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DENR

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More rivers classified for quality

By Rio N. Araja

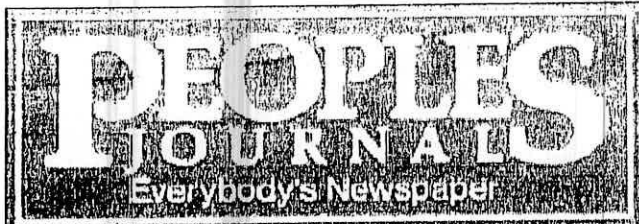
THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources has classified 35 more rivers, bays and lakes for their best uses, bringing to 824 the total number of duly classified water bodies nationwide since the enactment of Republic Act 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

Secretary Roy Cimatu issued a memorandum circular providing additional list of classified water bodies pursuant to Administrative Order 2016-08 or the Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016.

The classification helps water managers and planners to develop proper water quality management programs and provide the standards to protect aquatic life and human use of their specific water bodies, he said.

"With these classifications, we are able to determine the programs and activities to implement so that we can optimize the use of our water resources and make them beneficial to our welfare and health," he added.

Under RA9275, the DENR shall categorize water bodies whether freshwater or coastal according to their quality, area, purpose and vulnerability to pollution.



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DENR classifies 35 more water bodies for protection

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources has classified 35 more rivers, bays and lakes for their best uses.

According to Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, the latest classification brings to 824 the total number of duly classified water bodies nationwide since the enactment of Republic Act 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

RA 9275 mandates the DENR to categorize water bodies—whether freshwater or coastal—according to their quality, area, purpose and vulnerability to pollution.

Fresh surface waters, which include lakes, rivers and reservoirs, are classified as "AA," "A," "B," "C," and "D." Coastal and marine waters, on the other hand, are classified as "SA," "SB," "SC," and "SD." Under the circular, nine rivers in Region 9 or Zamboanga Peninsula classified as Class "B" and "C" are Batu, Binuangan, Buayan, Catituan, Lambuyong,

Logpond, Lutiman, Suluan and Sinusayan rivers.

Class "B" refers to recreational water intended for primary contact recreation such as bathing and swimming, while Class "C" pertains to fishery water for propagation and growth of fish and other aquatic resources.

Four rivers in Region 4B or MIMAROPA were classified either as Class "C" or "SC," which pertains to fishery water for propagation and growth of fish and other aquatic resources and intended for commercial and sustenance fishing.

Classified as "SC" waters are Sabang River in Sabayan, Occidental Mindoro; and Bangon, Gabawan and Bongoy rivers in Romblon.

Portions of Guimaras and Iloilo straits in Region 6 were declared as Class "SB" or fishery water suitable for commercial propagation of shellfish and intended as spawning areas for milkfish and similar species. Bicol region's Masbate Bay and Mobo

Bay, both in the province of Masbate, were classified as Class "SC" and "SB," respectively.

Caraga region's Mambakas River in Agusan del Norte was categorized as Class "A" or one intended as water supply source requiring conventional treatments like coagulation, sedimentation, filtration and disinfection. Also classified as Class "A" were Muleta and Aloran rivers in Region 10 and Alibunan River in Iloilo (Region 6).

The Camgat-Surong and Dinauyan rivers in Region 2 were classified as Class "C" and "B," respectively. Both the Balaong and Madlum rivers in Region 3 were categorized as Class "B" or recreational water intended for primary contact recreation.

Portions of Muleta and Aloran rivers in Region 10 were classified either as "A," "B," and "C." Batangas' Lobo and Pamintahan-Tubig ng Bayan-Sala rivers were classified as Class "B" and "C," respectively.

Joel dela Torre



35 anyong tubig, kinategorya ng DENR

Klinaseng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang 35 pang mga ilog, look, at lawa para sa kanilang pinakamainam na gamit, iniakyat sa 824 ang kabuuang bilang ng duly classified water bodies sa buong bansa.

Ang karagdagang listahan ng classified water bodies ay nakapaloob sa memorandum circular na inisyu ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, alinsunod sa Administrative Order 2016-08 o ang Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016.

Sa ilalim ng Republic Act (RA) 9275 o Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, inaatasan ang DENR na i-kategorya ang mga anyong tubig — kung ito ay freshwater o coastal — alinsunod sa kanilang quality, area, purpose, at vulnerability to pollution.

"With these classifications, we are able to determine the programs and activities to implement so that we can optimize the use of our water resources and make them beneficial to our welfare and health," ani Cimatu.

