

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 12 JUN 2016

DAY : Sunday

DENR

IN THE NEWS



DATE

7

PAGE

UPPER HALF

✓
LOWER HALF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Outgoing DENR chief to UN body

By CORY MARTINEZ

OUTGOING Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ramon Paje will continue his advocacy about environment protection as he will be representing the country as one of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly for the next two years.

This was disclosed yesterday by Paje, saying that once he stepped down as DENR secretary, he will start working as one of the members of said assembly.

He said that last May 23, the UN Environment Assembly president elected him to be the representative not only of the Philippines but the Asia Pacific.

According to Paje, the assembly, which is a new UN body created by the UN General Assembly in 2013, is called the Parliament to the Environment of the World, the highest environment body in the globe now.

"We are very fortunate that the Philippines was selected vice president representing the Asia Pacific. I would like to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) for campaigning for almost a year to get this representation," Paje added.

He disclosed that he will be based in Nairobi, Africa, for two years wherein he will be representing the country

for the second session of the assembly.

Among the responsibilities of a member of the assembly, Paje said, include the discussions and issuance of resolutions on what every country would do for the environment.

"When I was in Nairobi last May 23, when we were elected, we passed 25 resolutions for the countries of the world to follow, to comply. Among these resolutions were about protection of biodiversity, legal wildlife trade, ozone-depleting substances and among other environment concerns," Paje added.

Meanwhile, Paje assured the incoming administration that they are ready for their entry to support them.

"We will always give leeway to the next administration. We make sure that they will be able to continue our program up to December. Sana yung mga programa namin nasimulan na magaganda, katulad ng National Greening Program (NGP), ay ipagpapatuloy nila," Paje added.

Paje, however, said that he has no idea yet who will be the next environment secretary but the incoming administration has already appointed a DENR regional director in Davao, Mark Pragada, to be the senior undersecretary to the chief of staff who is now consulting with environment officials for the smooth transition to the next administration.

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1908

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THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

✓
UPPER HALF

11
PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Rescued Philippine Eagle now under DENR's care

By **MART SUPNAD**
and **FRANCO G. REGALA**

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has placed under its custody a critically endangered Philippine Eagle that was rescued in San Luis, Aurora recently.

“The juvenile raptor was found by an upland farmer last June 1 in a trap locally known as silo which is a type of snare used to catch monkeys,” DENR - Aurora Provincial Director Joey Blanco said.

The Philippine Eagle was found in the forests of Aurora Memorial National Park, which is known for its rich biodiversity.

“One of the eagle’s claws was trapped in the silo but the wildlife sustained no serious

injuries,” Blanco added.

According to biodiversity experts, the Philippine Eagle is endemic to the country and is known to live in areas of Eastern Luzon, Samar, Leyte, and parts of Mindanao.

DENR Regional Director Francisco Milla Jr. said the rescue of the Philippine Eagle is very timely since June is Philippine Environment Month.

Anchored on the theme “Go Wild for Life, Combat Biodiversity Loss,” this year’s celebration underscores zero tolerance of illegal wildlife trade and the importance of protecting and conserving biodiversity.

“We must conserve and protect our wildlife, especially the Philippine Eagle, which is our very own pride. Their population is now dwindling and they are placed at the critically endangered status meaning their kind is nearing extinction,” Milla stressed.

THE REPORT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1988

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

12 JUN 2010
DATE

17
PAGE

UPPER HALF

✓

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DENR 8 distributes 6,000 residential patents

By **RESTITUTO A. CAYUBIT**

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Eastern Visayas (DENR-8) has distributed over 6,000 residential patents in Eastern Visayas last year, according to a report issued by the agency.

DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca told reporters in an interview that his office had processed the distribution of a total of 6,903 residential patents to residential lot owners in the region.

He informed reporters that these total number of residential patents cover a total area of 274 hectares.

Sibbaluca said, meanwhile, that in terms of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), a total of 6,203 agricultural patents were processed and issued covering an area of 4,085.2189 hectares. "Both targets on residential and agricultural have both been a hundred percent accomplished," he said.

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

12 JUN 2016

DATE

3

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Quakes jolt Mt. Bulusan; signs of restiveness persist

Mount Bulusan in Sorsogon was rocked by at least five volcanic earthquakes, including an explosion-type one, in the past 24-hour observation period, indicating that the volcano has continued to show signs of restiveness, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said Saturday.

The volcano has also been exhibiting a slight inflation of its edifice since May this year, indicating that a steam-driven pressure could be building up beneath the volcano's vent, Ed Laguerta Phivolcs resident volcanologist said.

Laguerta explained that when hydrothermal processes continue to develop beneath the volcano, it may lead to steam-driven eruptions.

Aside from volcanic quakes and the bulging of the edifice, Phivolcs instruments recorded during the past 24-hour monitoring period that the volcano expelled weak-to-moderate white steam plumes that rose up to 150 meters and drifted towards north-northwest portion of the volcano.

Mt. Bulusan on Friday spewed

a two-kilometer high grayish ash plum that drifted northwest and fell on the villages of Anog, Juban and Mabini in Casiguran.

Traces of volcanic ash were observed in barangays Casay, Poblacion, Escuela, Inlagadian, San Antonio and San Juan all in Casiguran town and barangays Aroroy, Juban proper, Puting Sapa and Rangas in Juban town.

In a previous interview, Laguerta said that as a standard practice, the collected volcanic ashes would be tested on whether its texture contains magma fragments.

"If the test finds that it contains 'juvenile magma fragments,' this would mean that magma is building up and this may be a precursor to a much stronger eruption," he said.

Alert Level 1 remains in effect and the Phivolcs has warned the villagers not to venture in the 4-km Permanent Danger Zone due to sudden phreatic explosions.

Civil aviation authorities were likewise told to advise pilots to avoid flying close to the volcano's summit as ash from any sudden phreatic eruption can be hazardous to aircraft. **PNA**



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

12 JUN 2016

DATE

3

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

**DENR chief, 4 pang
opisyal; inireklamo**

Nasa balag ng alangin ngayon si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ramon Paje at apat pang opisyal ng ahensya dahil sa hindi mapahintong pagmimina sa Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

Paliwanag ni Larry Pascua, coordinator ng Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ), samahang binubuo ng aabot sa 102 alyansa ng mga lokal na organisasyon na nagsusulong na malutas ang climate crisis sa bansa, kabilang sa mga sinampahan ng reklamo sina Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Leo Jasareno, MGB regional director sa Eastern Visayas Nonita Caguioa, DENR regional director Leonardo Siballuca, at Marlon Ortiguesa, protected area supervisor ng Guiuan Marine Reserve Protected Landscape and Seascape.

Rommel Tabbad

12 JUN 2016

BusinessMirror

DATE

B 2-1

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

P-1

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

WORLD OCEANS DAY

Heroes of Tañon Strait recognized

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA [@jonlmayuga](#)

NORLAN PAGAL sat on his wheelchair, his knees touching each other and his legs were motionless. Mild mannered and quiet most of the time, he, however, spoke with a strong voice and with conviction when asked on his passion for protecting the environment: "I will not stop, God forbid, until I am dead."

Pagal, 46, of San Remigio, Cebu, is the leader of their small fishing community in the northern part of the Tañon Strait.

A staunch believer on the rule of law in fisheries management, Pagal was shot by still-unidentified gunmen on October 24, 2015. The gunmen fled and left him for dead, as he was lying in a pool of his own blood.

Pagal, who suffered near-fatal injury, survived the attack, although the bullet pierced his spinal column.

The incident depicts the grave danger faced by fishermen like Pagal, who swore to protect the ocean against unscrupulous individuals who use destructive fishing methods, like dynamite.

A few months later, barely recovering from his injury, Pagal was back watching over the Tañon Strait, which basically represents the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape (TSPS).

Using a telescope and communication radio, he communicates with his fellow Bantay Dagat volunteers during a routine patrol to prevent destructive-fishing activities. "Last week I was back with my fellow Bantay Dagat [volunteers], watching over the strait. I have a telescope, and I feed my colleagues information of what I see from the shore," Pagal told the BUSINESSMIRROR in Filipino.

Heroes award

PAGAL and 10 others from Cebu and Negros provinces were given recognition for their consistent work in protecting one of the country's major fishing grounds—a recognition fit for heroes who have shown courage, sacrifice and dedication to protect the environment. Three winners were chosen from each province along the Tañon Strait—from Cebu, Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental, and one from the women's sector. The winners were screened from a short list of 11 candidates vying for the first-ever Ocean Heroes Award.

Pagal was the winner for Cebu, while Oliver Dayupay, a fisherman in Ayungon town who recently passed away due to natural cause, was the recipient of the award from Negros Oriental.

For Negros Occidental, the awardee was Roberto Quigay, a leader of small fishermen in San Carlos City. For the women's sector, Vida Raunillo, also a leader in a small-fishing community, won the award.

Dayupay's widow, Genita, who received the award for her late husband, said she was surprised by her husband's death but vowed to continue his advocacy for ocean conservation.

"I was asked by our mayor to continue what my husband was doing to help our community. I've been a member of a group that protects our MPA [marine-protected area] and

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-2

Heroes of Tañon Strait recognized

500k ha



The area covered by
the Tañon Strait

will continue with what my husband was doing to help in my own little way," Genita said in Cebuano language.

Genita is a member of Iniban Fisheries Association, which protects and manages the Iniban Marine Sanctuary, which was nominated twice in the search for the Top 10 Most Outstanding MPAs in the Philippines. Out of the 1,800 MPAs in the Philippines, their group was chosen twice—in 2007 and 2015—as the Top 6 in the country.

A fisherman by trade and a carpenter on the side, Dayupay was a certified scuba diver. He used his skill to help monitor the municipal-protected area in Iniban, as well as in seven other marine sanctuaries in his hometown.

Meanwhile, Quigay has been active in the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (FARMC) in San Carlos. As chairman of FARMC, he gave inputs and advocated for the passage of municipal ordinances and resolutions on fisheries to help improve the lives of his fellow fishermen. One of such ordinances was for the establishment of two MPAs in Barangay San Juan and Ermita on Sipaway Island.

