

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 07 JUL 2016

DAY : **Thursday**

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### MGB to produce 800 coastal geohazard maps by 2017

**T**HE government is eyeing to produce 800 geohazard maps within the next two years, including those for 60 coastal towns in the eastern seaboard of the Philippines, as part of its coastal geohazard-assessment program.

In an interview, Director Leo Jasareno of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the eastern seaboard is most prone to typhoons and the coastal areas there are prone to erosion and flooding.

This year, he said, the target is to complete the coastal geohazard maps for 60 coastal towns.

The first phase, he added, will cover assessment based on geological evidence. Geological evidence, he explained, means the study will cover the characteristic of the rock and soil in the coastal areas that may be affected by storm surge or coastal flooding.

"Next year we will deliver the balance. This is a continuing project until we reach our target of 800 coastal municipalities," Jasareno said.

He said the coastal geohazard assessment will cover coastal towns in Luzon, starting in Cagayan down to the coastal towns of Quezon, Albay and Sorsogon; then Eastern Samar, Leyte and Southern Leyte up to Davao Oriental in Mindanao.

He said geohazard maps will have a scale of 1:10,000.

"After we're done with the first phase, we will proceed with the second phase, which will involve vulnerability and risk assessment. In the vulnerability and risk assess-

ment, we will identify how many houses or structures in every barangay in every coastal municipalities are at risk of coastal erosion and flooding," he said.

The coastal municipalities in the eastern seaboard of the Philippines will be the priority target areas for the coastal geohazard assessment next year, while the geological quadrangles of Region 4A or the Calabarzon and Region 5 or Bicol region will be prioritized for geological mapping by the MGB next year.

These were among the agreements during the budgeting workshop conducted by the MGB last year, Jasareno said.

Jasareno added that the coastal geohazard assessment and the production of coastal geohazard maps is different from the previous geohazard assessment conducted between 2011 and 2014, which yielded geohazard maps on land.

He said the geohazard maps on land involve an assessment of rain-induced landslides and floods based on geological evidence.

Based on a recent study conducted by the MGB's Marine Geological Survey Division, Jasareno said coastal municipalities in the northwestern coasts of Leyte are susceptible to coastal erosion.

The municipalities in the northwestern coasts are likely to be affected by landslides and rock-fall, while the eastern seaboard of Palo, Tolosa, Tanauan, Dulag, Mayorga, MacArthur and Abuyog are moderately to highly prone to coastal erosion.

The result of this activity helps coastal communities prepare for the effects of changing storm regimes driven by strong effects of climate oscillations, like El Niño and La Niña. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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## DENR-8, Leyte act on forest degradation

By **RESTITUTO A. CAYUBIT**

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office 8 (DENR-8) and the province of Leyte have jointly initiated moves to control the forest degradation in the island.

DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca told reporters that based on findings of a satellite imagery survey that about 15 percent or 41,060 hectares of forest cover in Leyte Island have been damaged in recent years.

Affected areas are mostly forest covers within the Mahagnao Volcano and National Park in the island's geothermal reserve.

The major cause of forest degradation is slash-and-burn or "*kaingin*" practices of farmers as well as timber

poaching.

DENR-8 has initiated moves to involve locals with income-generating activities – one of which is ecotourism – to provide alternative livelihood means.

Leyte Governor Leopoldo Dominico Petilla also said his office has intensified efforts to curb forest degradation by increasing police patrols in the said areas, in coordination with the municipal local government units, to complement the DENR-8's community-based forest guards.

Petilla added that his office has introduced high-value crop production practices so farmers in the communities can increase their income. "Better income for the farmers in modern agriculture will encourage them to veer away from the slash-and-burn farming

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# Palawan: PHIL's 'Last Frontier' under siege

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA & ROGER PE

**I**T'S called the country's last ecological frontier. From time to time, Palawan, an island-province in Luzon, is showcased because of its rich biodiversity, as well as natural wonders that are threatened by various human activities.

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Palawan: PHL's Last Frontier' under siege

Much has been written about Palawan. A number of blogs have featured trips to its secluded hide-aways, stunningly white, pristine beaches, and spectacular rain forests. Many have sang hosannas to its paradise-like havens. From the sublime to the cheesy, various travelogues have been penned about the Philippines's "Last Frontier."

And they keep on coming.

A global serial reality-television show has made Palawan as a backdrop, and Hollywood movie *The Bourne Legacy* made a stunning sequence of El Nido toward the latter part of the movie. YouTube has plenty of videos about Palawan in varying degrees of production quality—good, better and bad.

Every single visitor to the province has taken "selfies" about its famous landmarks or must have encountered any of these—Palawan Mynah, Green Parrot, cashew (in all its forms), Lamayo, Bear Cat, Armadillo, White Cockatoo, Pheasant Peacock, Coron and Calauit.

But the clueless has not probably heard of the insect-eating Pitcher plant or the bird of Ursula. They may have never been to Onuk Island, Punta Sebaring, the bowels of Mount Mantalingahan, the inner sanctum of the Underground River, terrains of Cleopatra's Needle, Malampaya Sound marine sanctuary, into the depths of Tubbataha, Pleistocene-age caves of Tabon, Fireflies tour of Iwahig River, desolately beautiful Cagayancillo Island, or the summit of Mount Victoria. The list is untiringly endless.

From north to south, the province is adventure spelled with a bold, capital "A" with plenty to spare.

You can't possibly cover Palawan in a day or a week to fully grasp its uniqueness that is akin to Borneo. If you are a lover of that wonderful island beneath the Philippines's largest province, you must love Palawan. After all, they were connected millions of years ago, and the similarities are very pronounced.

### Topping all provinces

PALAWAN currently tops all provinces in the country in terms of forest cover, according to the 2013 Forestry Statistics report released by the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Of its 1,489,626 total land area, 692,288 hectares are covered with forest.

Because of its thick forest cover, Palawan is known to host a diversified flora and fauna, including native birds that are unique or endemic to the Philippines.

The size of Palawan's forest cover is almost twice that of Isabela province, which ranked No. 2 in the top 10 provinces in terms of forest cover area, with 378,272 hectares of the total land area of 904,026 hectares.

However, Palawan recently lost its title of having the most densely covered forest. It now ranked as No. 6 in the top 10 provinces with high-density forest cover, at 46.47 percent forest cover. Previous records show it has 53-percent forest cover.

Topping the list with high-density forest cover are Quirino, 67.48 percent; Apayao, 55.59 percent; Surigao del Sur, 49.82 percent; Nueva Vizcaya, 49.62 percent; and Lanao del Sur, 48.56 percent.

In earlier interviews, Director Ricardo Calderon of the DENR's FMB said Palawan hosts the most diversified species of native trees in the country.

The country's top forestry official said Palawan has the most number of commercially viable trees, including narra, which is the most sought-after tree species by commercial loggers.

### Heritage sites

PALAWAN, the largest province in the Philippines, is a complex ecosystem that serves as refuge to more than a hundred marine and many other indigenous species of flora and fauna.

Conservation International describes it as the Philippines's "last biodiversity frontier," because it still retains more than 50 percent of its original forest cover and harbors vast stretches of old growth forests on its mountainous slopes.

It is home to two United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) World Heritage sites. These Unesco sites are the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, which includes the world's longest navigable underground river; and the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, the spectacular, uninhabited coral-reef atolls with thousands of abundant manta rays, whale sharks, marine turtles, sharks and more than 400 species of fish.

Rapid urbanization, consequent increases in utilization and high migration rates, however, are creating tremendous pressure on its upland forest and coastal areas, resulting to encroachment into sensitive areas where resources are exploited in unsustainable and destructive ways.

### Off-limits

SECRETARY Regina Paz L. Lopez of the DENR vowed to make Palawan "off-limits" to destructive development projects, underscoring its importance as the country's last frontier.

Early this year, former Environment Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje declared Palawan to be off-limits to new coal projects, heeding the call of communities and other stakeholders to protect the country's last frontier.

Lopez vowed to continue such policy, and said it will also be off-limits to new mining projects, as well.

An environmental advocate, Lopez in an interview said Palawan's rich biodiversity should be



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protected against destructive development projects.

As the chief steward of the country's environment and natural resources and alter-ego of President Duterte in the DENR, Lopez wants to turn Palawan into the No. 1 island-destination on the planet.

Lopez said she wants Palawan to use clean energy in the province, in lieu of coal-fired power plants, and stop projects that threaten its terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Likewise, she said mining in Palawan will have to stop if it will adversely affect people and the environment.

Lopez said she is meeting with the officials of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to discuss the Duterte administration's mining policies.

"We are going to stop all destructive projects in Palawan. If the mining is destructive, we will stop it," she said.

Several mining companies that operate in Palawan, such as Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. (RTNMC) and its sister company, Coral Bay Nickel Corp. (CBNC), are currently operating in the town of Bataraza for decades.

The two companies boast of implementing environment-friendly mining of nickel and recently showcased progressive rehabilitation. The CBNC, for instance, showcased its 90-hectare Tailings Dam 1, about 20 hectares of which have been successfully converted into agro-forestry plantations and food production area, while the rest are now covered with grass and shrubs. Another area, a 25-hectare portion of mined-out area of RTNMC, is now covered with native trees, vegetable farm and a portion planted to high-value crops.