Sa ilalim ng circular, siyam na ilog sa Zamboanga Peninsula (Region 9) ang inilagay sa Class "B" at "C"

Ang mga ito ay ang Batu, Binuangan, Buayan, Catituan, Lambuyong, Logpond,

Lutiman, Suluan at Sinusayan rivers.

Ang Class "B" ay tumutukoy sa recreational water para sa primary contact recreation tulad ng bathing at swimming, habang ang Class "C" ay fishery water para sa pagpaparami ng isda at iba pang yamang dagat.

Apat na ilog sa Mimaropa (Region 4B) ang Class "C" o "SC," na tumutukoy sa fishery water para sa pagpaparami ng isda at iba pang aquatic resources at para sa commercial at sustenance fishing.

Nasa "SC" waters ang Sabang River sa Sabayan, Occidental Mindoro; at Bangon, Gabawan at Bongoy rivers sa Romblon.

Samantala, ang ibang bahagi ng Guimaras at Iloilo straits sa Western Visayas (Region 6) ay idineklarang Class "SB" o fishery water na mainam sa commercial propagation ng shellfish at spawning areas para sa bangus at mga kauri nito.

Sa Bicol Region (Region 5), ang Masbate Bay at Mobo Bay, kapwa nasa probinsiya ng Masbate, ay klinaseng Class "SC" at "SB," ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Sa Region 13 (Caraga), ang Mamkas River sa Agusan del Norte ay Class "A" o para sa water supply source na nangangailangan

ng conventional treatments tulad ng coagulation, sedimentation, filtration at disinfection.

Nasa Class "A" ang Muleta at Aloran rivers sa Northern Mindanao (Region 10), at Alibunan River sa Iloilo.

Ang Camgat-Surong at Dinauyan rivers sa Cagayan Valley (Region 2) ay Class "C" at "B," ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Ang Balaong at Madlum rivers sa Central Luzon (Region 3) ay kapwa nasa Class "B".

Ang ilang bahagi ng Muleta at Aloran rivers sa Northern Mindanao ay nasa "A", "B", at "C."

Ang Lobo at Pamintahan-Tubig ng Bayan-Sala rivers sa Batangas ay nasa Class "B" at "C", ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Ang Bojo River sa Cebu, ang nag-iisang bahagi ng tubig na kinategorya sa Central Visayas (Region 7), ay "Class B."

Sa Davao Region (Region 11), ang Mayo River at Mayo Bay ay "B" at "SB," ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Ang tatlong ilog sa Soccsksargen (Region 12) — Glan, Malapatan at Sapu Masla — ay klinaseng "B", "C", at "C," ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz



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₱250-M exotic animals seized

By **ARMANDO FENEQUITO**

DAVAO CITY – Operatives of National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Mati City police station and the 28th Infantry Battalion seized different exotic animals valued at ₱250 million on Monday afternoon.

Suspects were identified as Jomar L. Toledo, 34 and Rompas M. Lumakore 25 both from Barangay Calumpang, General Santos City.

The two men allegedly caretakers of the animals, were arrested in a buy-bust operation led by the NBI around 4 p.m. of April 8 in Barangay Dahican, Mati, Davao Oriental.

The DENR Davao said in its Facebook page, the animals mostly

Indonesian birds, are believed to be from Papua New Guinea.

"Accordingly, the apprehended wildlife species were already at the area for about a week and that the caretakers were being paid to feed them," DENR Davao said.

It stated that around 345 species of birds and reptiles were identified and counted by the team from Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), the DENR Regional Office and DENR Provincial Offices in Mati.

"Some of the identified species were Black Palm Cockatoos, wallabies and Echidna," the report said.

The agency's report said all the seized species were temporarily given to Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Mati City.

DENR-BMB Dr. Rogelio Demelletes already tagged the smuggled species and will be identified according to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) category as this will be the basis for the charges and penalties that will be imposed against the perpetrators.

CITES is an international agreement between governments and aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival to regulate the trade of wildlife animals and plants across borders and safeguard certain species from over-exploitation.

Charges will be filed against the suspects who are in the custody of Mati City Police Station.



Most Diwalwal miners complied with govt order to halt pollutive operations—DENR

DAVAO CITY—The Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has reported high compliance to its order to stop gold processing activities in Diwalwal, Monkayo town, Compostela Valley, but the huge expense to move out equipment has slowed down the transfer to government designated processing areas.