Quigay was instrumental in sourcing funds for various projects that benefited the community. They received funding from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), through the bottom-up budgeting program, and got a project

jointly implemented by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) that provides fishing nets and boats and marine engines for their livelihood. People living in eight coastal barangays in San Carlos benefited from his initiative.

Raunillo is a prominent leader in Sitio Kinayan in Barangay Bulado, one of the 10 coastal barangays of Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental. She has been with the Bantay Dagat for more than three years and is currently its chairman. The river guards conduct monitoring patrols in her barangay and in 10 coastal barangays in her town.

Through the Kifa-Kinayan, an organization of wives of fishermen of Guihulngan, Raunillo is also active in various projects. She initiated activities, such as mangrove planting and seaweed farming, fishnet making, cassava and pandan planting, aquasilviculture, and swine and goat dispersal.

Dubbed Ocean Heroes Award, the recognition seeks to honor heroes in the Tañon Strait, aptly held as part of the celebration of World Oceans Day in Cebu City on June 8.

The Ocean Heroes Awards was jointly organized by Oceana Philippines, an international non-governmental organization dedicated to ocean conservation, the BFAR and the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"I have been a fisherman all my life. As far as I can remember, I was only 9 when I started fishing," Pagal said.

In the last 13 years Pagal was among the staunch advocates of environmental and fishery laws in their town. Because of that, he said he felt he was "targeted" by those involved in illegal activities.

"Some of them are from our town, but mostly from other areas," he said.

Pagal said fishermen, like him, are supposed to help protect the ocean not just for their survival, but for the future generation.

"If we don't protect the ocean, what will happen to us? What will we tell our children if they ask us one day 'What fish is that' 'Where can I find it?'" he said.

As part of his advocacy, ever since the establishment of the municipal-protected area in their barangay, Pagal has been very active in monitoring and reporting illegal fishing in Barangay Anapong, his village.

He used to be the Seaborn Patrol chief in the town and, from time to time, volunteers to join other Bantay Dagat volunteers in patrolling the Tañon Strait.

A member of the barangay council, Pagal is lobbying for barangay laws that will promote marine conservation at the barangay level.

After he was shot and seriously injured, the local chief executive of their town, Mariano M. Martinez, continued to support Pagal, who is still undergoing therapy.

"We launched this award in May last year. This year's award will be the first. There will be a token for all 11 finalists and a token cash for the four winners," said Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president of Oceana Philippines. The four winners received P25,000 each and another P25,000 for the winners' advocacy or projects.

BusinessMirror

DATE

132-1

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-3

Heroes of Tañon Strait recognized

Largest protected area

OCEANA Philippines is pushing for the implementation of a general management plan for the TSPS in order to promote sustainable management of the protected area.

A protected area by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 1234, signed by then-President Fidel V. Ramos on May 27, 1998, under the category of protected seascape, the TSPS is placed under the administrative jurisdiction of the DENR, through Republic Act 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992.

It is the largest protected area classified as a protected seascape in the country. It covers an area of 521,000 hectares and is shared by 42 towns and cities in the provinces of Cebu and Negros Occidental and Oriental.

"This event [awarding ceremonies] will encourage other partners to help protect Tañon Strait. It will also send a message to the public that the DENR, as well as its partners, means business particularly in the campaign against illegal fishing, illegal destruction of mangroves and other

destructive activities that threaten Tañon Strait," Isabelo Montejo, the DENR regional director for Central Visayas, told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an interview on the sidelines of the event. Montejo said the DENR is looking at strengthening the capacity of DENR partners, particularly the local government units, "for them to internalize the importance of Tañon Strait."

"Once they have the heart to protect Tañon Strait, commitment will follow," he said.

Montejo added that the DENR has been coordinating with various stakeholders in the Tañon Strait to prevent illegal-fishing activities, including big commercial fishing vessels from encroaching in the Tañon Strait.

BFAR Assistant Director for Administrative Services Benjamin F.S. Tabios Jr., who was one of the judges of the award, underscored in his speech the need for timely intervention in the Tañon Strait.

He said: "The event strengthens the relationship of government and civil society, such as Oceana, who are working together for the common good and well-being of the Filipinos."

Large fishing ground

BMB Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim said the Tañon Strait is known as one of the largest fishing grounds in the country.

The strait does not only boast of its productive capability for food sustenance. Covering more than 500,000 hectares, Lim said it is five times larger than the Tubataha Reefs Natural Park. It is also home to more than 70 species of fish, 20 species of crustaceans and 14 species of dolphins.

"That is why its importance is undeniable," she said. The Tañon Strait, she added, is economically

important to people living in the two regions, three municipalities and 42 coastal cities and towns, and 298 fishing villages. "More than 40,000 fishermen depend on the protected area," she said.

Currently, fishermen in the area are catching an average of only 2 kilograms of fish a day.

"With the increasing impacts of human stressors multiplied by the effects of climate change, destruction of the strait may be inevitable. That is what others may think. But for the awardees tonight, hope has never been lost. Day after day, they serve their purpose of consistently working for the protection of Tañon Strait. They fight against those who dared destroy and conduct illegal-fishing activities within the area which damages the habitats, as well as the marine organisms; and they act as a light to inspire individuals, groups and organizations toward sustainable management," she said.

According to Lim, the award also recognizes good-governance practices in the Tañon Strait that help support the cause of marine protection and conservation.

With the award, Lim is confident that the continued partnership with various stakeholders, initiatives will someday translate into sustainable development within the region.

"In order to achieve unity, surrounding provinces, municipalities and cities should harmonize their interventions, avoiding overlaps that may hinder the progress of our efforts," she said.

Oceana Philippines is encouraging a broader participation in the search for heroes of the Tañon Strait, as it pushes for the protection of the country's important fishing ground and protected seascape in the ensuing years.

12 JUN 2016

DATE

B-1

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-4

Heroes of Tañon Strait recognized

AWARDS and RECOGNITION NIGHT



THE 2016 Ocean Heroes Awards recipients pose with awards organizers and judges for a souvenir photo. The awardees are Norlan Pagal (in wheelchair) from San Remegio, Cebu; Eden Dayupay (standing, fifth from left), representing her late husband Oliver Dayupay, a fisherman in Ayungon; Vida Raunillo (sixth from left), a fisherfolk leader from Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental; and Quigay (right), a fisherfolk leader from San Carlos City, Negros Occidental. They are joined by (from left) Oceana Philippines Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos; Director Theresa Mundita S. I Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Dr. Maria Cecilia Gastrardo-Conaco, head of the Social and Political Psychology Research Laboratory of the University of the Philippines Diliman; and Assistant Director for Administrative Services Benjamin F.S. Tabios Jr. of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. National Scientist Dr. Angel (seventh from left), a marine biologist, was special guest. PHOTO FROM OCEANA PHILIPPINES



12 JUN 2016

DATE

UPPER HALF

PAGE

LOWER HALF

P-1
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME:

Shore It Up's Coral Restoration Field Laboratory

With its tropical climate, warm waters, white sandy beaches and a wealth of diverse, colorful corals, fishes and amazing critters, not to mention almost 59,000 km of coastlines, the Philippines is considered as one of the best diving destinations in the world. Recent scientific studies showed that the archipelago is the "Center of Global Marine Biodiversity", a cradle of diversity for the world's coral reefs, with more species of both corals and fishes found here than any other place in the world.

THE REALITIES

Sadly, the Philippine coral reef is not spared from the effects of climate change, destructive fishing techniques and other negative impacts of various human activities. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) reported that the Inventory of the Coral Resources of the Philippines (ICRP) found less than five percent of reefs to be in excellent condition with over 75 percent hard and soft coral cover.

Government agencies managing coral reefs in the Philippines are generally understaffed and insufficiently funded for effective management and monitoring of coral reefs. Many laws and regulations concerning coral reefs already exist including bans on destructive fishing practices but for the most part, these laws are not adequately enforced.

THERE IS STILL HOPE

Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC), one of the country's leading infrastructure holding company, through its award-winning corporate social responsibility project called Shore It Up, has been looking for ways to help mitigate coral degradation, restore the country's coral reefs and help sustain our marine ecosystem. Research and consultation with marine biologists started in 2012 to ensure that its approach will be effective and sustainable.

After the successful launch of the second Mangrove Propagation and Information Center in Alaminos, Pangasinan, MPIC partnered with Eco-MER, an organization founded to promote the marine environment and ensure its sustainability through environmental education, scientific activities, restoration measures and sound use of its products.

As a frequent hub for divers and tourists, MPIC has chosen Mabini, Batangas for its Coral Restoration Field Laboratory.

12 JUN 2016

DATE

UPPER HALF

17

PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-2

Build it and they will come: - - - - -

The Divers Institute of Technology fully supported the project by donating 25 units of Eco-MER artificial reef. Metro Pacific Tollways, a member of the MVP group, supported by transporting the artificial reef units from Angeles, Pampanga to Mabini, Batangas. The Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba Diving (PCSSD), through its executive director Karen Chan, supported the coral restoration project. Accreditation and certification of volunteer divers will be issued by the commission and shall endorse the project to other sites.