But Lopez said there is more to mining than rehabilitation. She earlier vowed to stop the operations of irresponsible mining companies that brought suffering to people and communities.

"*Iyong mga ilog, iyong dagat at iyong kalusugan ng mga tao, importante* [Palawan is very important and we will see to it that it will be protected]," she said.

### Revisit laws

DIRECTOR Theresa Mundita S. Lim of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), meanwhile, said for her part that the richness of Palawan in terms of flora and fauna has been recognized since the 1960s, when the entire province was proclaimed as a Game Refuge and Bird Sanctuary.

"This proclamation, and eventual boundary amendments, consequently placed Palawan or portions of Palawan as initial component of the National Integrated Protected Area System [Nipas]," she said.

Other laws and regulations have also been issued since, including Republic Act 7166, or the Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) for Palawan Act, which aimed to strengthen protection of the remaining natural areas of Palawan.

"Although we appreciate the good intentions in the declaration of the entire province as a World Conservation Area, we should also take some time to review all the past issuances and layers of proclamations that have covered Palawan through the years and assess why the state of biodiversity in Palawan has turned out to become the way it is now, to even warrant another declaration for conservation," she said.

"If it does get declared again, this time, then all of us, the various sectors across levels of governance, must have a concerted effort to make sure that it shall be implemented and operationalized in order to achieve what it seeks to achieve, for the benefit of the Palawenos and of the entire country," she added.

### Protected areas

THERE are several protected areas (PAs) in Palawan, including the world-famous Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, which have been declared as Unesco World Heritage Site.

In addition, the Puerto Princesa Underground River (PPUR) was voted as one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature in 2012.

The other more famous PAs in Palawan are the Calauit Game Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary; Coron Island Protected Area; El Nido-Taytay Managed Resource Protected Areas; Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape; and Ursula Island Game Refuge.

Some of these PAs were included on a list of 100 PAs sought for stronger protection measure by a bill filed by Sen. Loren Legarda, called the Expanded-Nipas Act.

While the bill passed through smooth-sailing in the Senate, it was, however, stalled because of debate over inclusion of several PAs in the province in the House of Representatives, with the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) standing against the proposed measure's enactment.

Palawan is known to host unique species of flora and fauna, which makes this biodiversity-rich province important for conservation.

### Plagued

CLEMENTE BAUTISTA, national coordinator of Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment, said Palawan is plagued with several environment-destructive projects and activities, including large-scale mining operations, palm-oil plantations and militarization.

According to Bautista, Palawan is the remaining island in the Philippines with large forest cover, rich biodiversity and bestowed with bountiful natural resources.

In 1990 the Unesco declared it Man and Biosphere Reserve. It is adjacent to Tubbataha Reef, a globally important marine ecosystem. But decades of mining operation, establishment of palm-oil plantations, proliferation of military bases and exercises are making Palawan the last frontier no more," he said.

According to Bautista, the large-scale nickel-mining operation by Zamora-Sumitomo-owned Nickel Asia Corp. is ravaging the



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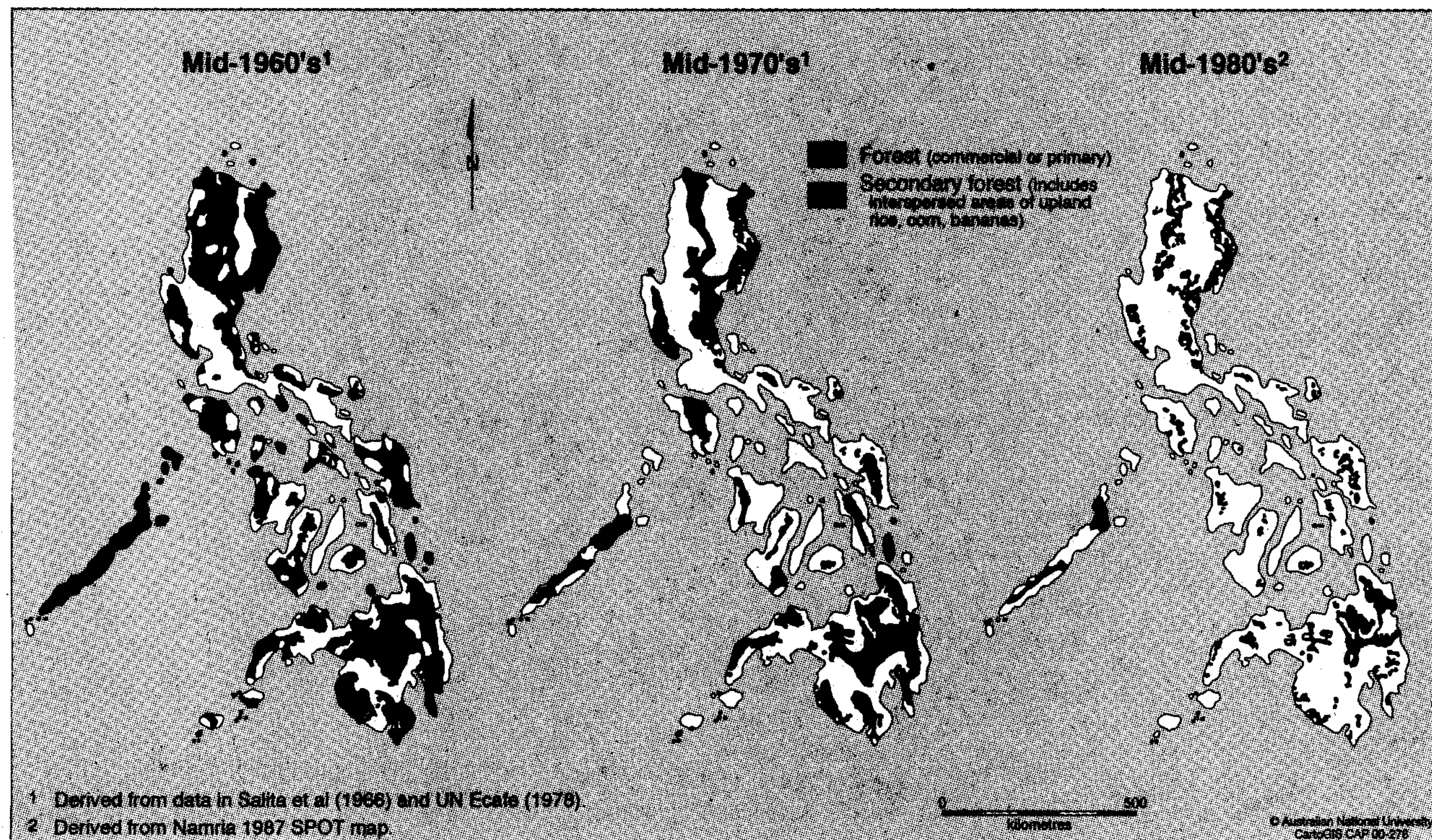
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forest in Rio Tuba and damaging the nearby river and marine ecosystems.

"More mining operations are denuding the forest in different parts of Palawan. Citinickel is clearing the forest in Sofronio Espanola. It was suspended because of mine spill in 2013 in Narra, Palawan, but was allowed again by the DENR to operate in 2015," he said.

Another problem plaguing Palawan, Bautista said, is the palm-oil plantations, which have

### THE PHILIPPINES'S FOREST FIGURE

- Forest cover, total forest area: 7,162,000 hectares (24 percent)
- Primary forest cover: 829,000 hectares
- Land area: 2.8 percent
- Total forest area: 11.6 percent.
- Annual change in forest cover (2000-2005): 157,400 hectares
- Annual deforestation rate: 2.1 percent
- Total forest loss since 1990: 3,412,000 hectares or 32.3 percent

Source: Rhet Butler

already converted around 6,000 hectares of forest land in the municipalities of Soforino Española, Brooke's Point, Bataraza, Rizal, Quezon, Aborlan and Narra.

"The plantation not only destroyed our forest, but also displacing communities and losing local livelihoods," he lamented.

### Conservation

CHUCK BACLAGON of the group 350.org said the urgency to protect Palawan's ecosystem from destructive industries, like mining and coal, can never be overemphasized.

He said protecting Palawan's ecosystem is vital not only because it hosts two Unesco World Heritage sites, but more so because Palawan's plight is a microcosm of the current crisis that besets the Philippine environment: known for its biodiversity, the island-province's pristine environment and abundant natural resources could supply the needs of its denizens for generations to come.

"Unfortunately, commercial interests of extractive industries have turned it into a battlefield where economic and political interests are waging a war over its economic and geopolitical value," he said.

According to Baclagon, Palawan's pristine environment, the top reason many visitors come to the province, is under threat by the planned construction of DM Consunji's 15-megawatt coal-fired power plant that has moved to three different proposed sites because of community opposition since 2013.

"Carbon emissions from energy production are the largest source of greenhouse gases that cause global warming," he said.

Coal comprises 35 percent of the country's energy mix. But without intervention, the Philippines is looking at 70-percent dependence on coal from 2030 to 2050, Baclagon stressed.

"Palawan is one of the top megadiversity hot spots in the world. We cannot let a coal plant add to its growing list of threats. It is home to different indigenous groups whose lives will be directly affected.

"As well as a refuge to hundreds of marine and terrestrial



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endangered species, the constant threat that looms over the island is but a reflection of the current profit-over-people-and-ecosystems conflict that besets the Philippines. We cannot afford to have corporations with poor environmental track records destroy our last ecological frontier," he said.