As of the end of March, 15 operators have been in various stages of transferring to the DENR-designated processing area in Sitio Mabatias, some 5 kilometers down the slope of the active mines and tunnelling operations in Diwalwal, according to Chamberlain J. Babiera, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (Penro) of Compostela Valley.

Assistant Secretary Ruth Tawantawan said there are more than 300 operators and plant owners of 1,797 ball mills and 31 carbon in-pulp (CIP) processors who must be served with the order to stop the unchecked and wanton dumping of toxic mines tailing laden with mercury and cyanide, a DENR briefing paper said.

"There are plenty who stopped their operations but have not yet transferred due to the cost...in the transfer, which, according to the plant owners, they don't have yet," Babiera said.

Babiera said many others have "actually stopped operating, and that's the essence of the CDO [cease and desist order]—to stop operat-

ing at their present location."

The CDO was served with finality on March 15, after several years of hankering with plant owners and operators. Tawantawan said the DENR gave them the last grace period between October last year and March this year.

The order was served to those who operated along rivers and creeks on the slopes and inside residential areas. One male owner of a retail store in residential Nang District acknowledged receipt of the order after the DENR team pointed to his ball mill and CIP processing below his establishment.

Another male operator of a ball mill said he would stop operating "because gold has been scarce anyway for years now."

"It's now common here to process about four sacks of rocks and ores to get one gram of gold. And that is not profitable anymore," he said.

A ball-mill machine crushes and pulverizes rocks and mix them with mercury to separate the gold dust. Some pulverized materials are processed in a CIP, which uses cyanide to separate the gold dust from the powdered soil. The wastes, or the tailings, are eventually dumped into the waterways.

In the 1990s, the government mounted a national investigation and mineral sampling of the Naboc River, the main water channel of Diwalwal that empties into the Agusan River, and in the waters of Davao Gulf following initial



Most Diwalwal miners . . .

with CDO have been found to be non compliant. There is an ongoing case build up so that proper information can be filed at the proper court, initiated by the issuing office, DENR-MGB and EMB," Babiera added.

He said the transfer would take several days or even months, "hence there are ongoing transfer that started even before March 15."

He said Barangay Capt. Pedro Samillano has requested DENR for the donation of lumber for the construction of common processing plants to be constructed by the barangay personnel.

Babiera said bidding for the dredging has not yet started with the office still finalizing its terms of reference "of which [it] would be the bases for the bidding."

"Because the activity is not merely the extraction of sand and gravel, per se, but involves the extraction of chemicals and other minerals therefrom, thereby cleaning the river of the hazardous or pollutant materials," he said.

Dredging would proceed once the pollutants or the polluting plants are transferred to Mabatias and the bidding done, he said. Also, structural and vegetative measures would be applied during maintenance and rehabilitation of the river, he added, and may include "riverbanks rehabilitation and protection and planting of agro-fruit-forest trees to benefit the local community."

findings of high traces of mercury among fishes and other marine species.

"Initially after the CDO service, there were unverified reports that few plant owners had extended their milling to accommodate their ready-to-mill mine ores," Babiera said. He said not all plant owners were served with the order because "no person was present in the plant during the service, no official representative of the owner to receive the CDO, [or] some plainly refused to receive the CDO."

"However, substitute service was done through official registered mailing of the CDO by the MGB [Mines and Geosciences Bureau]. Legally the CDOs were received by the concerned plant owners," he added.

Babiera said many other small operators "have grouped themselves into a cooperative and [are] having ongoing transfer of their respective mills to the area of the cooperative."

Dredging

THE DENR has formed compliance monitoring teams "to continuously conduct the compliance of the plant owners to the CDO. Cases may be filed by either MGB or EMB [Environmental Management Bureau] to those found to be defying the CDO."

"So far the report of the compliance monitor of CMTs show that only four out of the more than 300 individual plant owners served



Sarangani rolls out P 103-M watershed rehab project

THE provincial government of Sarangani recently rolled out a multi-million-peso rehabilitation project of the 7.9-hectare Saub watershed ecosystem in Maitum town.

Dubbed as Watershed Ecosystem Rehabilitation and Flood Risk Reduction for Increased Resilience, the project would cost P 103 million with counterpart fund sharing of P93,597,439.90 from the People's Survival Fund and the P9,325,125.10 from Sarangani.

The watershed covers nine barangays with a total of 1,747 households living along the 100-meter riparian zone which are placed at high risk exposure to flooding and other climate hazards.

According to governor Steve Chiongbian Solon, the memorandum of agreement (MOA) sets the terms and conditions for the release of the P93.5-million grant from the national government's flagship finance climate program (PSF).