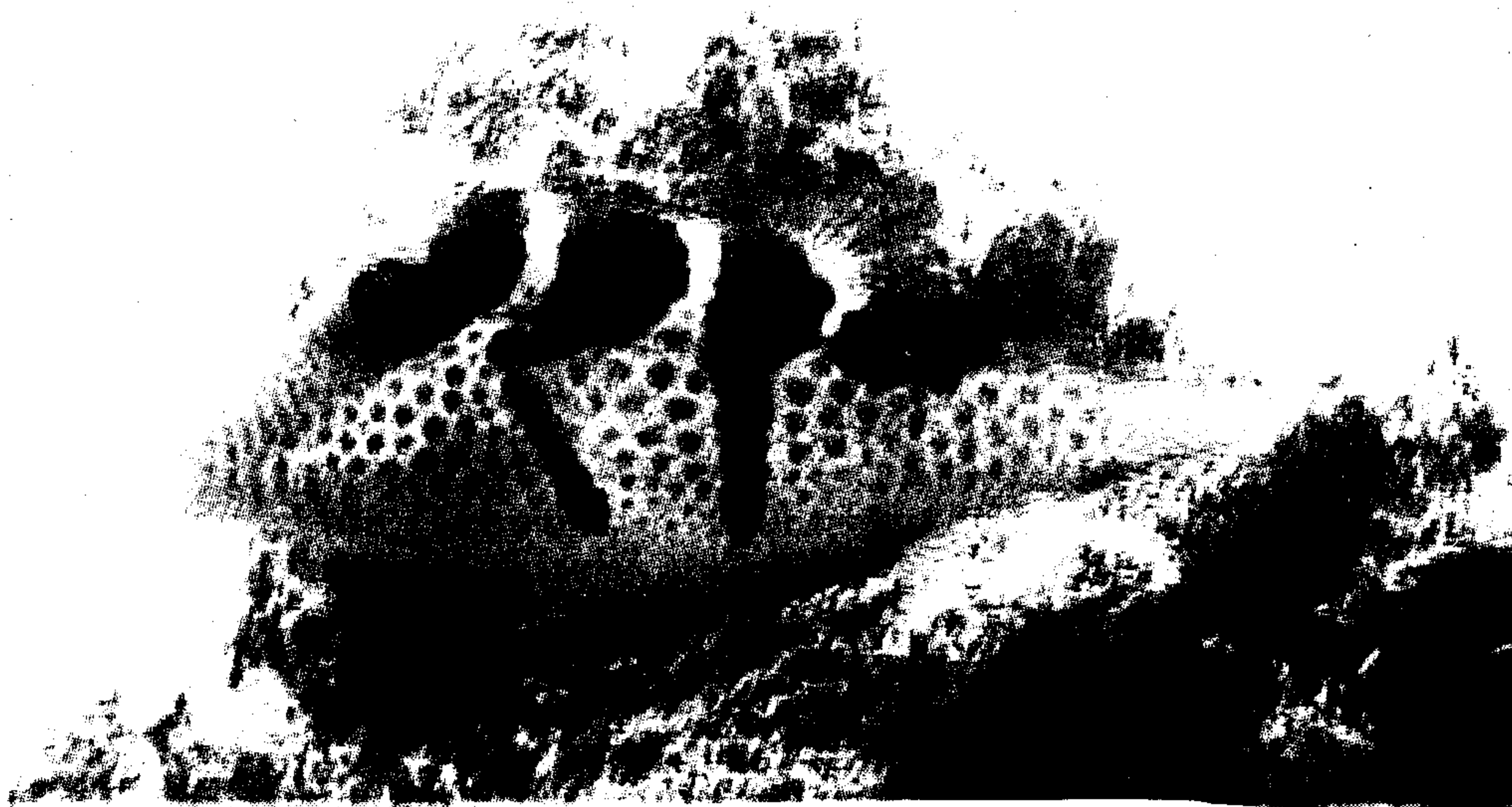
TOGETHER WE CAN

A group of volunteers composed of Shore It Up divers, local dive professionals, resort/dive operators

and Bantay Dagat volunteers were certified under the National Association of Underwater Instructors Specialty Course designed for divers who will be working on the first-ever Philippine Underwater Laboratory as technicians. The artificial coral reefs installed in the underwater laboratory will undergo monitoring and scientific activities at the coral restoration field laboratory which aims to enrich the marine ecosystem of Anilao, Batangas.

In one of the lectures, Prof. Avigdor Abelson explained that coral restoration is one way of responding to the effects of climate change.

"My major goal is to halt the worrying degradation of marine ecosystems and





12 JUN 2016

DATE

17

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-3

Build it they will come

their essential services to humans. Likewise, I am working on solutions for sustainable exploitation of the sea as a source of food and as an alternative livelihood basis for fishermen and other ocean stakeholders," he said.

Meanwhile, Shore It Up Underwater Consultant William McGilton said, "Eco-MER artificial reef units are all made of marine concrete which tremendously advance their ecological features."

"Because of our unique ingredient, it has better larval attachment, higher survival rates of coral recruits and wider niche range for higher species diversity, beyond any other commercial artificial reefs," he added.

The local government unit of Mabini, Batangas, who have been supporting Shore It Up since 2013, expressed its gratitude to MPIC during the training graduation of the underwater lab's volunteer divers. Mabini tourism officer and the official representative of the LGU for the project Pasenciana 'Nini' Casapao expressed that they are committed to support and protect the project to achieve its goals.

Speaking on behalf of MPIC, vice-president for PR & corporate communications and executive director of the MPIC Foundation Melody Del Rosario said, "Since we started our Shore It Up activities eight years ago, our goal was to improve the condition of our ocean by intensifying the awareness of people on the deteriorating state of our seas. Starting simply with cleanup activities, we have developed programs that address livelihood concerns of fishermen, protection and propagation of mangroves, preservation of marine-protected areas and currently increasing marine biodiversity through artificial reefs."

Other partners who will be helping in the monitoring and protection of the project are: Haybols Scuba Hub, Anilao Camper, O2 Marine Protection Resort, Batangas Dive Pro and Pier Uno.

SIGNS OF LIFE

Despite the conditions, such as high sedimentation and high cover of Turf Algae, Prof. Abelson has recorded that the Eco-MER modules have yielded nice recruitment of several young fishes— wrasses, damsel fish, lizardfish, baby scorpion fish, baby sweetlips and two to three young migrant Toby, which is a relative of the famous puffer fishes.

Some invertebrates, including tunicates (three species), hydrozoans, feather-star and bryozoans are also starting to grow. To tell whether there are stony (hard) corals, or not, UV lights will be needed to determine their existence.

At this stage, the Shore It Up project on artificial coral reef is already showing very promising results, while it is being monitored weekly by its diver technicians. In time, this will be replicated in other potential areas in order to increase our country's marine biodiversity and restore the abundance of our ocean once again.

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THE PHILIPPINE STAFF

TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

12 JUN 2016

DATE

17

PAGE

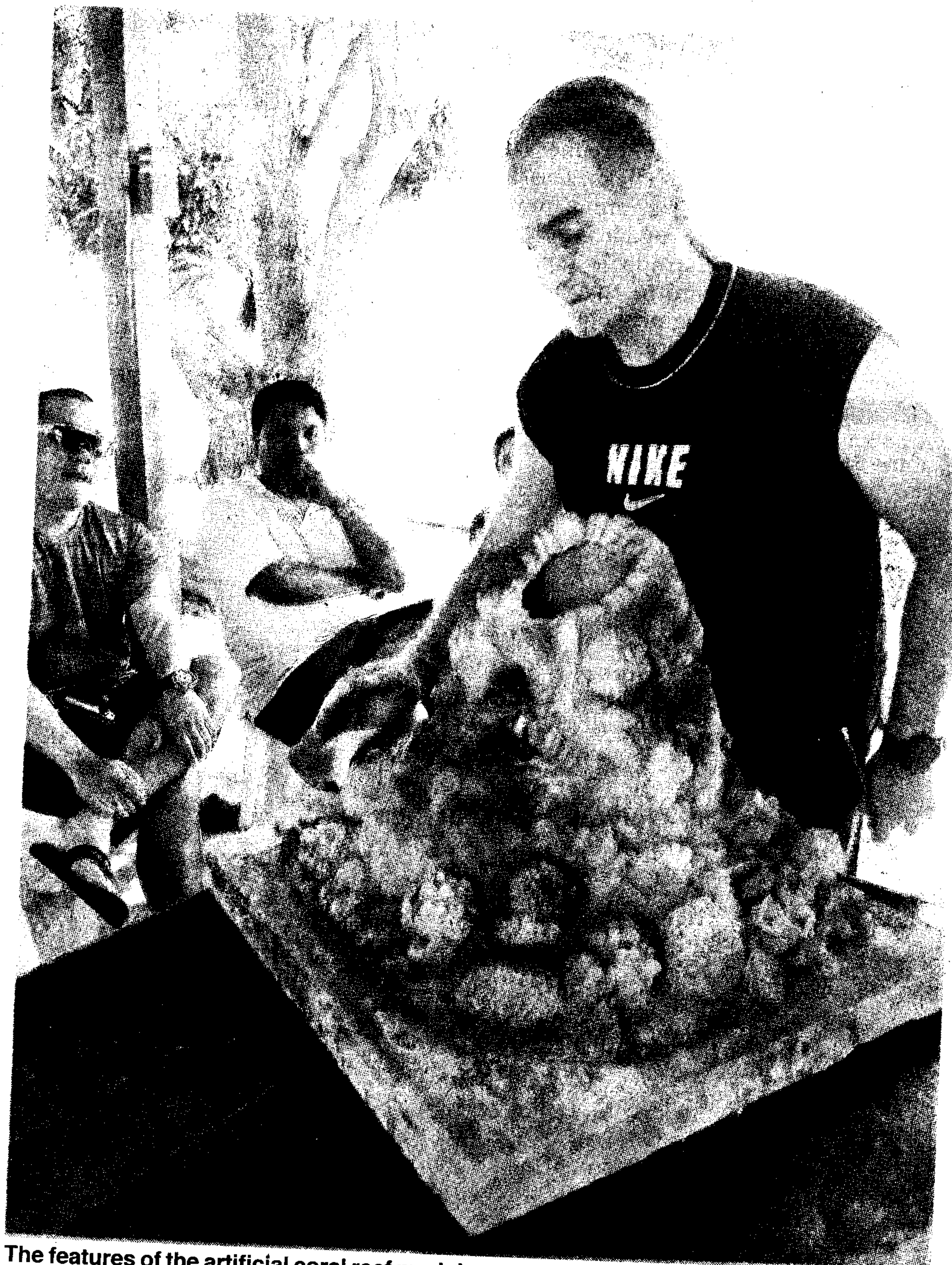
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LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-4

Build it they will come - - - -



The features of the artificial coral reef module are discussed in detail to the Artificial Coral Reef Installation Project volunteers. Avigdor Abelson, a consultant for the Shore It Up project, is a professor of marine ecology at the Tel Aviv University, PADI Dive Instructor, CMAS Dive-Master and IANTD Technical Diver.