### West Papua

ARTHUR RODRIGUEZ VENTURA, former director of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, wants Palawan to follow West Papua's footsteps.

The Indonesian province was declared World Conservation Province by The Coral Triangle and the World Wildlife Fund in October last year—a first for both Indonesia and the rest of the world.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, the honor was "symbolically important in ensuring the future health of the province's astonishing ecosystems."

"Besides its rain forests, West Papua is the world's epicenter of marine biodiversity, boasting more species than anywhere else on the planet," the WWF said.

Almost half of Indonesia's biodiversity is contained within the two Papuan provinces. Its forests and coasts are rich in climate-stabilizing carbon and untold biological resources.

Gaining such declaration would make Mother Nature happy for Palawan, but it will be a declaration of war against greedy businessmen, their protectors and powerful politicians.

### Ventura way

AS a kid, Ventura was already a lover of nature.

Understandable, because he was born and grew up in Coron, one of Palawan's tourism jewels and where many of its lakes are considered the cleanest and greenest in the Philippines up to now.

Ventura loved watching *Tarzan* movies, mesmerized at seeing Johnny Weismuller cling from one

vine to another with his panther friend, swim in a refreshingly clear river, and imagined basking in a very clean environment with his lovely Jane. He longed to be lord of the jungle.

In the days of Tarzan, poachers already existed in the forest, killing elephants for their ivory tusks, hunting tigers, lions and trapping birds to be sold. But Tarzan emerged as their protector, as well as of Africa's flora and fauna.

He once fought against businessman-poachers who erected seaweed-farming structures in the Tubbataha Reef, now a World Heritage Site. The stilts have now been demolished.

### Lonely war

VENTURA ran for governor of Palawan in the May 9 elections and lost against money and power. Today he is still fighting a lonely war but, like Tarzan, is hoping for a Divine Intervention so that the wanton abuse of Palawan's natural resources could be contained.

He wants Palawan be like what it was used to be—abundant, rich in forest and marine resources, and indigenous peoples are happy.

Along with many Palawenos who are concerned about environmental plunder in the province, Ventura hopes that the E-Nipas Act of 2015, providing protection for the country's declared protected areas in the country, be passed soon.

It will give double protection for five fragile Palawan PAs, he said. These PAs include the following: the El Nido-Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Malampaya Sound Protected Land and Seascape, Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary and the Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape. He hopes that some lawmakers connected with mining and other interests in the province should not exclude them out of the bill.

### Ray of hope

AT age 6, Ventura was already helping augment the family income at a time when hardship was still being felt because of World War II. His father was a school principal and his mother president of a women's club that put up the town's first puericulture center.

At age 15, Ventura worked as an attendant, assisting a doctor, like a midwife, sanitary inspector and nurse, rolled into one, doing all medical work like prenatal care, autopsy, vaccination, injection and minor operation.

After graduating in high school with academic honors, his father let Ventura and his brothers and sisters find their own fortune, confident that he had instilled in them his disciplinarian ways to face the world.

He did many odd jobs in Manila, like working in a restaurant just so he can enter college. He lived with her older sisters, moving from one sister to another to get free board and lodging. Then his first ray of hope came.

The Mapúa School of Engineering had announced a qualifying chess game. Top finishers will get an athletic scholarship and be included in the school's varsity team.

### Chess game

VENTURA would win and even go further—bag the national intercollegiate championship.

He was on cloud nine when a newspaper article bannered his triumph: "Unknown from Palawan beats intercollegiate champion from UST."

Chess had paid off for Ventura, a game that was a family pastime. "I thank my father-mentor and brothers for that," he said.

After winning the championship, Far Eastern University (FEU) took interest on him and offered him a scholarship he cannot refuse. Apart from a college scholarship, he was offered an employment at the university's accounting department during that time, a big extra



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bonus that allowed him to help his other siblings Caesar, Lyn and Patricia to finish their own college degrees.

He, too, helped struggling Palaweños at the FEU. As soon as he graduated with an Economics degree, he enrolled for a Master's in Marketing and, some two years later, entered law.

Ventura married Marilou Galman Cruz after only 20 days of courtship. The two met on the FEU campus while the latter was securing academic records to comply with her UST thesis as architecture student. Cruz would eventually pass her thesis defense with flying colors, even topping the architectural board exam.

### Ways possible

THE couple settled in Palawan and continued to help the people in many ways possible.

Their willing hand extended to regional sports meet in order for Palawan to perform well in the Southern Tagalog Regional Athletic Association.

They went out of their way to finance and find funds for medicines of sick friends and neighbors. Love for each other gave them four children: Pamela, Fiona, Justine and Joshua, and grandchildren Lian and Zia.

Ventura went into the gas station and burger-chain business to be able to sustain his civic-mindedness. His wife contributed by squeezing funds from her professional practice.

As the saying goes: "When you help, don't expect something in return; when you are in a position to share, do share." Ventura took this seriously.

Perhaps, that was the reason the late President Corazon Aquino appointed him as vice governor of Palawan (officer in charge) after the Edsa People Power protest in 1986.

### Legacy building

AS one who champions progress without abusing Mother Nature, Ventura wants to leave a legacy of protecting Palawan's environment.

He longs to see the Last Frontier as the first frontier in well-managed resources and developing renewable energy, not coal power plants.

As a longtime environmentalist, Ventura wants Palaweños to distance themselves from destructive mining and promote the tourism industry sustainably. He continues to fight against land grabbing done with use of force or deceit, and these lands returned to their rightful owners.

Ventura wants people to respect the rule of law, for nobody is above the law.

As in a chess game, Ventura has made his move and wants people together in one chess team—to protect Palawan's precious natural resources. As a true Palaweño, he fears that plantation agriculture, especially oil palm, could emerge as the newest threat to Palawan's remaining forests.

"The continuing disappearance of Philippine wildlands is of great concern. In this respect, we should save Palawan from plunderers and make its forests proudly intact," Ventura said. "We were voted, and continue to be vote, as the best island-tourism destination worldwide in many magazine polls year after year. This is effort, not luck."

Ventura said Palawan has "made it this far as icon for the Philippines as a prime tourist destination."

"Let us not destroy it."



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## Philex tells DENR chief: 'We are compliant'

BY JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ  
REPORTER

**THE country's biggest gold miner Philex Mining Corp. on Wednesday said that it and its wholly owned subsidiary Silangan Mindanao Mining Corp. were already ISO-compliant.**

"We are compliant," Philex said, in response to Environment Secretary Gina Lopez's call for an audit of mining companies to determine if their operations were benefiting the people and the environment or causing harm.

Lopez also said mining companies must have certification from the International Standards Organization (ISO) otherwise they could face suspension.

In her first press conference after assuming office, Lopez equated ISO-14001 certification with responsible mining.

"ISO 14001 is another way of saying responsible mining," she said.

"If you're really responsible, like, responsible, then you have to have the highest standards, and the standards we want for our beloved

country is ISO 14001," she added.

"That's the law, that's what the President said, and then you follow the law."

Philex obtained its IMS Certification from TUV Rheinland as early as April 2015, while Silangan was awarded its ISO 14001 Certification last month before the Duterte administration came into office.

"With these certifications, we have emphasized our care for the environment and the safety of our people. Environmental awareness and looking after the safety of workers are the trademarks of a responsible miner," said Eulalio Austin, Jr., Philex Mining CEO and president.

An IMS certification covers all company processes and the management requirements on environment as well as quality and labor protection.

It includes both ISO 14001:2004 certification for instituting a systematic approach for the improvement of performance in environmental protection and an OHSAS 18001:2007 certification, a recognized standard for the internal and external assessment of Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Management Systems.

Silangan Mindanao's ISO 14001: 2004 certification was awarded for its pre-mining development activities given by Certification International Philippines.

"This is hard proof of Silangan's hard work in establishing the culture of responsible mining. This certification is also a result of an actual audit done by an internationally accredited independent group. We are probably the first mining company who received an ISO 14001 certification prior to the actual mining operation," said Yulo Perez, president and CEO of SMMCI.

Perez added that the certificate was in compliance with DENR Administrative Order 2015 - 07, which requires mining companies to secure ISO 14001 certificates to enforce environmental compliance and promote responsible and sustainable mining.

Lawyer Michael Toledo, Philex Mining's senior vice president for public and regulatory affairs and head of the MVP Group media bureau, emphasized that in their combined 60 years of operations of "living the tradition of responsible mining," Philex and SMMCI have both set the benchmark and inspiration for other mining companies to follow, as evidenced by their IMS and ISO certifications, numerous awards on corporate governance and sustainability, as well as active participation in government transparency initiatives.

"This is a yet another validation of global best practices that Philex Mining Corp. and Silangan Mindanao Mining have always aspired for and maintained. These certifications give strong assurances to existing and prospective investors and strategic partners of both Philex and Silangan on our excellence in operation, maintenance and rehabilitation practices," he said.

Both Philex Mining and Silangan Mindanao Mining have also been recipients of numerous awards on environmental protection and mine safety.



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POWER FIRMS CONFIDENT OF HURDLING D.E.N.R. CHIEF'S SCRUTINY

## Coal-plant owners unfazed by Lopez

BY LENIE LECTURA [@llectura](#)

**C**OAL-FIRED power-plant operators are unfazed by the pronouncement of Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez that all investments in coal power plants will be strictly scrutinized, saying they have complied with all the requirements in securing the necessary permits.