The PSF was created by Republic Act No. 9729 or the Climate Change

Act of 2009, and aims to help vulnerable communities prepare for the adverse climatic events. It is a special fund in the National Treasury for the financing of adaptation programs and projects based on the National Strategic Framework on Climate Change with at least P1 billion annual supplementary allocations to relevant climate-related program funding of the local government units.

Partnering with the province in the undertaking are the municipality of Maitum, and the Mindanao State University (MSU), Mahintana Foundation, Inc. and the Conrado and Ladislawa Alcantara Foundation, Inc. (CLAFI), which will provide technical assistance in the research, formulation of Saub Watershed Management Plan, project monitoring and evaluation.

Since 2010, extreme flooding in Maitum has caused destruction to agricultural and structural properties, and loss of lives.

The Environmental Conservation



■ Saub river in Sarangani

and Protection Center (ECPC) of Sarangani noted that flooding is the most common hazard experienced in the area. Flood susceptibility is computed to be 10,001 hectares for high, 5,881.65 hectares for moderate and 2,604.26 hectares for low.

The project will develop Saub watershed ecosystem resiliency and

community protection through watershed governance, build the capacities of Maitum municipal government, development partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders to adapt to flood risks and impacts of climate change variability, alleviate poverty through agro-forestry development, and establish riverbank protection.



DENR team combs El Nido beach, unearths illegal pipe



TOURISTS watch from a wooden balcony of a hotel-cum-resort as a backhoe unearths an illegally installed PVC pipe discovered by DENR-MGB personnel using a ground penetrating radar. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO FROM DENR-MIMAROPA REGION OFFICE



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DENR team combs...

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

@jonlmayuga

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has started the search for illegally installed sewer lines and removed a PVC pipe used by an erring establishment in El Nido, Palawan, to discharge untreated wastewater out to the beach area.

DENR-Mimaropa Regional Executive Director Henry Adornado ordered the immediate removal of the sewage line which violates provisions of Presidential Decree 1067 or the Water Code of the Philippines. The law prohibits any structure within the easement zones without permission from the government.

"The law is clear, and so was our appeal to everybody to cooperate with us in rehabilitating El Nido. We will continue to implement measures to find out if there are others who are doing the same and continuously disregarding our call to follow the rule of law. We will hold them responsible," he said in a statement.

The DENR's Central and Mimaropa Regional offices of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) used ground penetrating radar (GPR) to detect any hidden pipes in El Nido beach resort as part of the ongoing effort to rehabilitate the top tourist destination in the Mimaropa region.

The pipe, measuring 6 inches in diameter and 6 meters in length, was uncovered in front of Outpost Beach Hostel in Barangay Corong-corong.

It was also found discharging black and foul-smelling liquid directly into Bacuit Bay, one of the province's ecotourism sites undergoing massive rehabilitation.

The regional Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) used a green tracer solution into Outpost Beach Hostel's last chamber to which the excavated pipe was connected, confirm-

ing the source of the polluted waters that flow out from the pipe.

The DENR is conducting further investigation to determine if there are other sources of wastewater discharge aside from the hotel.

Paul Sepulveda, one of the co-owners of Outpost Beach Hostel, admitted that they owned the pipe and volunteered to cut the line although he insisted they have a discharge permit, and the effluent samples taken from their sewage treatment facility passed the water quality guidelines of the DENR.

The establishment was earlier issued a Notice of Violation by the EMB for releasing wastewater exceeding the standards.

Last year, the DENR created Task Force El Nido to spearhead the restoration of the famous island paradise found beset by environmental problems, such as encroachment of easement zones and high coliform levels in Bacuit Bay.

The DENR and the local government unit of El Nido organized several stakeholder meetings to engage residents and business establishment owners in restoring the beauty and cleanliness of the place.

Under the directive of Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, the DENR Mimaropa region vowed to be more aggressive in enforcing the laws.

"We have to remind everyone that we are preparing Bacuit Bay as Water Quality Management Area so we shall be conducting regular water sampling and analysis not only to Outpost Beach Hostel but also to other establishments to ensure they do not discharge untreated wastewater into Bacuit Bay," EMB Regional Director Michael Drake Matias said for his part.

Besides regular effluent sampling, the DENR and the MGB have been conducting a GPR survey of the coastal areas of El Nido since March 18 to detect buried waste pipelines.



