be like under the sort of draconian carbon-reduction policies that climate activists are demanding; punishing carbon taxes, severe emissions caps, outright bans on the construction of power plants.

Forget one measly hour with just the

*"This blindness to the vital importance of energy is precisely what Earth Hour exploits."*

lights off. How about Earth Month, without any form of fossil fuel energy? Try spending a month sweating in the dark without air-conditioning, electricity, refrigeration; without power plants or generators; without any of the labor-saving, time-saving, and, therefore, life-saving products that industrial energy makes possible.

Those who claim that we must cut off our carbon emissions to prevent an alleged global catastrophe need to learn the indisputable fact that cutting off our carbon emissions would be a global catastrophe. What we really need is greater awareness of just how indispensable carbon-based energy is to human life (including, of course, to our ability to cope with any changes in the climate).

It is true that the importance of Earth Hour is its symbolic meaning. But that meaning is the opposite of the one intended. The lights of our cities and monuments are a symbol of human achievement, of what mankind has accomplished in rising from the cave to the skyscraper. Earth Hour presents the disturbing spectacle of people celebrating those lights being extinguished. Its call for people to renounce energy and to rejoice at darkened skyscrapers makes its real meaning unmistakably clear: Earth Hour symbolizes the renunciation of industrial civilization.

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## DENR, DOT kasado sa Bora fever

TINIYAK ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Department of Tourism (DOT) ang kahandaan ng Boracay sa pagdagsa ng mga bakasyunista ngayong summer season.

Ayon kay Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda nakatakdang magpulong ang Boracay Task Force para ilatag ang mga measure na ipatutupad para matiyak na mapangangalagaan ang isla at hindi muling maabuso lalo ngayong summer na isa ang Boracay sa paboritong destinasyon.

Bukod umano sa pagtiyak na maayos at ligtas ang pagdating ng mga turista ay prayoridad ding masiguro na masusunod ang daily carrying capacity na 6,405 na bisita.

Sa panig naman ng DOT ipinaalala ni Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo-Puyat na sa compliant at approved hotels lamang magpa-booked.

Sa pinakahuling talaan ng DOT nitong Marso 2019 ay nasa 326 na ang accredited hotels na kayang magbigay ng 11,943 rooms. **(Tina Mendoza)**





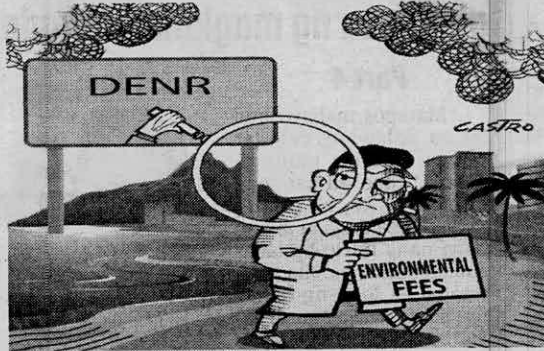
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## EDITORIAL



### Environmental fees sa mga beaches at tourist spots, nao-audit ba?

Wala na yatang beach resort at tourist destination ngayon ang hindi naniningil ng environmental fee.

Mula sa mga sikat na mga resort hanggang sa kasulukulukan at uncrowded na mga pasyalan ay kumukolekta ng environmental fees sa mga bisita, mapadayuhan man o lokal na turista.

May ilan na nag-iisyu ng mistulang ticket na pang-rafle at may ilan namang nagdedetalye ng environmental fee sa resibo. Pero marami ang wala talagang ibinibigay na katibayan ng pagbabayad.

Marami tuloy ang napapaisip kung napupunta ba talaga sa Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) ang nasabing koleksyon.

Kung nakakarating sa tamang ahensya, mabuti. Pero kwestyunable pa rin ang mga collecting outpost na walang ibinibigay na resibo.

Tanong pa rin sa DENR, paano naman naibabalik sa kalikasan ang mga environmental fees na ito?

Kung lokal na pamahalaan kasi ang naniningil, mas nakakasiguro na sa partikular na tourist spot gagastusin ang koleksyon [sana nga].

Mahirap kasi kung ilalagay sa national fund ng DENR ang mga koleksyon, malaking problema ang distribusyon ng gastos. Ang bawat resort at tourist spot pa naman ay may kani-kanyang pangangailangan at environmental concerns.

Ang nangyayari pa ngayon, may ilang pasyalan at bakasyunan ang kumukulekta nang doble sa mga bisita.

May singil na ang DENR, meron pa ang local government.

Kailangan ang mabusising auditing nito at dahil sa lawak at yaman ng Pilipinas sa mga tourist destination napahirap masiguro na napupunta sa dapat puntahan ang perang ito na napakalaki rin kung pagsasamahin.

Isang sistematikong koleksyon ang kailangan. Kickback-proof hangga't maaari at 100% gastusin sa pangangalaga sa kalikasan.