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“We feel that we operate within the standards set, so there should not be a problem.”

—MORAZA



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# Coal-plant owners unfazed by Lopez

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Aside from their compliance, officials of the power generators stressed that they only utilize the so-called clean-coal technology to mitigate the environmental impact of power generation using coal.

But according to Greepeace report, the so-called clean coal is merely an illusion. "Coal plants are the biggest source of man-made carbon-dioxide emissions. This makes coal energy the single greatest threat facing our climate," it said, adding that coal-plant emissions may cause over 2,400 premature deaths in the country.

It also said the Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology, a proposal to capture carbon emissions from power plants and bury these, won't be ready for at least another 20 years. "By then, it would be too late to save the climate. The vague promises of CCS are being used to justify building new coal plants."

Aboitiz Power Corp. President and COO Antonio Moraza defended the company's coal operations. "We feel that we operate within the standards set, so there should not be a problem," he said in a text message when sought for comment.

AboitizPower is the holding company for the Aboitiz Group's investments in power generation, distribution, retail and power services.

In its annual report released in May, the company said its portfolio of generation assets accounts for 16 percent of the country's installed generation capacity. Of this, 1,957 megawatts (MW) are baseload coal and oil-fired power plants, while 1,217 MW are renewable energy (RE).

The power firm's coal-fired power plants include the 300-MW facility of AboitizPower subsidiary Therma South

Inc.; the 700-MW Pagbilao plant of another subsidiary Therma Power and its partner; the 210-MW plant of AboitizPower and partners; and the 246-MW facility of AboitizPower and a partner.

DMCI Holdings Inc. President Isidro Consunji said Semirara Mining and Power Corp. and DMCI Power Corp. have secured the necessary permits from the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for their various power projects.

"We have ECCs [environmental compliance certificates] to prove that we are compliant," he said via text message when asked for comment.

Besides, he added, the company is yet to receive any new directive from the DENR. "We have not received any information on new instructions from the DENR. All I am saying is that we have secured ECCs as proof that we have complied with the government's requirements," Consunji said.

Energy Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi is aware of the Climate Change Commission's stand regarding the continued use of coal-power plants, as well as the policy pronouncement of Lopez.

He said he was prepared to sit down and discuss this with the new DENR chief to find the "right balance," since the country "can't afford not to have coal."

"If coal is not the solution, what is the alternative? You have to find that balance—the energy mix cannot all be renewable energy. If it's RE, why not? But we have to be realistic. We will discuss that. We have to help one another find the solution," Cusi said.

Data from the DOE showed the Philippines will see nearly 5,000 MW of new power plants being built until 2020, of

which over 70 percent are coal-based.

Under the DOE's current fuel-mix policy, the country should source 30 percent of its energy requirements from coal, 30 percent from RE and another 30 percent from natural gas. The remaining 10 percent will come from oil-based power plants.

Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc. (Acric) of the Alcantara Group, meanwhile, said its four power plants operate at emission levels that are even lower than those allowed by the DENR.

"As Mindanao's first and most experienced independent power producer, we, at Alsons Power, have consistently complied with the DENR and global standards for allowable emissions since the start of operations of our first power plant in 1993," Acric Chairman Tomas Alcantara said in an e-mail reply.

He added that Acric is strongly supporting the Duterte administration's policy of a balanced energy mix between renewable and traditional sources of power.

"We, at Alsons Power, also admire and share Energy Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez's staunch advocacy and passion to preserve and protect our environment. Alsons Power welcomes Energy Secretary Cusi's statement that he is prepared to sit down with Secretary Lopez to discuss the need to strike the right balance between having adequate, reliable energy supply and a cleaner environment," he added.

Among others, Acric is involved in the 210-MW Sarangani Energy Corp. (SEC) baseload coal-fired power plant in Magsaysay, Sarangani, and the 105-MW San Ramon Power Inc. baseload coal-fired power plant in Talisayan, Zamboanga City.

By 2019, Acric-affiliated power facilities will have around 588 MW of generating capacity, approximately 25 percent

of Mindanao's projected peak-power demand for that year. First Philippine Holdings (FPH) Corp. Chairman and Chief Executive Federico Lopez said earlier that First Gen Corp. would not invest in coal-fired power plants.

"Today let me state unequivocally and for the record that the FPH and its subsidiaries will not build, develop or invest in any coal-fired power plant. I'm certain that, without having to look too far, this country already has many alternatives that do not mortgage the future of our children and future of our planet," Lopez said.

He said the Lopez Group would push for the development of geothermal-power plants, as well as RE.

The company's declaration against investing in coal-fired power plants would affect the company's business prospects moving forward.

"It's just a matter of shifting our focus elsewhere. It is quite liberating because we are going where the rest of the world is headed, and for me, it is important for the country to embrace this," Lopez said.

First Gen earlier urged the government to increase the share of RE in the country's power-generation mix to 50 percent to counter the damaging effects of climate change.

Lopez said the remaining 50 percent of the generation mix could be shared by other sources, including low-carbon emission power projects.

First Gen owns the 1,000-MW Santa Rita and the 500-MW San Lorenzo gas plants in Batangas City.

It is developing two more gas plants—the 97-MW Avion open-cycle and the 414-MW San Gabriel combined cycle natural gas plant.



# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Key chain Cabinet

IT SEEMED that our new President, the tough-talking Duterte Harley, based on his statements and actions, would have none of those secret groups of roguish shadow advisers known as kitchen Cabinet.

You know, the kind famous in the administration of Tita Cory as the "Council of Trent" or in the administration of the man named Band...Wrist Band...as the "midnight Cabinet!"

Such was the view in big business, as influential organizations tried to assess and react to the choices of Duterte Harley for his new Cabinet.

At one point, by the way, the number of "regular" Cabinet positions in the just-concluded Aquino (Part II) administration reached a peak of 35 plus about six "other Cabinet-rank officials."

Just imagine the headache of Duterte Harley in filling up that many Cabinet positions, considering he had only a small circle of "trusted" friends and classmates, to begin with!

Admittedly, groups like the mining sector or even the construction industry might bicker that certain key members of the new Cabinet seemed to be rather impulsive picks, potentially becoming the weak links in his official chain.

The name of Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar would quickly come to mind, since his family's real estate company had development projects in more than 80 cities and towns all over the country crying for government projects.

Immediately, the business community, through the stock market, sounded the alarm bells for "conflict of interest," with the price of stocks of the Villar companies suddenly zooming up to the sky.

The same should be true in the case of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Paz Lopez, aka Gina Lopez, a member of the loaded Lopez clan, who, four years ago in 2012, crossed swords with the entire mining sector.

Reports said that, at the onset, Duterte Harley wanted to give the DENR portfolio to any nominee of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and when the plan fizzled off, he trained his sights on recruiting a former rank-

#### BREAKTIME

*Conrado R.  
Banal III*



ing military officer.

The latest I heard was that Duterte Harley wooed a Filipino scientist who had an ongoing engagement at Harvard University, who, however, begged off for the time being because of his commitment in the prestigious US institution.

It seemed therefore that Lopez was not even in the lineup of possible heads for one critical executive department like the DENR.

From what I gathered, the BIR commissioner, lawyer Ceasar Dulay, was also not the original choice of Duterte Harley, since Dulay hardly had any background in taxation law, having been in the legal unit of the Philippine Airlines.

The first choice was actually Jesus Clint Arenas, the tax expert from SGV, the accounting firm that became the local version of the US group Ernst and Young, who was relegated to being BIR deputy commissioner for legal.

Anyway, the biggest problem of the Duterte administration over the appointment of the fanatical anti-mining Lopez would be the prevailing view in the business community on her competence—or the lack of it.

For instance, the former head of the UP National Institute of Geological Sciences (NIGS), Carlo Arcilla, said Lopez was "simply not qualified," considering her lack of scientific training, which she often revealed in her statements on the mining sector.

Lopez reportedly said that, contrary to the statements of Duterte Harley, there was no such thing as "responsible" mining in this world, because mining was a biggest reason behind poverty in the country.

In other words, to Lopez, mining was bad, period. And so incompetence became the latest battle cry against her.

Arcilla noted that, contrary to her claim that all mining sites were poor areas (implying that mining caused the poverty), "mineralized" land would not be fit for any kind of agriculture.

He also insisted that studies had shown how the thousands of mining jobs in the country actually saved hundreds of families from poverty.

In Mindanao alone, home base of Duterte Harley, where his administration wanted to push for rapid growth, various local and foreign companies already invested more than \$17 billion in the mining sector.

What would happen to those investments?

That estimate did not even include the billions of pesos in coal-fired power plants that Lopez also wanted to eliminate from the face of earth—or at least the piece of earth occupied by the Philippines.

Advanced countries like Germany were still very much into coal power plants.

And so the business community turned to the issue of "conflict of interest" involving Lopez, and her wealthy clan, as a reaction to her recent statements regarding a possible ban on coal power plants.

As we all know, the Lopez clan had huge interests in the rather expensive "renewable" power, such as geothermal, wind, and solar power facilities, or even natural gas plants.

The government gave subsidies to "renewable" energy through the so-called Feed-in Tariff, or FIT, to help defray the high cost of renewable energy estimated at P8.70 per kwh, versus the low cost of coal plants at P3 per kwh.