Gov't to review performance of water concessionaires

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**

The government is expected to review the performance of water concessionaires as part of an envisioned master plan to ensure better water resource management in the country.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles bared the forthcoming performance review after President Duterte approved in principle a draft executive order placing the supervision of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) under the Of- **▶ 10**

office of the President.

"That's one aspect that will be reviewed under the Office of the President. The concessionaire agreements, the compliance of our concessionaires with the plans will be part of our review," Nograles said in Filipino.

"We will review their performance vis-a-vis what is stated in the terms of the agreement," he added.

He noted that the President has recently ordered the review of all government contracts to remove any onerous provisions. The contracts under review include the deals with Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water, he added.

All departments have been tasked to take a review of all these contracts and submit them to the OP for further review," he added.

According to Nograles, the draft executive order seeking to address the country's water issues is now being finalized by the Office of the Executive Secretary and will soon be signed by the President.

The proposed executive order seeks

to reconstitute the National Water Resources Board into a policy and direction-setting body and integrate all government efforts related to water. The supervision of the NWRB will also be transferred to the President's office from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"That has to pass through vetting pero in principle, the President has already approved it during the last Cabinet meeting," Nograles said in relation to the proposed EO on water.

Under the proposed EO, Nograles said the reconstituted NWRB would be directed to craft a national water management master plan that would integrate all relevant and existing plans and roadmaps of the different agencies.

"But in order for us to create a master plan we have to get everybody, all the water sector bodies, offices, agencies and departments get together and coordinate with each other and the best way to do that is would be to put it under the Office of the President," he said.

"So pending Congress passing a

Department of Water, this is the fastest way that we can resolve all our water resource issues and concerns," he added.

He said an integrated water resource management would help address any water concerns not only in Metro Manila but in other parts of the country.

He noted that proper water management during the wet and dry seasons would also be included in the planned master plan.

"Two months from now, we will be experiencing torrential rains so baha naman yun [there will be floods] so there has to be a master plan on how we are supposed to manage all of these water from the river basins, all the way to the rainwater," he said.

So in case of a problem on water when it comes to consumption of water, our plans will be laid out and we have a framework for that," he added.

Nograles had earlier recognized the need for various government agencies to work together instead of playing the blame game following the recent water supply interruptions in Metro Manila. He noted that concerned Cabinet members and other water officials were "focused on finding solutions to the problem instead of dwelling on its roots."



Palace wants proposed Dep't of Water institutionalized

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

MALACAÑANG wants Congress to institutionalize the creation of a Department of Water to ensure a stable supply of water nationwide, Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said yesterday.

Nograles said the enactment of a law establishing a Department of Water will prevent future administrations from overriding positive actions that the Duterte government would undertake to address the water issue.

Nograles added the proposed

department, which has been approved in principle by President Duterte, should also be included in the agenda of the Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) and in the common legislative agenda of Malacañang and Congress.

"I think it should be [included in the LEDAC] because of the fragmented approach that we have. The EO that we are drafting can be superseded and amended by the next administration. The problem is if we did something good, and the next administration will come

in they will just over rule or cancel the EO, then we'll go back to our old ways which is not acceptable," he said.

While waiting for the establishment of the new government agency, Nograles said policy-makers have already started drafting an executive order that will integrate efforts to ensure water security in the country and merge the National Water Resources Board and the River Basin Control Office under one agency to be called the National Water Management Council (NWMC), which would oversee

the policy, direction-setting, and the integration of all government efforts in relation to water.

Malacañang is likewise working on a national water management master plan to consolidate all plans and measures involving water.

Nograles said Malacañang is confident its allies in Congress will support the creation of the new Department of Water, which was first suggested by Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia at the height of the water supply crisis that affected parts of Metro Manila and Rizal.



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Modern indigenous proven solutions, sagot sa paglilinis ng Laguna Lake at Pasig River

ISINUSULONG ng Green Charcoal Philippines, Inc. (GCPI) ang programang pupukaw sa interes ng publiko na target tumulong ipaunawa sa mga awtoridad ang kahalagahan ng kapaligiran sa pamamagitan ng thematic program sa mga peste, mga basura, at iba pang environment problems, kasabay nito, umaasa ang kompanyang aani ito ng suporta mula sa publiko, ayon kay Gonzalo Catan, Jr.

Ang programang pinamagatang "Modern Indigenous Proven Solutions" ay nakasaad sa position paper na iniharap sa DENR noong administrayong Arroyo.

Ito ay tungkol sa pag-recycle ng water lilies mula sa Laguna Lake at putik mula sa Pasig River

na maaaring maging modelo sa pagpapahay at paglilinis ng mga lawa sa pamamagitan ng organic vermin composting gamit ang green charcoal technology na naaayon sa Article 1, Section 2 ng Republic Act 9003 at Solid Waste Management Law.