The Manila Times

12 JUN 2016

DATE

A-8

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Dozens of fish species in danger—Haribon

DOZENS of fish species have disappeared or are on the verge of being lost from marine biodiversity hotspot the Philippines, an environmental group said Friday, citing a new study.

Fishermen reported that 59 coral reef species had gone missing from catches since the 1950s, according to the study conducted by Haribon, one of the Philippines' oldest conservation groups, and Britain's Newcastle University.

It based its findings on interviews with 2,600 fishermen across the Philippines, which has one of the highest concentrations of marine species in the world.

Overfishing to meet the demands of a fast-growing population and Chinese restaurants around the region was a key factor in the decline, according to Gregorio de la Rosa, a marine biologist with Haribon.

"These species are usually served in restaurants, swimming around in aquariums. They command a high price. If you have lots of

mouths to feed, you need lots of fish to catch," de la Rosa, told AFP.

The Philippines' population has grown to more than 100 million people from about 20 million in the 1950s.

De la Rosa said demand from China added to pressure from the local market.

"It has a very big impact because most of our fish are exported to China, also Singapore and Hong Kong. The groupers are highly priced, especially the red ones which are in demand in Chinese wedding receptions," he said.

While dynamite and cyanide fishing are illegal and no longer rampant, the study found that they continue to contribute to depleting fish stocks.

The Philippines is part of the Coral Triangle, an area of water spanning Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands that is known as the global center of marine biodiversity.

AFP

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Antimining archbishop sees hope in Duterte

A CATHOLIC archbishop has seen a glimmer of hope in their fight against mining under the incoming administration of President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte.

Archbishop Ramon Arguelles of Lipa City has welcomed Duterte's recent pronouncement that big mining has to stop "destroying the soil" of the country, particularly in Mindanao. "I know he means it...and knowing

the Mindanao experience," said Arguelles, who is leading a fight against mining and coal-plant operations in his archdiocese.

"I hope he supports our plea for total mining ban," he said, especially in Batangas, where

the Verde Island Passage, dubbed as the world's "center of marine biodiversity," is located.

The archbishop lamented that they have been fighting against the mining and coal plants for so long, but they have always been ignored.

"Let us be steadfast and determined in following Pope Francis's call to protect our common home," Arguelles added.

The incoming president earlier called on mining firms to "shape up" and stop destroying Mindanao, where 25 of 44 large-scale mining operations can be found.

Duterte also got the support

of Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), a coalition of mining-affected communities and their support groups collectively confronting the "destructive" large-scale mining in the Philippines.

ATM believes that Duterte is aware of the "plunder" of the environment, and mostly foreign-owned mining firms are "making huge profits from the country's natural resources at the expense of the communities."

The group urged Duterte to act on these concerns and investigate further, specifically by ordering a moratorium on all mining operations and the evaluation of

project contracts and operations.

"We urge President-elect Duterte to exercise his power to immediately suspend or cancel any mining contract that has violated our laws or abused the human rights of mining-affected communities," it said.

ATM, which is currently chaired by Fr. Edwin Gariguez of Caritas Philippines, also urged Duterte to order the review of the implementation of Republic Act (RA) 7942, or the Mining Act of 1995, and repeal it with the enactment of a Philippine Mineral Resources Act, or the Alternative Minerals Management Bill

(AMMB). RA 7942, ATM claims, "promotes the plunder of the country's resources for the benefit of investors and mining firms, while the environmental and natural resources and Filipino communities are at the losing end."

On the other hand, it said the proposed AMMB presents a sustainable, rational, needs-based minerals management geared toward effective utilization of mineral resources.

"It would be consistent with his stand against the current state of mining that Duterte certifies the proposed alternative mining bill as urgent," ATM also said. *CBCPNews*

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

B-3

PAGE

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Silangan mine gets ISO certification

By JAMES A. LOYOLA

Silangan Mindanao Mining Corporation (SMMCI), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Philex Mining Corporation, has obtained its International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001: 2004 Certification for its pre-mining develop-

ment activities.

The certificate for Environmental Management System was given to SMMCI by Certification International Philippines.

SMMCI has been pursuing the development of its Boyongan project in Surigao del Norte. To date, the mining company is further completing require-

ments for its feasibility study.

"It is again a re-affirmation of our advocacy for responsible mining because we have raised the bar as our Padcal ISO certification is suited for an operating mine while that of Silangan is for the exploration stage which is a stage before actual operations," said Philex president and SMMCI chairman

Eulalio B. Austin Jr.

He noted that the certificate affirms SMMCI's adherence to processes that comply with strict and internationally recognized Environmental Management System in all stages of project development.

"This follows Philex Mining's own Integrated Management System (IMS)

Certification, ISO 12001:2004 and OH-SAS 18001:2007 for environmental and safety management systems, respectively, obtained from TUV Rheiland in April 2015 and reflects the Company's overall commitment to environmentally-safety procedures across all its operations and exploration projects," added Austin.

Meanwhile, SMMCI president Yulo E. Perez said that this is proof of Silangan's hard work in establishing the culture of responsible mining.

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

12 JUN 2016

DATE

4

PAGE

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

YKK Phils., EcoWaste launch 'Palit-Zipper' campaign to reduce kids' exposure to toxic lead

YKK Philippines Inc., the country's leading fastening company, has partnered with the EcoWaste Coalition and the Melencio Castelo Elementary School in Quezon City to replace damaged zippers of school uniforms.

Through the "Palit-Zipper na Ligas sa Tingga" program held yesterday, broken zippers of school pants, shorts and skirts were replaced with lead-safe zippers without charge.

"We now know that lead in

paint and dust is bad for children's health. Thanks to the creative and vigilant advocacy of the EcoWaste Coalition. But we did not realize until now that lead-coated zippers can be a potential source of exposure," said Rodolfo Modelo, principal of the Melencio Castelo Elementary School.

"We thank YKK and EcoWaste for choosing our school for this beneficial undertaking that has made us aware of the potential lead hazard in poor quality zippers and also helped reduce the back-to-school expenses for our

parents," he said.

For his part, Tadashi Koshio, executive vice-president for Sales and Marketing of YKK Philippines Inc. said: "Our zippers and other fastening products are recognized for their high quality, durability and compliance with national and global standards. We are happy to assure our Filipino customers that YKK zippers do not contain lead and other hazardous substances that can pose health and environmental risks."

"Consumers need to be choosy when buying clothes, bags and

other items with fastening devices as some zippers may be loaded with dangerous amounts of lead, a toxic chemical that is known to harm children's developing brains," said Thony Dizon, coordinator of the EcoWaste Coalition's Project Protect.

Dizon cited their discovery of extremely high concentrations of lead in some school supplies as part of the group's "get the toxic out" back-to-school campaign, including a pencil pouch and a backpack that had zippers containing 27,800 and 120,000 parts per million (ppm) of lead, respectively.

The group had also detected lead in the pull tabs and sliders of four brands of garment zippers in the range of 11,600 ppm to 45,100 ppm.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order 2013-24 prohibits lead in the production of school supplies and limits lead in paint at 90 ppm.

Zippers, which are easily reached parts of basic school necessities such as bags and uniforms, must be lead-free as children are most susceptible to the health effects of lead exposure, the EcoWaste Coalition said.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "children are particularly vulnerable to the neurotoxic effects of lead, and even relatively low levels of exposure can cause serious and in some cases irreversible neurological damage."

"There is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe," the WHO said.

PNA



Broken zippers of school uniforms are replaced with high quality lead-free zippers at a "back to school" project organized by the EcoWaste Coalition and YKK Philippines Inc. at Melencio Castelo Elementary School in Quezon City

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12 JUN 2016

DATE

2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Unite vs environmental pollution – Loren

AHEAD of the celebration of Independence Day today, Sen. Loren Legarda called for unity in building a pollution-free environment.

"We celebrate our Independence Day commemorating the sacrifices made by our heroes who laid down their lives to break free from the clutches of oppression. But while we are a sovereign nation, we continue to live in a polluted environment that has trapped us in a cycle of disaster vulnerability and poverty," said Legarda.

"Even with our abundance in natural resources, many of our people remain poor because of our extractive and consumptive lifestyle. The effects of our exploitative activities are evident in the increased frequency and volume of natural hazards. We have seen many times how disasters caused by environmental degradation and climate change killed thousands of families, wiped out cities and communities, and undid years of development gains," she said.

The senator said that the conservation of the environment should be mainstreamed in the government's development agenda, stressing that the decline of ecosystems has been determined as one of the underlying drivers of disaster risks and poverty.

Thus, protecting ecosystems, which involves rehabilitating forests, cleaning rivers, preserving biodiversity and stopping pollution, among other actions, must be done now.

She added that to be pollution-free, everyone must embrace a low-carbon lifestyle, pursue sustainable development, promote renewable energy, and practice ecological solid waste management, among others.

"Our ancestors braved wars with our colonizers, now we are facing a different war—pollution, environmental degradation, climate change. But like our revered heroes, we can only win this battle if we break free from our apathy and we unite to address these challenges," Legarda concluded.

Marlon Purificacion

12 JUN 2016



DATE

10

PAGE

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Groups declare Independence from fossil fuel, as solar now cheaper than coal

A COALITION of environmentalists, businesses, and civic groups have signed a Declaration of Independence from Fossil Fuel and Support for 100% Renewable Energy before 2030. This was the culmination of a forum aimed to raise awareness that solar is already cheaper than fossil fuel, marking a turning point in the drive to "Energy Independence," as participants urged power companies to switch to renewables that do not depend on expensive, imported fuel.