Insisting that coal power plants produced "dirty" energy, Lopez reportedly vowed to review all permits issued by the Aquino (Part II) administration, which of course made the business sector even more nervous of the DENR under her.

The latest in an apparent demolition job on Lopez was of course the revival of the COA report on the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), which she headed as a real government official under the Aquino (Part II) administration.

It seemed that the COA report had shown that, under Lopez, the PRRC bungled its program to clean up the Pasig River, as millions of pesos worth of recycling equipment were rendered as "junk," i.e. wasted, because Lopez decided to purchase the equipment well in advance.

Did the Duterte administration really want the problem called Gina Lopez this early?



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### A sensible annulment

WE'RE witnessing divorces of a different kind, institutional ones. One has been blessed: Communications has left the Department of Transportation and Communications and has found a new partner in the Department of Information and Communications Technology, so once the honeymoon is over, there's no doubt it will be life happily ever after. After all, it's a marriage made in heaven. Transportation is left alone and lonely. Tying the knot with the Department of Public Works and Highways is a possible way to go. Control what you've built. It's a partnership that the parents (in Malacañang) should carefully research, toward the desirability of an arranged marriage.

There's another where the partners are miserable together, fighting every day, with irreconcilable differences. They'll never get along. So in this crazy, isolated country where divorce isn't permitted, it's time to annul the marriage. The Church won't care, and it may even be supportive.

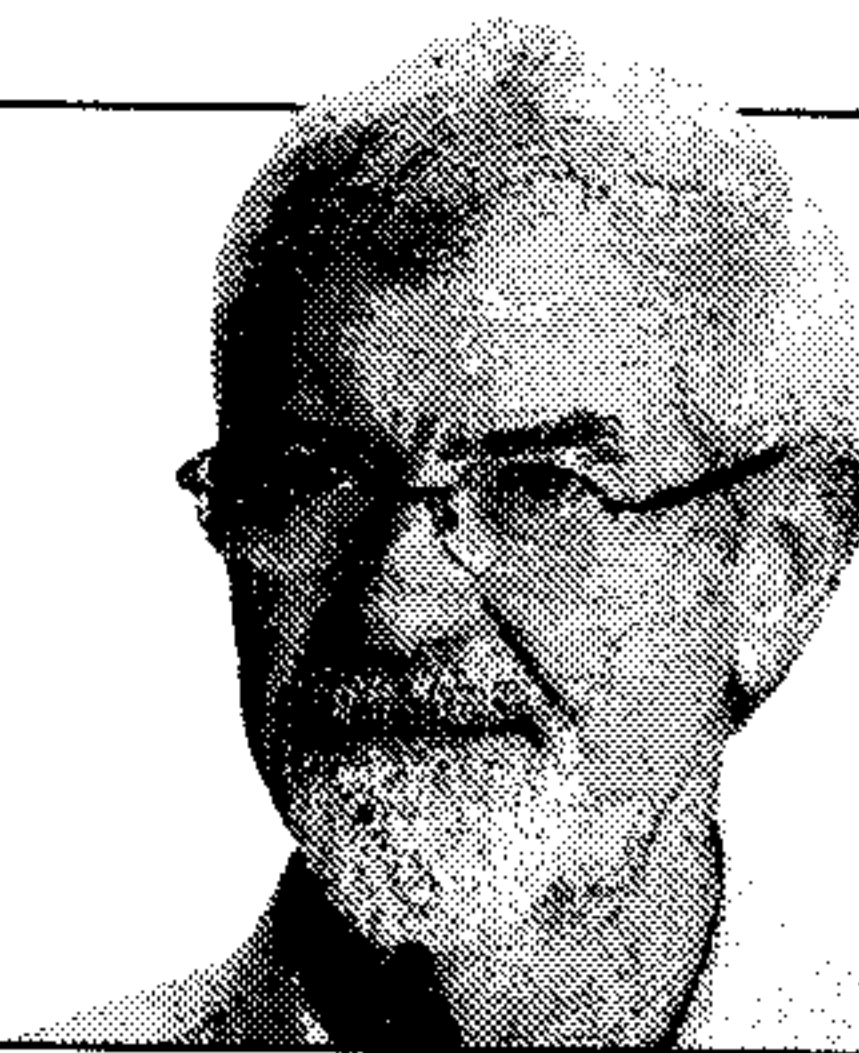
And that's the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Tree-huggers can't stand miners. And miners think the huggers don't even begin to understand them. So, annul. Let them go their separate ways. It makes no sense to promote an industry in the same department that also controls and regulates it. The department head will inevitably be biased one way or the other.

We need a DENR where a passionate environmentalist can fight tooth and nail for every tree, shrub and eagle, even for crocodiles. And Gina Lopez is the perfect choice for this. For the next six years climate change will ever increasingly demand our attention. The desecration of our forests, not by miners but by illegal loggers and local folks eking out a living, requires far more attention and action to stop it. The lack of parks in cities, of the oxygen to fight pollution, bothers me greatly.

While mining is under the purview of an environment secretary, it will take too much of, and even dominate, that secretary's time. The way the world, and especially the Philippines, is being destroyed by too many people acting with no care for that environment, we will lose the very environment we need within which to survive, let alone live a healthy life. We need a secretary who can de-

#### LIKE IT IS

Peter Wallace



vote 24/7 to giving us the environment we need.

We need a different department for mining where the leader knows the industry intimately but comes from a strong, ethical and well-balanced history, a leader who knows the difference between responsible and irresponsible. In mining, responsible means miners who do minimum damage (there is always some during the mining operation), one who actively, even aggressively, supports the local communities, pays their taxes, and puts the area back into a fully green condition when finished (generally between 30 and 50 years). The irresponsible are just criminals and must be put out of their misery in "Duterte fashion." There can be no "bleeding heart" concern for the small guy when it comes to mining. You use picks and shovels, fine. But give them to a 12-year-old kid. You're closed? And thrown in jail, I would hope. You use mercury to leach out the gold, you're finished.

Mining isn't a *sari-sari* store. It's a complex process that can be easily, dangerously abused. Those who abuse, of any size, must be stopped. The good guys must be allowed to give us the products our modern society demands that we have.

It's not just the smartphones, cars, TVs and refrigerators. It's the clothes on our back (you need a thread and needle, a sewing machine, and a loom). It's the food you cook. You prepare the land with a plow. You transport in a truck. EVERYTHING needs mined products.

I mustn't forget energy. Our electricity comes from a mine, too, much of it—and will do so for many years yet. We need coal (for now, but not eventually), and natural gas—yes, that comes from a mine. So let's go solar and wind. But what's a windmill made of? What holds a solar

panel together and delivers the electricity? Metals. Well, let's do without electricity. But paraffin lamps need oil. That's mined. There is nothing that doesn't have a mined product in it somewhere, somehow.

Of course there's Nimby—not in my backyard. But isn't this a Christian country where you don't foist on your neighbor what you're not prepared to do yourself? Selfishness is not in the Bible or Koran. Generosity or doing things for others is.

A responsible miner uplifts the community and leaves the land in better shape than it was when he leaves. That's what President Duterte should demand.

A responsible miner builds rural roads. Yes, he uses them, but so does the community. They have roads they never had. A responsible miner builds schools, provides scholarships for deserving students, establishes a clinic for all, etc. And provides jobs for people who had none. And will have none if the mine is closed. The list goes on and is available from any responsible mine. When my wife went to school in Baguio, the kids from Benguet were brought by bus while the kids from other villages walked. Mines bring wealth to a community; to say otherwise is nonsense. Government statistics don't show it, they're too macro—seeing the province, not the barangay.

What is missing is government support. The mandated share of taxes that local governments are supposed to receive come, if at all, sometimes years after they were due. Better if they be paid direct, simplifying the bureaucracy.

A Department of Mining can assure all this to happen while promoting new responsible mining to provide jobs and uplift the economy.

A Department of the Environment can ensure that the least damage is done—where forests are maintained, reefs protected, and eagles given the environment to thrive. Responsible logging should be part of it. Don't ban logging; demand that when you cut one tree, you plant 10.

Time to annul the marriage.

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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### GLOBAL VIEW

# Making the government more efficient



By BETH DAY ROMULO

**T**HERE was a move to split the Department of Environment and Natural Resources into a Department of Environment and a Department of Natural Resources to make them more efficient. Within the past decade, environment has become a leading concern in the world, due to rising global temperatures which have melted Arctic and Antarctic glaciers, which, in turn, have contributed to rising sea levels. The Philippines has emerged as a regional leader in the development of renewable energy sources – solar, wind, and geothermal power – which have gradually replaced the use of fossil fuels, such as coal and gas, that pollute the environment.

The Department of Transportation and Communication has already been split into a Department of Transportation and a separate Department of Information and Communication Technology.

President Duterte has named Gina Lopez, who is a well-known environmentalist, to become the next DENR Secretary. This appointment will be good for en-

vironmentalists, but the mining sector is unhappy about it, judging by the fall in mining and oil stocks after the appointment was made public. But as columnist Solita Monsod has pointed out, the appointment of Gina Lopez as head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is an appointment to be applauded. The president has put this important department into the hands of someone who is already an environmentalist and a committed natural resources conservator, and who cannot be manipulated by politicians or bribed by mining interests. While detractors have tried to paint Mrs. Lopez as an empty-headed, wealthy socialite who dabbles in public service, the facts speak otherwise.