Ayon sa source, ang programa ay nabuo kasunod ng mga resulta ng pagsasaliksik hinggil sa mabilis na pagdami ng water lilies sa Laguna Lake at putik sa Pasig River.

Ayon sa pagsasaliksik, ang water lilies ay maaaring gawing vermicast (organic fertilizer) sa pamamagitan ng patented Green Charcoal technology ng kompanya.

Ang Green Charcoal technology, paliwanag niya, ay ikino-convert ang bio waste patungo sa green charcoal sa porma ng pellets, fire log at briquette.

Ito ay activated carbon na pinoprodukto mula sa coconut shell, coal, banana peelings at iba pang forest wastes na hindi nakasasama sa kapaligiran.

Ang activated carbon ay amorphous carbon na isinasailalim sa thermal treatment kasama ang oxidizing gases at vapors o pinaghalong steam upang maitaas ang absorptive properties.



DENR, SINIMULAN ANG 2019 NATIONAL SEARCH FOR ECO-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

KASALUKUYAN nang tumatanggap ng aplikasyon ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa paghahanap ng mga piling paaralan para sa "6th National Search for Sustainable and Eco-friendly Schools" sa buong bansa.

Ang patimpalak na ito ay inorganisa ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) ng DENR, katuwang ang Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Nestle Philippines at Landbank of the Philippines, na may layuning hikayatin ang mga paaralan at ibang academic institutions na maging aktibo sa mga usaping-pangkapoligiran sa local level.

Bukod sa pagtutok sa mga solusyon sa problema ng climate change at iba pang environmental issues, layunin din ng kompetisyon na ito na imulat ang kamalayan ng mga mag-aaral, guro at school administrators sa isyung pangkailangan.

Hinati sa tatlong kategorya ang kompetisyon, ito ay ang elementary, high school at college category. Bukas din ito sa lahat ng pam-

publiko at pampridadong paaralan. Magsisilbi namang hurado ang mga kilalang personalidad sa larangan ng environmental education na magmumula sa gobyerno at pribadong sektor para sa regional at national levels. Ang mapipili sa bawat rehiyon ay ipadadala sa EMB Central Office para sa "national judging".

Ang mananalong paaralan para sa national level ay magkakamit ng halagang PhP50,000-1st Prize; PhP40,000-2nd Prize at PhP30,000-3rd Prize, kasama pa nito ang plake ng pagkilala. Para naman sa regional winners, mabibigyan ng certificate of recognition at halagang PhP15,000 ang mapipiling kalahok sa bawat kategorya.

Bukod sa mapipiling pinalo, magbibigay rin ng tatlong Special Category Leadership Awards kabilang na rito ang The Nestle Water Leadership Award para sa water management at conservation; The Energy Leadership Award na kilalala sa energy efficiency and conservation para sa aktibidades sa kanilang paaralan at ang Landbank Green Leadership Award



ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

na ipagkakaloob sa tatlong National First Prize Winners sa bawat kategorya.

Makataatanggap ng PhP20,000 ang mga mapipiling Nestle Water Leadership Award at Energy Leadership Award para sa national level ng college, high school at elementary school categories habang PhP10,000 at certificate of recognition ang ibibigay sa regional winners sa bawat kategorya. Mabibigyan naman ng PhP25,000 ang Landbank Green Leadership Award para sa national level.

Sa darating na Abril 26, 2019 ang huling araw sa pagsusumite ng "entries". Para sa public elementary at high school categories, isusumite ng mga lalahok ang tatlong kopya ng kanilang "entry" sa DepEd Division Office. Kailangan namang dalhin sa pinakamalapit na EMB Regional Office ang mga magsusumite ng kanilang "entry" sa private elementary, high school at college categories.

Ang mga isusumiteng "entries" ay kinakailangan itagay sa isang pahina kung

saan nakasaad ang deskripsiyon ng "environmental program" at proyekto ng kanilang paaralan na may kalakip na dalawang larawan na may nakalagay sa "caption" at iba pang impormasyon, kinakailangan ding i-upload ang ilalahok na "entry" sa Eco-friendly School Facebook Page o kaya naman ay ipadala sa pamamagitan ng email sa ecofriendlyschools@gmail.com.

Ipakikita ang lahat ng nanalong kalahok sa bawat kategorya at iba pang napiling entries sa national awarding ceremonies na gaganapin sa Nobyembre 2019 kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng National Environmental Awareness Month.