The forum was organized by Solar Philippines and featured Danny Kennedy, founder of Sungevity, one of America's leading solar companies, who discussed how solar now costs P2 to P3 per kilowatt-hour in other countries, resulting in stranded power assets and bankrupting coal companies. Kennedy noted how both solar and battery costs have fallen at an extraordinary rate, and are now starting to supply 100% of the needs of tropical countries like the Philippines. He likened the rise of solar to the disruption of mobile phones to landlines, and called on

power companies to heed the lessons of the telco industry and switch to solar for their own survival.

Solar Philippines President Leandro Leviste discussed how solar costs in the Philippines have gone down over 50% from the previous subsidy of P9.68. He added that solar plus batteries can replace all gas, oil, and diesel in the country today, and save Filipinos almost P100 billion a year. He challenged the power industry to embrace change, noting "the debate is over given solar is cheaper than coal, and we're building projects to prove it. The only problem is it takes time to shed old perceptions, but we are confident power companies will see the light."

In April, the Duterte campaign called for "the eventual phase out of coal power plants and other plants that use harmful fuels and steer the country for more investments in RE, [and] the timeframe of the phase out will be determined by the speed RE sources can replace coal." Last week, NEDA Secretary Ernesto Pernia stated, "We have to move away from coal and toward renewable energy, which is expensive in the short run but should be cheaper in the long run."

12 JUN 2016

DATE

A14

PAGE

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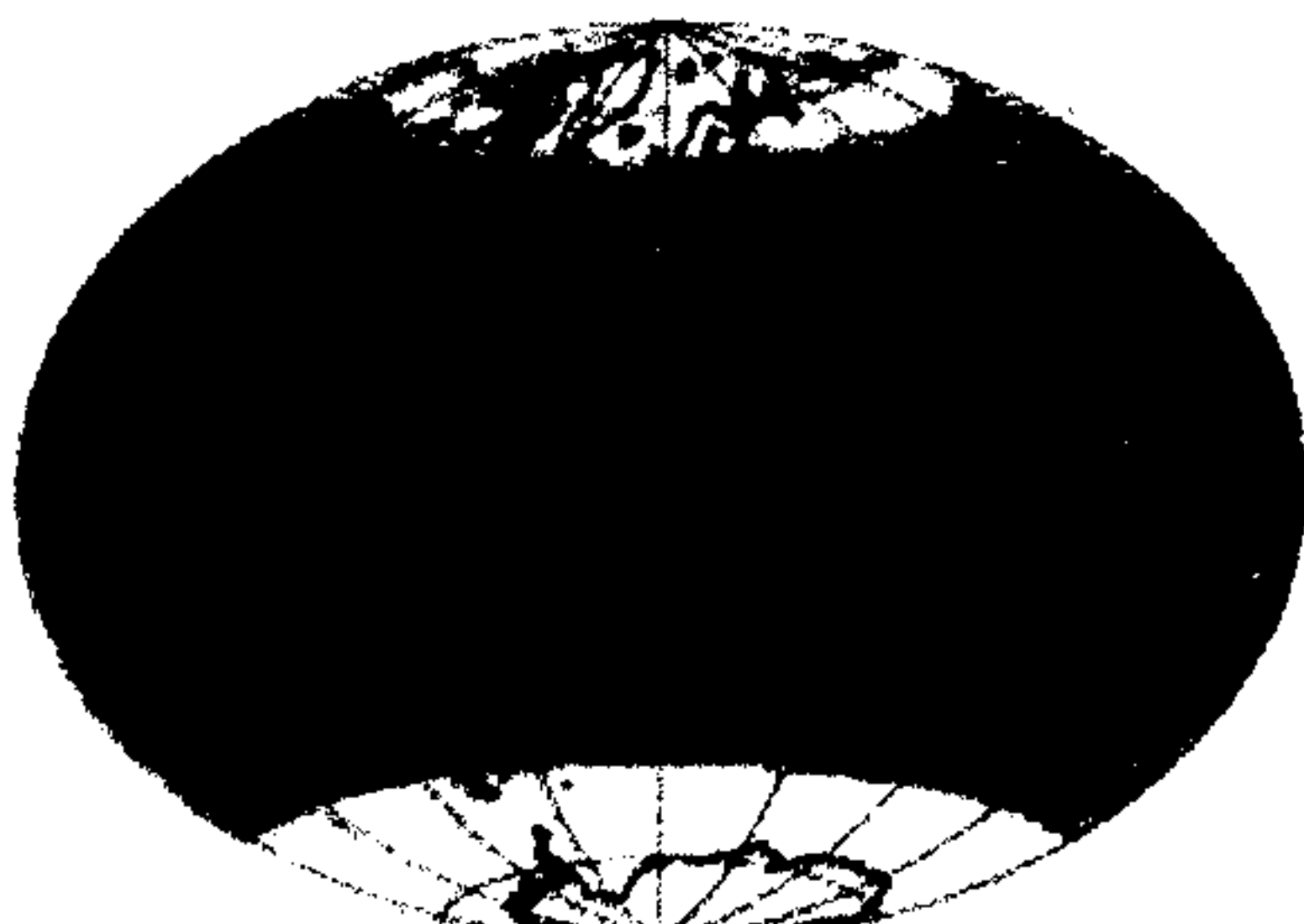
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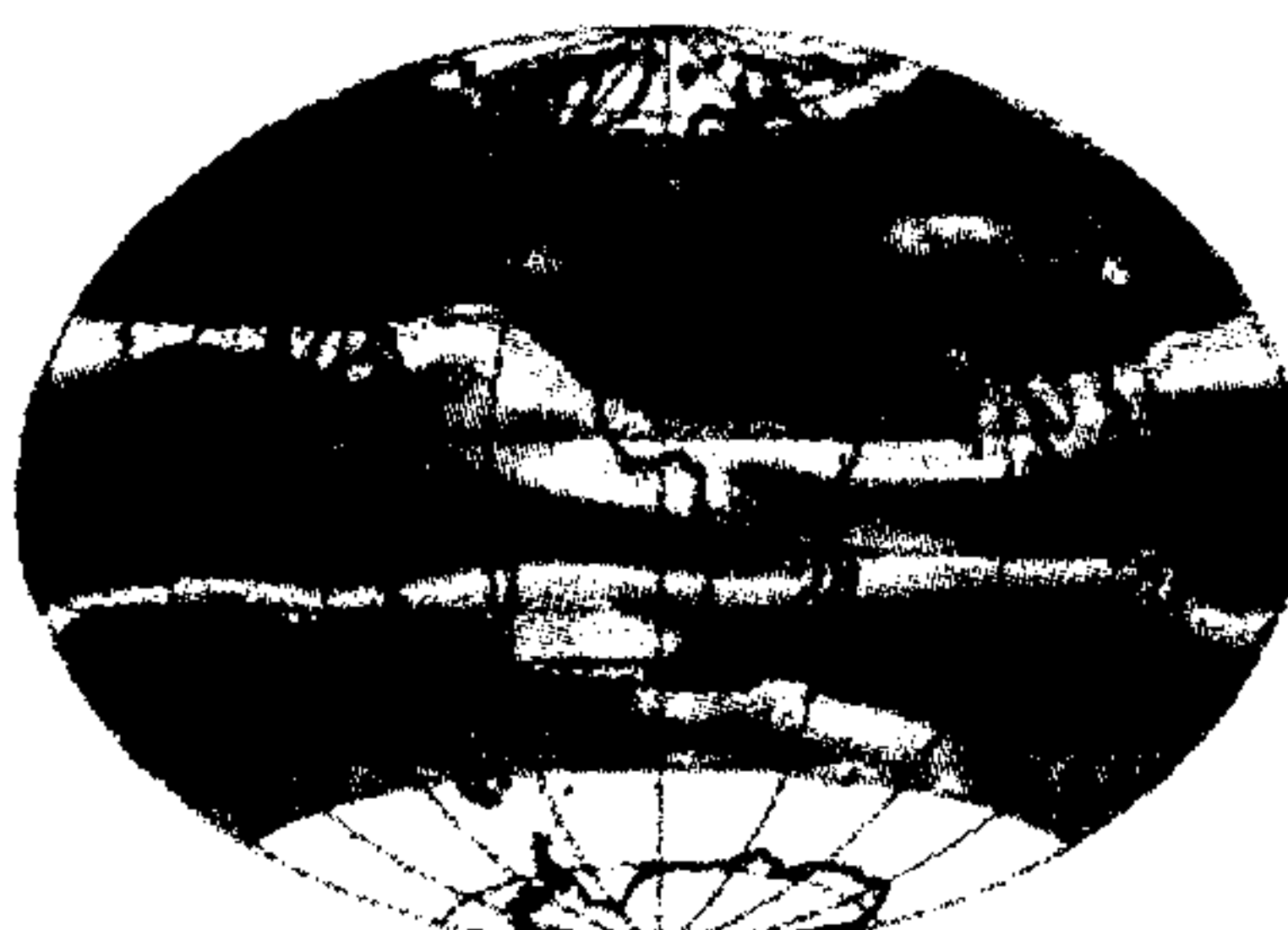
How PH helps curb global warming