Gina Lopez has been at the forefront of the campaign to save the Pasig River. Over the past few years, she has flown all over the Philippines at her own expense to take pictures and interview residents about the damage to the environment that has occurred in areas of unregulated mining activities.

According to Mrs. Monsod's analysis, the DENR stands no risk of being captured by vested interests, so long as Gina Lopez is at the helm.



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# HOT ALPHABET SOUP FOR MINING

**M**ining is once again in the limelight — or in the doldrums? — as President Duterte threatened to take on the industry for environmental destruction. In addition to strong words against irresponsible miners shortly before taking his oath of office, the President also nominated a known anti-mining activist to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

These actions now beg the following questions: Is President Duterte against all mining? I don't think so. Is he totally against destructive mining? Yes, I believe so, as any government official should be. Will the order for a new audit of all mining operations nationwide result in intolerable delays in the approval of new mining applications? Maybe.

I am pro-environment, but I am not anti-mining. I cannot be. I believe only a hypocrite will declare himself 100% anti-mining and yet continue to live on the products of the industry. Most everything in the "built" world — cement, sand, iron and steel, glass, semiconductors, electronics, as well as coal, oil, and gas — are all products of extraction, including mining.

But I do believe that mining should be responsible, and should be less about profits and supplying a demand for products, and more about preserving the environment and improving people's lives. There should be a balance, but it should be skewed in favor of environmental protection, economic upliftment, and social protection.

### MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN EXTRACTION, PRESERVATION

In striving for the ideal, I offer hot alphabet soup. The government and the mining industry, in my opinion, should take to mind and heart the following acronyms: IRMA, ISO, and EITI. By looking into these letters, they will find themselves more or less on the path of "responsible" mining, or the middle ground between extraction and preservation.

IRMA is the global Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance. It is a private sector-led multi-stakeholder, consultative initiative that advocates responsible mining worldwide. It is currently working to establish "a multi-stakeholder and independently verifiable responsible mining assurance system that improves social and environmental performance."

### STATIC MARVIN A. TORT

Using the updated ISO certification as the initial basis for quick audit can result in the least amount of downtime for ongoing mining operations, or the least delay in the approval of new mining applications.

On its Web site, IRMA explains that it was founded in 2006 by a coalition of nongovernment organizations, businesses purchasing minerals and metals for resale in other products, affected communities, mining companies, and trade unions. Note that miners are included in the initiative, and that is it not exclusive to anti-mining groups.

This coalition is presently "developing standards for environmental and social issues related to mining, including labor rights, human rights, indigenous peoples and cultural heritage, conflict response, pollution control and site closure." After all, who best to determine the global standards for responsible mining that mining's stakeholders themselves.

And by developing the "standard," IRMA targets to put in place "a system of independent, third-party verification to enable mine sites to credibly demonstrate that they are operating in a manner that is consistent with healthy communities and environments, and that leaves posi-

tive long-term legacies." This, obviously, aims to produce universal results acceptable to all.

It just so happens that it was only in April that IRMA made public for review comments the second draft of its proposed "Standard for Responsible Mining." The first draft was made public in July 2014, but various stakeholders requested for an extension to review it. This was after the global stakeholder public comment period that ran from July to November in 2014.

So, the Duterte government's timing in calling for a new review is somewhat fortuitous. I just hope, however, that in conducting its new audit of mines, the DENR will also consider developments abroad, particularly the IRMA initiative and how it can help us locally. If we want global best practices here, we need to have a credible source of data and information.

IRMA's proposed "standard" will outline "a set of best-practice requirements that were developed and are being revised through multi-stakeholder processes." And then, mining companies' adherence to these responsible mining practices



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### STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Hot Alphabet soup for mining

can be independently verified through the "responsible mining assurance system" that IRMA will implement.

#### GLOBAL STANDARDS TO HELP DEFINE RESPONSIBLE MINING

This, I believe, is key to this entire mining brouhaha and the hairsplitting as to how responsible mining is defined. IRMA also reportedly plans to "beta test its certification system" in 2017, which is just a year from now, and "mine sites participating in the beta test phase of IRMA's development will be eligible for certification."

I believe local mining companies as well as DENR should take this opportunity to be involved or to participate in this beta phase, if only to show their good faith in locally adopting mining's global best practices — which would be based on standards set by global stakeholders after exhaustive consultation and comprehensive study.

In short, why reinvent the wheel and waste time replicating locally the "audit" and consultation process now happening worldwide, only to later on adopt global best practices, anyway. The global audit is ongoing through IRMA, and the consultation is

phase starting in 2017 or six months from now — as compliant with the new global, multi-stakeholder standards, then what more will the government want? IRMA will be the end all and be all of standards, and DENR's job will simply to make sure that IRMA certifications are updated and mines are monitored strictly for compliance.

Meantime, or at least until the IRMA standards go beyond the beta phase certification, I believe the ISO 14001 standard should be deemed as substantial compliance. This is in the absence of other globally accepted or universal standard of compliance with best practices. After all, ISO or the International Organization for Standardization, is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 163 countries.

On its Web site, ISO says it gives "world-class specifications for products, services and systems, to ensure quality, safety and efficiency. They are instrumental in facilitating international trade." I see ISO's value, particularly for mining, as a third-party, independent audit of mining operations while IRMA is still in its infancy.

Perhaps in the future, say three years from now, the IRMA standard can take the place of the ISO standards for mining, particularly in terms of environmental management. I believe the IRMA standard will eventually become the globally acceptable standard. Minus that, ISO is the next best thing to ensuring that local miners implement environmental managements systems that adopt locally the best practices of similar industries worldwide.

ISO has reportedly published more than 21,000 International Standards and related documents, covering almost every industry, from technology, to food safety, to agriculture and health care. And yet, locally, particularly in mining, only four out of hundreds of mining companies are reportedly updated in the ISO certification of their environmental management systems.

ISO certification is a good start, I believe, as the DENR itself has cited it in the past as perhaps a reasonable and acceptable measure of compliance with respect to environmental protection standards. It is unbiased and empirical, and requires periodic monitoring. It can be withdrawn anytime in case of breach, thus noncompliance has repercussions.

Sans any other globally acceptable standard, and barring the imposition of new local requirements, using the updated ISO

of new mining applications. And considering that only four mining companies reportedly meet this requirement to date, then more emphasis should be given to it.

#### OPEN, ACCOUNTABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Another effort that requires greater local support is EITI or the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. EITI is another global standard, but this time to promote the open and accountable management of natural resources. On its Web site, EITI claims to address the key governance issues of the oil, gas and mining sectors.

"The EITI Standard covers themes or key issues from the extraction of the resource from the ground to how it affects the citizens of the country. This includes how licenses and contracts are allocated and registered, who are the beneficial owners of those operations, what are the fiscal and legal arrangements, how much is produced, how much is paid, where are those revenues allocated, and what is the contribution to the economy, including employment," the EITI Web site notes.

I am uncertain as to how many local companies are now part of IRMA, but I do believe the Philippines started participating in EITI in 2013. EITI provides a platform to systematically report on, review, and assess what is being paid by companies in fees and taxes and received by governments through a system of bilateral disclosures.

Admittedly, EITI is more for the public sector, as "the government benefits from following an internationally-recognized transparency standard that demonstrates commitment to reform and anti-corruption, leading to improvements to the tax collection process, and enhanced trust and stability in a volatile sector."

However, by taking part in EITI, the private sector, particularly extractive industries like oil

and gas as well as mineral mining, become more transparent in their dealing with government. At the same time, they can be held more accountable for their actions and what they pay — or not pay — to the government. At the same time, the government becomes more accountable as to how it spends what it earns from extractive industries like mineral mining. ■

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Philex Mining reports ISO certification

PHILEX Mining Corp. and its subsidiary Silangan Mindanao Mining Corp. have secured the required International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001 as early as last year, said Eulalio Austin Jr., Philex Mining chief executive officer and president.

This as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered an audit on all existing mines in the country.

Philex Mining said it has obtained its IMS Certification from TUV Rheinland last April 2015 while Silangan Mindanao was awarded its ISO 14001 certification last June.

"With these certifications, we have emphasized our care for the environment and the safety of our people. Environmental awareness and looking after the safety of workers are the trademarks of a responsible miner," Austin said in a statement.

Michael Toledo, Philex Mining senior vice president for public and regulatory affairs, said the company has set a benchmark for other mining companies to follow.

"This is a yet another validation of global best practices that Philex Mining Corp. and Silangan Mindanao Mining have always aspired for and maintained. These certifications give strong assurances to existing and prospective investors and strategic partners of both Philex and Silangan on our excellence in operation, maintenance and rehabilitation practices," he said.

Regina Lopez, DENR secretary, earlier said the audit on existing mines, which will last for a month, is necessary as only 30 percent of the 42 operating metallic mines in the country were able to secure the required certification.

"It is my challenge to the mining companies, prove it. If you feel that your exist-



Philex Mining said it secured its IMS Certification from TUV Rheinland last in April 2015.

ence in the country is good, then prove it... Should any mine be suspended or closed, I will take special care to make sure that anyone who works in the mine will not be disadvantaged," Lopez said recently.

Lopez added the list of non-conforming mining companies will be revealed after the audit.