Para sa karagdagang impormasyon, maaaring tumawag sa National Program Secretariat ng Environmental Education and Information Division ng EMB-DENR na may tanggapan sa 2nd Floor HRD Building, DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Telefax Numbers: (02) 928-4674 at 376-5610, email address: ecofriendly-schools@gmail.com.



₱250-million endangered species seized in Davao Oriental

By **ARMANDO FENEQUITO JR.**

DAVAO CITY – Operatives of National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Region 11, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 11, Mati City Police Station and the 28th Infantry Battalion seized a total of ₱250 million of different exotic animals on Monday afternoon.

Authorities also arrested the alleged caretakers Jomar L. Toledo, 34 and Rompas M. Lumakore 25, in a buy-bust operation held at around 4 p.m. last Monday, April 8, in Barangay Dahican in Mati, Davao Oriental.

DENR Davao said most of the animals were Indonesian birds believed to be from Papua New Guinea.

"Accordingly, the apprehended wildlife species were already at the area for about a week and that the caretakers were being paid to feed them," DENR Davao said.

It stated that around 345 species of birds and reptiles were identified and counted by the team from Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), the DENR Regional Office and DENR Provincial Offices in Mati.

"Some of the identified species were Black Palm Cockatoos, wallabies and Echidna," the report said.

The agency's report stated all the seized species were temporarily given to the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Mati City

DENR-BMB's Dr. Rogelio Demelletes already tagged the smuggled species and will be identified according to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) category, as this will be the basis for the charges and penalties that will be imposed against the perpetrators.

CITES is an international agreement between governments and aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival to regulate the trade of wildlife animals and plants across borders and safeguard certain species from over-exploitation.



Vote for health, environment

THE LAST MOHICAN



By MARIO FETALINO JR.

A COALITION of environmental advocacy organizations recently launched its "Green Scorecard" for the 2019 elections. It aims to raise awareness of the voting public on the proposed environmental policies of senatorial candidates.

I agree that knowing where candidates stand in key environmental issues will not only enable us to choose the legislators that we need but to also hold them accountable, once elected, to promises they are going to make during this period.

Among the issues touched upon by the scorecard are: biodiversity preservation and ecosystem integrity; natural resource and land use management and governance; sustainable agriculture; waste management; climate justice; energy transformation and democracy; mining, ex-

tractives, and mineral resource management; upholding human rights and integrity of creation; and people-centered sustainable development.

Interestingly, the coalition also rated President Rodrigo Duterte based on statements he made as presidential aspirant in contrast to decisions he made as elected Chief Executive. It should serve as guide for Duterte for direction in the last remaining years of his term.

The group found it worth noting that mechanisms provided by the 15 year-old Renewable Energy Law were only implement-

ed under Duterte's administration, and so is the tax on imported coal.

But they cannot overlook how the approval of coal plant projects and coal operating contracts have been made easier at the expense of the public and communities with the issuance of Executive Order 30 last June 2017.

As a result, they said the Philippines has been derailed in achieving the global initiative to address climate change. It also jeopardized the price of electricity in the country and its capacity to achieve clean, affordable electricity, as coal

assets are expected to become stranded.

In terms of waste management, they pointed out that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources rolled out important administrative orders on effective control of chemicals that have negative effects on health and environment.

The battle against waste, both domestically produced and those coming from overseas, has yet to be won and while our nation's waste production continues to swell, foreign garbage dumping persists as well, they said.

Waste-to-energy inciner-

ation is also disturbingly being touted as the way out of this garbage overload aggravated by the relentless production, consumption and disposal of single-use plastic packaging, and by foreign waste importation.

Meanwhile, the group also took note of positive developments in the protection of marine and coastal resources such as the Boracay and Manila Bay clean-up. However, they were concerned on reclamation projects, as small to medium reclamations are still rampant and ongoing around the country, with

many local government units still planning for reclamation.

They were uneasy about the Philippine Reclamation Authority being transferred to the Office of the President, as they fear that the move is a way to fast-track all the interest of big businesses behind the reclamation projects, which will definitely endanger mangroves and biodiversity. In fairness to Duterte, I don't think he will commit such mistakes, especially if he wants to leave a lasting legacy to the Filipino people.

For comments, please call or text 09055080126 or email lastmohican2004@yahoo.com



HOW TO LEAD A NO-PLASTIC LIFESTYLE?