By Carlo A. Arcilla

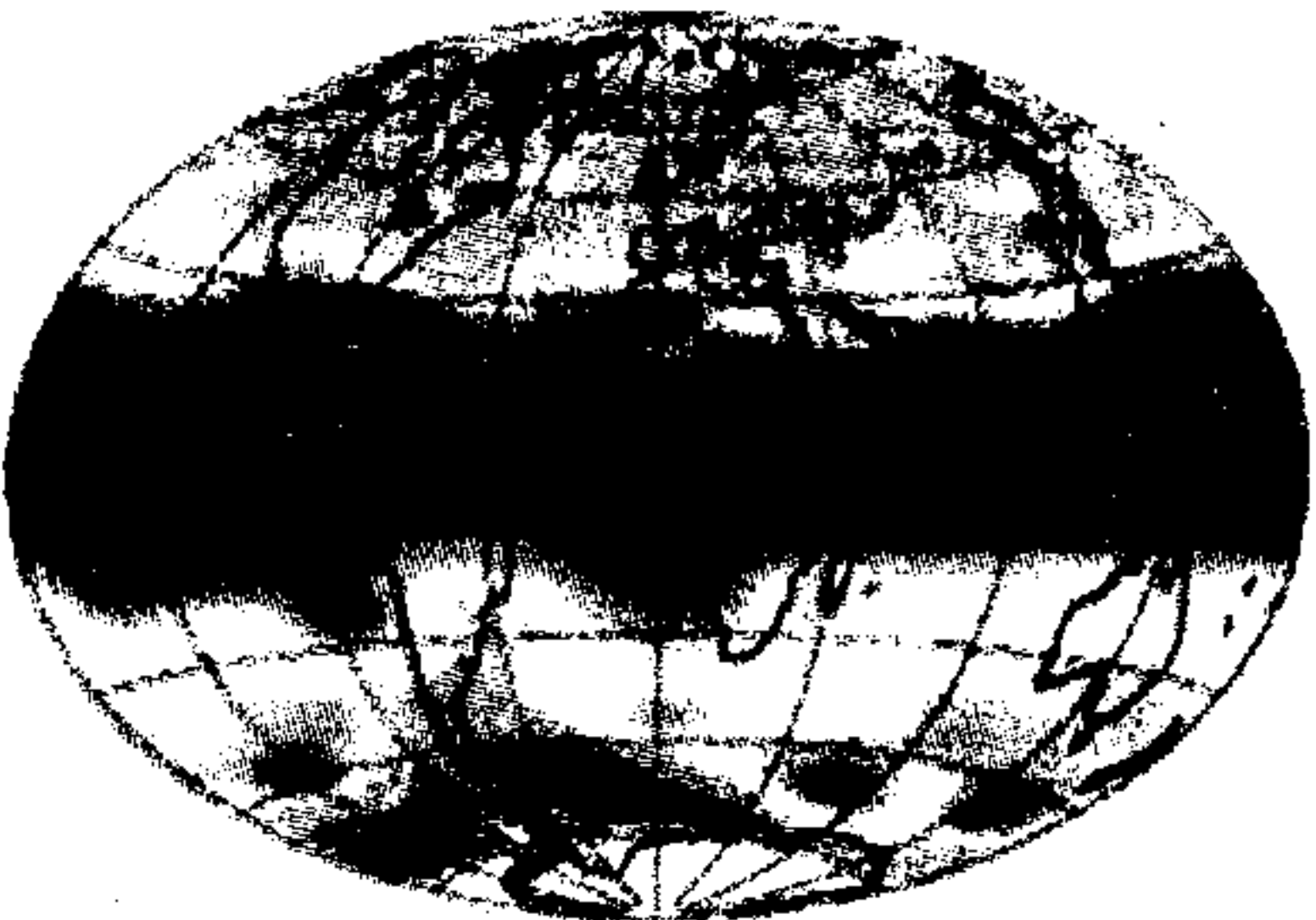
Global cooling effect of June 1991 Pinatubo eruption



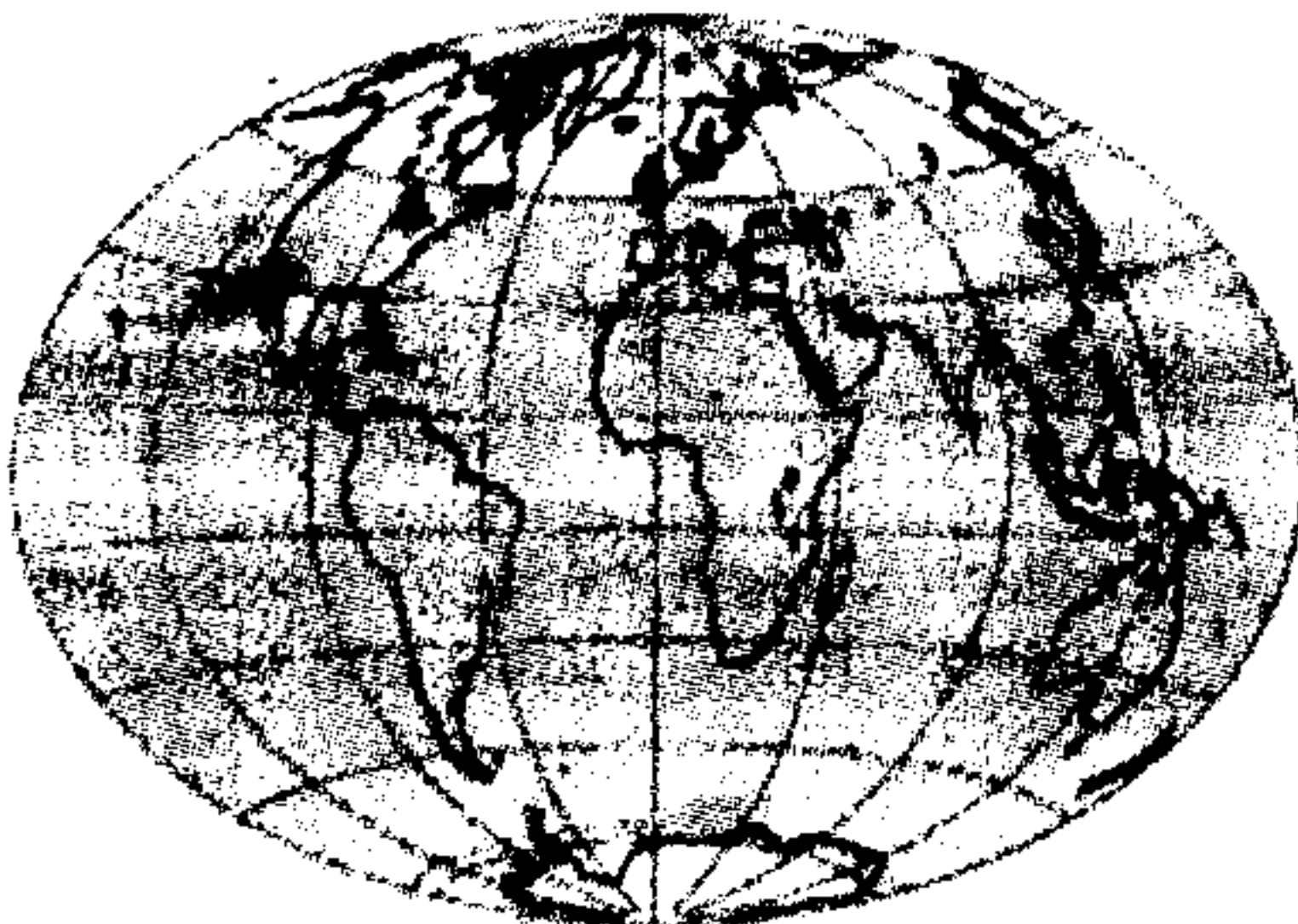
April 10, 1991 to May 13, 1991



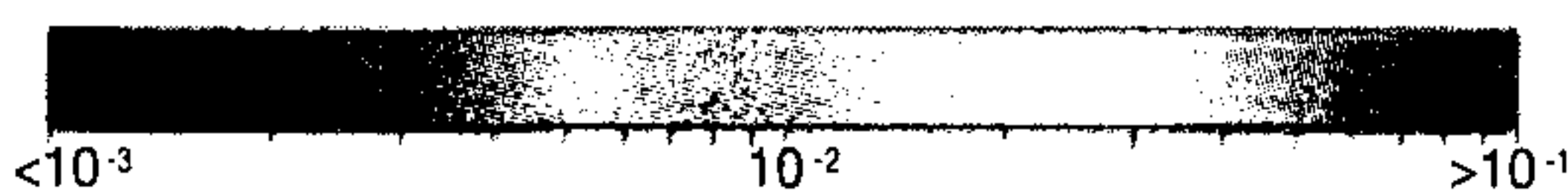
June 15, 1991 to July 25, 1991



Aug. 23, 1991 to Sept. 30, 1991



Dec. 5, 1993 to Jan. 16, 1994



AEROSOL DENSITY CAUSED BY PINATUBO ERUPTION The aerosol covered a big area of the Earth, which reduced incoming solar radiation that led to a decline in global temperature.

SOURCE: NASA



HYPERALKALINE SPRING IN NARRA, PALAWAN The pH of this spring is 1 and the rocks surrounding it have resulted from precipitation of CO₂ from the atmosphere, resulting in millions of tons of carbon sequestration. CONTRIBUTED PH

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

AA

PAGE

UPPER HALF

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE WORLD celebrated in April an important milestone—the signing of the Paris agreement to curtail carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions aimed at controlling global warming's disastrous consequences.

This is just the beginning of a long struggle to lower carbon emissions, perceived as the main cause of global warming. Unknown to many, several aspects of Philippine geology can help mitigate global warming.

Carbon sequestration

Perhaps, this is the issue in which most Filipinos are ignorant about. While difficult to quantify, the Philippines has made substantial contributions in helping remove CO₂ (sequestration) from the atmosphere, lowering global temperatures.

The most dramatic happened in 1991, when Mt. Pinatubo erupted, the world's largest eruption in a hundred years. The plume, which carried millions of tons of sulfur dioxide, injected a heat-absorbing compound into the upper atmosphere. The sulfur dioxide later turned into sulfuric acid droplets that reduced sunlight into the Earth's lower atmosphere.

As a result, the global temperature was reduced nearly 1 degree for more than a year. Talk about global cooling from a single Philippine volcano. No country has ever reduced the global temperature by this much in a year. We could argue that this alone should have been our greatest contribution to reducing global warming. (See *Nasa infographic.*)

CO₂-absorbent rocks

Another geological carbon sequestration process is related to magnesium silicate rocks that dominate Philippine geology. It has been shown over the past decade that certain kind of rocks (ultramafic rocks dominated by serpentine) absorb CO₂ in huge quantities.

Fortunately for us, a large part of our geology comprises these rocks and we are only beginning to understand and quantify the amount of CO₂ they sequester from the atmosphere. In contrast, China, the largest emitter of CO₂ (25 percent of the world total), does not have a significant amount of these rocks, which is unfortunate because those would have helped reduce its carbon footprint.