The ISO 14001 certification was earlier required by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to all metallic mines with a deadline that expired last May 1. Under the order, mining firms that fail to secure this will not be given ore transport permit and will be prohibited to export minerals abroad.

In an earlier interview with the min-

ing bureau, it said aside from Philex Mining, Oceana Gold, SR Metals Inc. and Greenstone Resources Corp. also secured ISO certification.

Apart from the audit, the DENR will also require non-metallic mines to obtain the same ISO certification to be allowed to operate and will push for government to take a larger share of income from mining firms.

"I feel that the government should get more. That's my take. If you look at the numbers, the suffering goes to the community but the bulk goes to taxes. I don't think that's right. And if you look at our share in the taxes, we don't get much at all," Lopez earlier said.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Apex Mining confident of securing ECC for Maco mine tenement

LISTED Apex Mining Co. Inc. is expecting to secure an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for one of its tenements in the Maco mine complex in the next few months.

"In a matter of months, we're going to get our environmental compliance certificate for MPSA [mineral production sharing agreements] 234 and that would also allow us to start mining this part of the tenement," said Apex Mining Executive Vice-President for Geology, Exploration and Operations Graciano P. Yumul, Jr. during the company stockholders' meeting last week.

Apex Mining has two approved agreements, namely the MPSA 234-2007-XI which is targeted to be drilled next year, and the MPSA 225-2005-XI, which covers 15% of the 2,500-hectare Maco mine in Compostella Valley.

"We have a lot of deposits we're still targeting... there's still a lot of areas to be explored and for next year we have already identified the different areas we're going to drill and put underground tunnels," Mr. Yumul added.

An ECC, issued by the Environmental Management Bureau, certifies that the mine has complied with all the requirements of the environmental impact assessment and has committed to implement its approved environmental management plan.

Apex Mining reported P40.22 million in attributable net income in the first three months of 2016, a 60% drop from P100.27 million during the same period last year.

The company said its Maco mine set a new production record over a quarter period, producing 12,779 ounces of gold and 61,085 ounces of silver, higher by 11% and 18%, respectively.

Apex Mining is aiming to more than triple its profit this year on the back of a higher targeted capacity at its Maco mine and a projected recovery in gold prices.

Apex Mining Comptroller Marion Saul V. Aggarao earlier said the firm set a P320-million net income target this year, a 351% increase from last year's P71 million. Apex Mining is also looking to generate a billion more in revenues this year to P3.4 billion. — **Janina C. Lim**



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Mining company allots P3M for PhilHealth Ward at PGH

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

🐦 @jonlmayuga

**H**INATUAN Mining Corp. (HMC), a subsidiary of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC), the largest producer of nickel in the Philippines, said in a statement it has allocated P3 million to refurbish a ward at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) in Manila.

Jose Bayani Baylon, NAC vice president for corporate communications, said the donation will be used for the refurbishment of a space vacated when the Ophthalmology Department moved to the Jose Rizal Eye Center.

The funding for the PGH PhilHealth Ward project was approved by HMC Vice President Rolly Cruz, NAC Vice President for Legal Affairs Bodeck Fernando and NAC SVP Martin Antonio Zamora.

Dr. Gerardo D. Legaspi, PGH director, said the PhilHealth Ward should answer the needs of pa-

tients who want to be treated as private patients, but could not afford it.

"Someone's paying for health insurance should get good-quality care from doctors and PGH, as well, and yet we have acceptable accommodation and comfort through the PhilHealth Ward," Legaspi said.

The PhilHealth Ward, which has 28 compartmental beds, is designed to enhance the privacy of patients and reduce communicable infections.

Dr. Leo D.P. Cubillan, chairman of the Department of Pay Patient Services, said any earnings that could be generated from the PhilHealth Ward will be earmarked to subsidize the charity wards of PGH. "Whatever income we get from the PhilHealth Ward, we use it to support our charity operations," Cubillan said.

PGH, he said, is spending P600,000 to P1 million every day for its charity ward. The fund from the national government is not enough to shoulder its operational expenses.



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## NAKADUDUDANG AKSYON VS MINING SA TAYSAN

NOONG June 26, 2016 ay ipinasa ng konseho ng bayan ng Taysan, Batangas ang isang ordinansa na nag-uutos ng total ban ng mining sa kanila.

Ang total ban ordinance (Municipal Order No. 2016-001) ay nagbabawal ng pagtatayo ng minahan, quarry at crusher saanmang dako ng Taysan.

Pero bakit ngayon lamang ipinagbawal ang mining sa Taysan, gayong halos tatlong dekada nang namamayagpag ang illegal mining dito.

Ika nga ng beteranong mamamahayag ng Batangas na si Cris Ibon, dapat ay imbestigahan ng Duterte administration ang pamilya Portugal.

Ang mga Portugal umano ang pamilya ng mga politiko na nagsilbi nang deka-dekadang taon sa bayang ito ng Batangas.

Sa kanilang napakahabang panahon na panunungkulan ay nagsulputan at namayagpag ang illegal mining na lubhang nakasira sa gandang yaman ng Taysan.

May kasabihan na ang lahat ay may katapusan. Noong nakaraang election ay natalo ang huling nakaupong mayor na si Dondon Portugal.

Pero bago lisanin ni Mayor Dondon Portugal ang liderato ng Taysan ay biglang nagpasa ang konseho ng total mining ban ordinance.



## CHOKES POINT

ni BONG PADUA

nance.

Nakadududa, ayon kay kaibigang Cris, ang ordinansa kaya ang suhestiyon natin ay silipin ito ni Pangulong Digong.

Ngayon ay may bagong pinuno ang Taysan sa katauhan ni Mayor Grande Gutierrez, na nagpataob kay Dondon Portugal noong election.

Hiling natin kay Mayor Gutierrez na magsagawa ng imbestigasyon at panagutin ang mga taong nasa-likod ng iligal na pagminina.

May natanggap tayong ulat na isang mining advocate na opisyal ngayon ng Duterte administration ay nagmimina rin sa Taysan.

Hamon natin kay Mayor Gutierrez na bantayan ang Duterte official na ito na kung umasta ay mapagmahal sa kalikasan pero 'di naman pala.

Ang illegal mining sa Taysan ay matatagpuan sa Brgy. San Marcelino, Bacao, Piña, Sto Niño, Mataas na Lupa at iba pa.

Bukod sa Taysan, may mga illegal mining, quarry, crushing at logging operations din sa Brgy. Mainaga, Mabini; Brgy. Tanggoy, Balayan; at sa Lemery, Calaca, Calatagan, Agoncillo, Laurel, Talisay, Balete, Calaca, Nasugbu at Batangas City.





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### MASAlamin ni Ed Cordevilla

ANG pagmimina at pagku-quarry ay nakasisira sa ating kalikasan at maging sa ating mga komunidad, lalo na sa mga katutubong Pilipino na kadalasan ay nagiging mga biktima ng pandarahas ng mga negosyante at politikong kasapakat nila.

Marahil ay dapat ipaintindi sa mga gumagawa ng batas at nagbibigay ng regulasyon sa mga mining company na may mga responsibilidad

at katugunan muna para sa lokal na komunidad ang isang mining company bago ito mairehistro at makapagsimula ng pagmimina.

Dapat maintindihan nila na ang lugar na kanilang miminahin ay hindi kanila kundi parte ng buhay ng mga lokal na residente, hindi maaari na basta na lamang magbungkal at dumurog ng mga bundok nang walang tiyak na kapakinabangan hindi lamang ang pamahalaan

kundi higit ay ang mga lokal na komunidad na direktang apektado ng mga pagmimina.

Magandang gawing modelo para sa minahan at pagku-quarry ang Diavik Diamond Mine sa Northwest Territories ng bansang Canada.

Sa 1,000 empleyado ng Diavik Diamond Mine, kalahati nito ay mula sa mga katutubo na pawang binigyan ng edukasyon at training ng nasabing kompanya. Bukod sa pag-eempleyo, sa \$6 bilyon na ginastos sa konstruksiyon at operasyon ng minahan ay nasa higit sa \$4 bilyon

ang napapunta sa mga kompanya na pagmamay-ari ng mga katutubo na siyang nagsu-supply sa Diavik Diamond Mine.

Bukod dito, ang kompanya ay nag-iinvest din ng \$5 milyon kada taon para sa sari-saring sponsorship program at project para sa komunidad katulad ng educational scholarship at iba't ibang inisyatibo na pinatatakbo ng mga katutuboon. Nilinaw rin sa pagitan ng mga katutubo at kompanya ang proteksiyon ng kapaligiran at mga wildlife kasama na ang pagpapanatili sa mga

daluyan ng tubig, puno at kabundukan.

Nagbigay rin ng diin sa paggamit ng kompanya at komunidad sa mga renewable energy source. Tuloy-tuloy rin ang edukasyon ukol sa lokal na kultura at kamalayan nito, bukod pa sa patuloy na pagtuturo sa mga katutubo ng pagpapalago ng kani-kanilang mga negosyo.

Bukod sa mga benepisyo sa mga katutubo, ang mismong pamahalaan ng Canada mula sa lokal hanggang pambansa ay nakinabang sa milyon-milyong dolyar na mga buwis na binabayaran ng

kompanya.