LET US COUNT THE WAYS

To help the environment by cutting down on noncompostable plastics, many people have begun saying no to plastic straws and are bringing reusable bags to the grocery store instead of accepting new plastic ones.

But many more small steps like those can be taken.

"There are so many simple changes you can make at home," says Melissa Ozawa, features and gardening editor at Martha Stewart Living magazine. "You can use a wooden comb, a bamboo toothbrush, silk dental floss and metal refillable safety razors."

And that's just a start.

"A good way to begin is with a waste audit, taking notes on what you throw away, whether it's a dryer sheet or an old toothbrush. You'd be surprised by how much trash you're generating and it'll give you clues about

what you can do differently," says Anna Maltby, deputy editor of Real Simple.

A handful of easy, no-plastic hacks for a greener home:

Lids, not cling wrap

"When I did a waste audit, I realized we were using a lot of plastic wrap. So I switched to using containers we already had and invested in a set of silicon lids that fit onto bowls in an array of sizes," says Maltby.

Other substitutes for cling wrap include cloth coverings, like Bee's Wrap and Abeego, that seal tight. Paper sandwich bags and reusable zip-shut silicon baggies are also popular choices to replace traditional single-use plastic baggies.

Plenty of things like laundry detergent can be found in refillable containers, and beans and

nuts can be found in bulk, so you can sidestep plastic or clamshell containers, Ozawa says. Carry purchases home in glass jars, paper bags or other containers you already have.

Farmer's markets are another great source of package-free foods, she adds.

Dry cleaning fixes

Many dry cleaners now offer reusable bags for garments, including folded shirts. Just as the milkman used to bring milk in returnable bottles, dry cleaning can be delivered and dropped off in reusable bags.

"The industry has made great strides," says Jennie Nigrosh, founder and CEO of The Green Garmento, which sells reusable dry-cleaning garment bags, shirt box bags and other sustainable products.

"My husband and I started the company after we started freaking out because we couldn't find anything in our closet. It was so full of plastic-wrapped clothes. We were drowning in plastic," she says.

The idea seems to be catching on. And like a growing number of companies, The Green Garmento has a take-back program to recycle or upcycle the worn-out bags.

Reuse reusables ... a lot

"It's important to remember that some reusable items may be harder on the environment than the plastics you're trying to avoid, unless you use them a lot," points out Maltby, of Real Simple. "Switching to reusables is a good goal, but you have to be willing to commit long-term to ensure that shift is doing more good than harm."

For example, it could take as many as 1,000 uses of a travel mug to make it a total win for the environment, she says, citing an estimate by the International Reference Center for the Life Cycle of Products, Processes and Services, in Quebec.

Shop mindfully

"The message really is that when you buy a reusable product, use the heck out of it and don't keep buying new ones," says Maltby.

"Using reusable products you already own or that are handed down, that's a real win for the ecology," says Maltby. "You don't need to buy a new set of Mason jars because chances are your sister or a thrift shop may have perfectly good Mason jars you can use."

"Think carefully about what

you're buying. At the grocery store or mall, people are often on autopilot. Just make avoiding plastic a part of your mindset," Ozawa says.

"As a consumer, you have a lot of power and you can use it to reward the companies that are doing a good job with their packaging."

Above and beyond small changes on the home front, "political action is the most important thing you can do for the environment. Contact your representative and ask them to make changes," Ozawa says.

Urge friends and family to join you in your efforts, post something on social media and write companies to request that they make environmentally friendly changes, says Ozawa.

"Make your voice heard," she says. —AP



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World's tallest bamboo statue

At 50.23 meters or 164 feet, the Saint Vincent Ferrer statue in Bayambang, Pangasinan has been declared by the Guinness Book of World Records as the tallest Bamboo Statue in the World.

Standing tall at the San Vicente Ferrer Prayer Park, more than 600 people worked to build the world's tallest bamboo statue for more than ten months.

Swapnil Dangarikar, Guinness World Records adjudicator, made the formal announcement as part of the town's recent celebration of the 400th founding anniversary of the Saint Vincent Ferrer Parish (1619-2019) and the 600th death anniversary (1419-2019) of the patron saint of builders. The Spanish saint is also known as the greatest Dominican preacher.

The imposing statue, made of engineered bamboo with steel frame, is the town's second Guinness record. The first was for the longest barbecue (8 kilometers), which the town made during its 400th founding anniversary in 2014.

Diocese of Bayombong Bishop Elmer Mangalino, in his homily during the mass, urged the faithful to follow the example of San Vicente Ferrer. **(Leslie Aquino)**