Palawan springs

In addition to these rocks, we have recently documented in Palawan and in several localities in the country the existence of natural hyperalkaline springs, which have very high pH (up to pH 11 while neutral water is pH 7) and which are rare geologically.

Aside from having beauty-related benefits, these springs sequester CO₂ from the atmosphere. In Palawan alone, the amount of CO₂ taken out over time would easily run to millions of tons. (See photo.)

Energy scenario

Given the natural geologic contributions of the Philippines to reducing carbon footprint, it will be wise to review our contribution to the global CO₂ footprint.

The Philippines has diversified its energy sources. As of 2010, almost 40 percent of its power sources came from renewables, with geothermal the biggest share, followed by biomass and hydro. In addition, the natural gas from Malampaya has accounted for almost 7.5 percent of the power source.

Thus, the fossil fuel source for Philippine power mostly comes from imported oil (34 percent), imported coal (10.2 percent) and local coal (7 percent). Solar and wind account for only 0.01 percent, although this must have increased in the past few years.

Argument for PH use of coal

These data demonstrate that the Philippines is a very good example in the fight against global warming—very few countries in the world can match our proportion of renewable energy in terms of power sources. This alone and the geologic factor mentioned earlier, should support the argument that we should be allowed, like many other countries, to use some fos-

P2
How PH
helps curb
global
warming

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

A14

PAGE

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UPPER HALF

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

oil fuels like oil and coal, as coal is still the cheapest form of power.

Just for comparison, Germany, which is leading the world in applying new renewables technology (8 percent from wind onshore), still uses more than 40 percent of its power mix from coal!

Of course, more wind and solar have to be encouraged, but we also have to consider their higher costs. The Philippine cost of power is now one of the highest in the world and has become a major stumbling block in efforts toward industrialization.

To illustrate this point, the Philippines is the second largest source of nickel in the world. Along with iron and chrome, these are the main ingredients for making steel, which is essential in infrastructure.

Expensive electricity

Sadly, we cannot produce steel in the Philippines even if we have all of the ingredients because power is too expensive. Even more important, the proportion of the income that the typical Filipino family pays for power costs is so high compared with many countries—for many families in developed countries, electricity bills are not major expenses.

If our power cost is low, perhaps we could afford to have

Carbon reduction targets

Country	% Carbon reduction target	Target year
Indonesia	26	2020
China	40-45 60-65	2020 2030
US	26-28	2025
Canada	30	2030
Philippines	70	2030
Marshall Islands	45	2030

SOURCE: UNFCCC INDC SUBMISSIONS

further restrictions on coal use compared with renewables, but I don't think it is right to impose additional cost burdens on Filipinos for the sake of appearing "green." It has been said that one megawatt of solar power will use one hectare of otherwise agricultural land. This ability to pay should also factor in the national debate of becoming carbon-responsible.

Carbon justice

With more than 170 countries signing the Paris COP21 agreement, however, it is undeniable that the respective contribution to the CO₂ output is not equitable. This is probably the root of the disagreements that have knocked out previous attempts to regulate carbon emissions globally.

Only 10 countries comprise more than 70 percent of the CO₂ output worldwide. It would seem reasonable that these top emitters be the ones to share most of the burden in reducing global emissions.

I would bet that many Filipinos, including a majority of our decision-makers, are unaware that Southeast Asia contributed only 12 percent of the global greenhouse emissions and of this the Philippines contributed only 4 percent and Indonesia, 59 percent.

This means that the Philippines is contributing 0.5 percent to the whole world's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This also suggests that even if we reduced our GHG emissions to zero, it would not affect the world's global warming problem.

In spite of this, our country has pledged to reduce our carbon footprint by 70 percent into the future, even more than the world's greatest emitters! (See table.) I wonder how this will be done and obviously it would mean virtually eliminating coal from the picture, which in the ideal world, would be great.

Indonesia, which emits more than 10 times the amount of CO₂ than the Philippines, however, has committed only 26 percent, or less than half of the Philippine commitment.

In contrast, the Philippines is quick to volunteer reduction in carbon footprint, even if we already have a very favorable energy mix and our reduction will not have a global impact.

Interestingly, Marshall Islands, one of the countries most severely threatened by global warming, has committed a lower target than the Philippines.

P3
How PH
helps curb
global
warming

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

A/4

PAGE

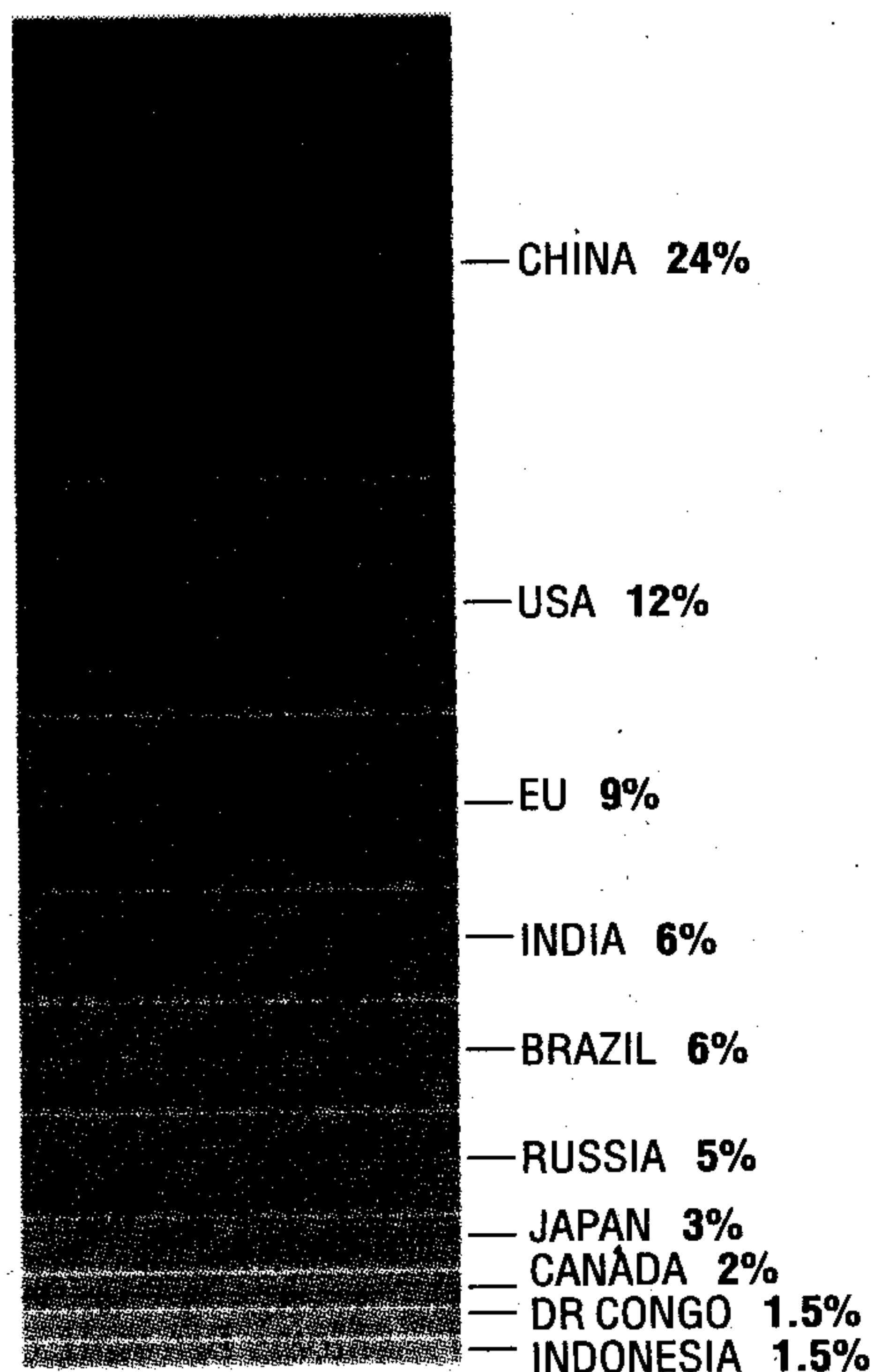
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

World's Top 10 emitters

The Top 10 greenhouse gas emitters make up over 70% of total emission



SOURCE: CARBON BRIEF, FIGURES ARE OF 2012

Geoscientific perspective

Geologists have been some of the most skeptical of scientists in accepting the attribution of global warming to human-caused burning of fossil fuels. The skepticism is rooted in the geological time perspective that every Earth science student is taught: that the Earth is very old (4.5 billion years) and that in this long time, its temperature has varied wildly, without human intervention.

In fact, the difficulty has been to isolate the human contribution in spite of the wild natural temperature fluctuations.

Even without humans, the Earth in the past was both

much hotter and colder than it is today, and the causes for this temperature changes are highly variable and complex and cannot be covered here adequately. In fact, in the past 100,000 years alone, we have had at least four ice ages and global warming events after each ice age, with no human intervention.

Scientific consensus

However, the current scientific consensus shows the worrisome rate of temperature increase, which has been unusually higher and most likely due to fossil-fuel burning. At this rate, the glaciers in Antarctica could melt precipitously and lead to worldwide sea level increases, which will have dramatic and disastrous consequences.

Much has been said about the negative effects of global warming and these will not be expounded here. For some perspective however, we would not want to be around 800,000 years before the present when the temperatures were really low and the fluctuations were really high, which would actually place the current warming concerns almost negligible by comparison.

Can't it be argued, therefore, that, considering the very high power rates which are stifling local development and the majority of the Philippine populace, we should be given some leeway to use cheaper but carbon-emitting sources like coal while we further improve our power mix?

Countries like India and probably Indonesia, which have much lower proportion of renewables and with much greater GHG emissions, have argued that they will not sacrifice their economic development for lower GHG emissions. I cannot understand why we committed such a large percent of our future carbon footprints given the arguments above.

P4
How PH help
curb
global
warming

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

✓
UPPER HALF

A14
PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

How PH helps curb global warming

P5

Policy, fiscal implications

Because the global warming scare is upon us, there is the reaction to spend more on climate change initiatives, which is well and good. However, the points raised above should give some perspective on how and where to spend climate change funds in the country. Just because a project is related to climate change should not be justification enough to fund it.

Climate change research projects should be science-based and with concrete goals. It would be reasonable that budgets should be spent, for exam-

ple, on exploration for more geothermal energy to further increase our renewables, explore further areas where hydroelectric power can be used, aggressively pursue natural gas exploration in the West Philippine Sea and elsewhere, and explore areas where wind and solar can be used economically.

In the worst-case scenario (which is actually likely), there will be less delivery of GHG emissions than what the idealistic Paris agreements promise in the future—and this is the scenario we must ~~really~~ prepare for. We must prepare for the worst, which means that many of the largely emitting countries will not meet their targets.

Mapping of topography

To cope, this will mean accurate mapping of the topography of the Philippines much like what Project Noah has done for the disaster-prone areas, so that the effects of sea-level rise be quantitatively assessed and the most appropriate and cost-effective intervention (if any) be done. It will mean readily increasing the budget for science and engineering education and research in the country because in the final analysis, it will be the engineers and scientists who will have to do something really concrete about the consequences of global warming.

Nothing against lawyers, who will have to argue for our interests, but so far the voice of science and engineering in this important issue needs to be heard.

The Nobel laureate Al Gore was in the country a few months ago, once again preaching to us his green gospel. We owe a lot to Gore for helping bring to the fore the concern about global warming. However, considering the miniscule amount of GHG we emit, it would have been a better use of his time to preach in his home country, China, Europe and the rest of the Top 10 emitters of CO₂ that account for 70 percent of all emissions.

I hope incoming President Rodrigo Duterte will make a more reasonable approach to the Philippine adaptation to global warming.

(Carlo A. Arcilla is professor of Geosciences at the National Institute of Geological Sciences, University of the Philippines Diliman. He is president of Solid Earth Section, Asia-Oceania Geosciences Society and immediate past president of Geological Society of the Philippines. He has a Ph.D. in Geotechnical Engineering and Geosciences, University of Illinois. E-mail: caloy.arcilla@gmail.com.)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

A10

PAGE

✓
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Pusan: Where PH first sees the sun



THE FIRST rays of the sun make their majestic presence felt in Pusan Point in Davao Oriental province.

EDEN JHAN LUCAYAN CONTRIBUTOR

By Frinston Lim
Caraga, Davao Oriental

THE FIRST rays of the rising sun strike the Philippines on a 40-foot high rock promontory known as Pusan Point, which faces the Pacific Ocean, in Caraga, Davao Oriental province.

Tourism officials are now calling the place the newest gem of the picturesque eastern province of Mindanao following the recent opening of the Pusan Point Discovery Center and Eco-Park in Barangay San-Jago.

Gov. Corazon Malanyaon said the vantage point would be the latest addition in ecotourism destinations to be opened by Davao Oriental "to its people and to the rest of the world."

Pusan last gained promi-

nence and attracted local and foreign tourists and journalists on Jan. 1, 2000, as the Philippines' welcome mat for the new millennium.

Its development was the provincial government's effort to maximize the point's natural

ecotourism draw, so that it would have more to offer than just the glimpse of the Philippines' first day, Malanyaon said.

New landmark

The point hosts two concrete lighthouses, one of which was

built in the early 1900s. With the establishment of the Pusan Point Discovery Center and Eco-Park, a new landmark, according to the governor, "(would) complement the site's substance."

A concrete Jubilee Cross

planted on the rough edges of the point where the Pacific surf pounds violently, especially during the monsoon season, forms part of the park's attractions.

Meditation kiosks are also

PUSAN/A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

✓
UPPER HALF

PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Pusan: Where PH first sees the sun

P2

From page A10

strategically built on its grounds, as well as an amphitheater that can seat 100 people.

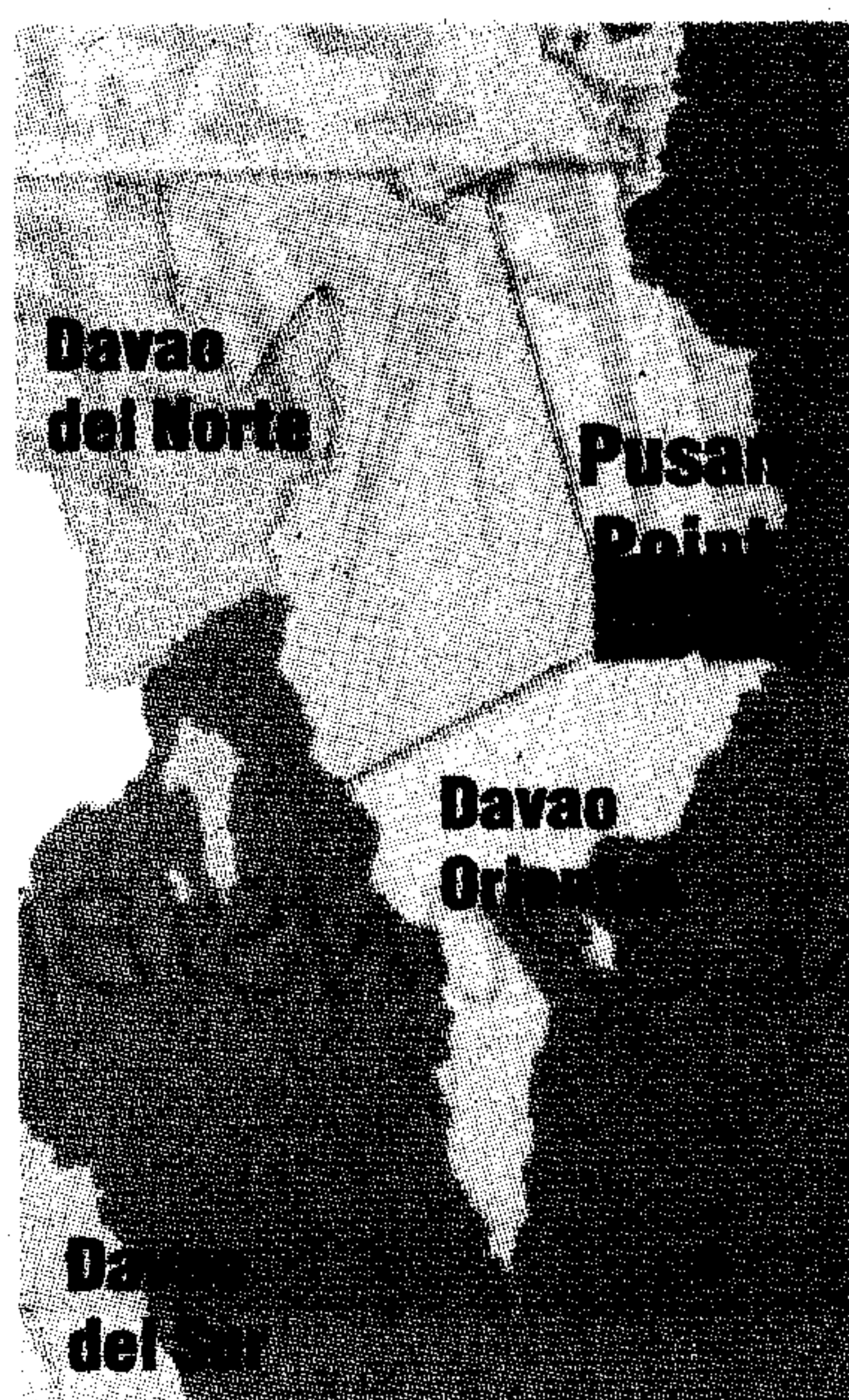
Other facilities include a 200-square-meter swimming pool, a sundial and a two-story building that houses the Science Discovery Center featuring a planetarium and other science-themed interactive sections.

Duterte factor

Roberto Alabado III, regional tourism chief, said Davao Oriental's newest ecotourism attraction would further lift the local tourism industry.

He said his office was banking on the popularity and buzz generated by the Davao region following the election to the presidency of Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, in marketing Davao Oriental to local and foreign tourists.

"This is our time, especially now that we have a President who comes from Davao. The word Davao now exudes beauty. It exudes discipline. It exudes public service. Now, the word Davao is known internationally. That is a very, very welcome marketing tool," he said.



'World-class'

Alabado pointed out that Southern Mindanao's largest province had virtually all that could attract visitors—ecotourism sites, museums, historical places and rich Mandaya culture and traditions.

Caraga, 82 kilometers from the capital of Mati City, is also home to pristine beaches and waterfalls, as well as one of Min-

danao's oldest churches, the San Salvador del Mundo parish church at the town center, which was built by the Spaniards during the late 19th century.

Alabado called the tourism destinations "world-class."

"You've got everything here. From dolphins, sea cows, sea turtles, whales, beaches... and so many more. When everything is here, that's tourism. That makes your province a tourism destination, an ecotourism destination," the official said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

12 JUN 2016

DATE

4/11

PAGE

✓
UPPER HALF

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Pusan: Where PH first sees the sun

P3

'Wow factor'

Alabado lauded the efforts of the provincial government in embarking on big tourism infrastructures that rivaled or even surpassed those undertaken by the private sector.

Malanyaon said Pusan Point would further be improved by offering more amenities to tourists, such as camping tents and other facilities for overnight stay. She expressed hope that it would open more livelihood opportunities to residents.

Alabado suggested that those living around major tourism sites such as Pusan Point be tapped to provide homestay accommodation to visitors.

The scheme is being encouraged following the opening of the Unesco-recognized Mt. Hamiguitan World Heritage Park in San Isidro municipality to the southeast on May 4. President Aquino led the inauguration of the ecotourism facility.

"The province has never failed to give tourists the wow factor. ... we (have) great things to market for tourism," Alabado said.