Higit sa lahat, mababanaag sa kanilang gawi ng pag-estima sa mga minahan at pagku-quarry ang kapakinabangan muna ng mga lokal na komunidad. Sinisiguro sa kanilang mga kasunduan na lubos ang magiging benepisyo ng mga komunidad bago pa ang pamahalaan sa isasagawang pagmimina o pagku-quarry.

Marahil ganito rin ang nararapat na pagtingin sa ganitong mga aktibidad sa ating bansa, na ang isang project venture site ay hindi pagmamay-ari ninuman ni ng pamahalaan man, kundi ito ay parte ng buhay ng mga lokal na komunidad at

katutubo. Dapat na masiguro muna ang lubos na kapakinabangan at benepisyo ng mga lokal na komunidad, higit sa lahat ay ang mga katutubo sa mga mining at quarry site.

Dapat baguhin ng mga Pilipino ang pagtingin sa isang mine site na ang yayaman lamang ay ang mga nag-ooperate nito kundi pinakaimportante na dapat na kasama ang komunidad sa pagkita ng salapi at pagsulong sa asenso. Sa ngayon, ang bawat katutubo at kani-kanilang mga anak na direktang benepisyaryo ng Diavik Diamond Mine ay pawang mga milyonaryo na.



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Anti-coal activist killed

**DAHLI ASPILLERA**



*'Coal production, be it on an industrial scale or backyard family income supplement, is a major cause of environmental degradation and workers' ailments.'*

**D**ESPITE the undesirable effects of coal production, the previous administration scheduled the creation of a number of coal factories, pressured and convinced by coal producers.

It is evident that the constant threat of power shortage has hindered industrial growth in Mindanao. To address the shortage, the previous administration allowed private industry to build more power plants, mostly coal-fired, to answer the need for more electricity.

Industry dependent on coal-fired power plants are feared to be at risk now that Gina Lopez, a top advocate against coal, is now the new Department on Environment and Natural Resources secretary.

Lopez is a long-time advocate against coal-fired power plants. She is also of the Lopezes who own the First Gen Corporation (FGEN) a listed renewable energy (RE) company. During her swearing in at DENR, Lopez stressed her opposition to coal mining. "The future of our planet is dependent on renewable energy."

Acts of violence clearly shows how dangerous it is for environmentalists to defend the environment. Ian Rivera, National Coordinator of PMCJ: "Just recently the report of Global Witness Entitled On Dangerous Ground revealed that the Philippines is the 2nd deadliest place in the world for environmental activists, around 50 were killed in 2015".

PMCJ strongly condemns the senseless killing of a community leader and anti-coal activist, Gloria Capitan. The bullets fired from motorcycle riding gunmen that put an end to her life is another patented assassination style that has victimized many leaders struggling for human rights.

Gloria Capitan is a known woman and community leader of Lucanin village in Limay, Bataan. She was actively involved in opposing the presence of huge coal stockpiles located inside the Seafront Shipyard and Port Terminal Services Corp. owned by the Limay Bulk and Terminal Handling Corp. She was also involved in protest actions and petitions calling for the permanent closure of the coal storage facility.

Limay residents have been complaining of this facility. The stockpile has caused a significant increase of children and elderly suffering from asthma and other respiratory related diseases. They also observed that their houses are already darkened by coal dust particles and fisher folks experienced a drop in the volume of their catch due to coal dust and seepage from the storage facility that directly goes to the sea that is the source of their livelihood.

"I am enraged and my whole body was numb upon hearing this news, I have no words to describe how I feel about this COWARDLY act! She was a caring mother to us, a comrade in the fight against this coal menace. We demand justice for Ate Gloria." These were the words of Derec Cabe one of the leaders of Nuclear Free Bataan Movement, a member organization of PMCJ.

The country has a long list of extra judicial killings involving environmentalists. In 2011 Dr. Gerry Ortega was gunned because of his strong opposition to mining in Palawan, and Juvy Capion and her two sons were killed in 2012 for opposing the Tampakan mining project. Many more killings remain unsolved and the people behind these remain at large and unpunished.

"The killing of Gloria Capitan is definitely under the watch of the Duterte administration. We at PMCJ together with the other civil society organizations strongly call on President Rodrigo Duterte and the newly appointed DENR Secretary Ms. Gina Lopez to immediately conduct a thorough investigation and to make sure that perpetrators will be punished. These heinous crimes don't befit the administration calling for change," Ian Rivera concluded.

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Pall of uncertainty to haunt mining industry for some time

By Krista Angela M. Montealegre

National Correspondent

AN AIR OF UNCERTAINTY hangs over the country's miners and Justirini Rachel B. Gozum, who earned her BS Metallurgical Engineering degree at the University of the Philippines (UP) this year, can feel it.

With limited opportunities here, she is considering to avail of a program that will send her to Australia where she hopes she can find a job in the metal industry.

"UP is advocating service to your country, but *ako din 'yung inaasahan sa family. Hindi naman puwedeng forever maghintay ng opportunity* (...but my family relies on me. I cannot wait forever for op-

portunity)," said Ms. Gozum, 24, referring to staunch environmentalist Regina Paz L. Lopez, who has taken charge of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ms. Gozum's sentiments were echoed by a group of Mining Engineering graduates who, ironically, presented a metal pot to Ms. Lopez on her first day as DENR chief last Friday. This brought to

mind the video of her exchange with a pro-mining advocate who attempted to ridicule her by asking if she uses a *kaldero*, which is made of metals mined from underground.

Philex Mining Corp. President and Chief Executive Officer Eulalio B. Austin, Jr. and Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc. Executive Vice-President Dante R. Bravo moved to ease their anxiety, saying in separate

*Mining, SI/5*



### Mining, from SI/1

interviews that mining engineers will be in demand in the next six years.

But in reality, the industry employs only "less than a hundred" mining engineers — a result of the "unstable" investment environment in the past six years that forced them to seek opportunities abroad, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) Executive Vice-President Nelia C. Halcon said.

"We have come from an environment that's not so friendly so there is no radical change that will alter the regime of mining industry unless Gina Lopez stops mining in the country," said Ralph Christian G. Bodollo, equity research analyst at RCBC Securities, Inc.

Ms. Lopez may not implement a total mining ban, but her hardcore anti-mining stand is enough to keep the industry on edge. The industry expects a continuation of the investment dry spell former President Benigno S.C. Aquino III started when he signed in 2012 Executive Order 79 that enforced a nationwide ban on new mining permits until a new mining revenue sharing scheme is legislated.

Mining investments have been falling in

the last two years, with the 2015 figure sliding by an annual 22.5% to a three-year-low \$924.94 million, according to data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

In the media briefing last Friday, Ms. Lopez wore her heart on her sleeve, spending much of the nearly-two-hour press conference talking about the country's rich resources and the ill effects of mining. Her answers to queries were supported by a Powerpoint presentation with data on mining's negligible 1% contribution to the Philippine economy.

"I am not against mining, but I am against suffering," Ms. Lopez said, arguing that the poorest areas in the country host mining operations.

Her first directive is to review all operating mines, but she has yet to issue specifics on her position on the revenue-sharing scheme and whether the department will hand out new permits.

"For now, there is still no clear mining policy on what the government likes to do. The mining industry is at a loss on the real direction of the administration," said Astro C. del Castillo, managing director at First Grade Finance, Inc.

Commodity markets may have bottomed out, but investors remain hesitant to pick up mining stocks because of the lingering



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

*Pall of uncertainty to haunt mining industry for some time*

regulatory challenges. The mining and oil sub-index has lost 4.32% since June 21, when Mr. Duterte offered the DENR post to Ms. Lopez.

"There is little appetite for mining now," First Metro Investment Corp. Head of Research Cristina S. Ulang said.

Despite the relatively small contribution of the sector to the economy — 0.7% last year by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's reckoning — mining has the potential to bring in large-scale foreign direct investments and the jobs that may come along with them, Bank of the Philippine Islands Research Officer Nicholas Antonio T. Mapa said in an e-mail.

"Neighboring countries such as Indonesia benefit from the influx of foreign capital in the mining sector, which we could see as well should we find a way to allow mining, but at the same time, safeguard its sustainability. The jobs generated from this sector, and the forward and backward linkages to this sector will undoubtedly help raise incomes and lower the unemployment rate," Mr. Mapa said.

The appointment of Ms. Lopez to head the DENR has rekindled the debate about responsible mining and whether the government can strike a balance between development and environmental protection.

Mining is "ugly," but "there is a science to it," said UP Geosciences professor Carlo A. Arcilla. He lamented damaging practices perpetuated by small-scale miners, which are backed by rich individuals and corrupt government officials, that have put the industry in a bad light.

"In an area that's poor and there are minerals, the only option for them to gain anything is through mining and if you still take that away from them, it will even make things worse," Mr. Arcilla argued.

Cielo D. Magno, a board member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, is pushing for a more comprehensive mining policy that will give the government a "fair" share of revenues, specify how proceeds from mining will be spent and create a downstream processing industry that will boost mining receipts through value-added products.

So far, the government has failed in regulating the industry, Ms. Magno said, noting that 70% of mining companies has yet to secure ISO 14001 certification — an internationally agreed standard on environmental management systems — as the deadline for compliance lapsed in April.

"It is not enough that mining companies are ISO-certified. We need to make sure we are maximizing the proceeds from mining and they are minimizing the damage, rehabilitating the area, protecting the rights of the community and complying with environmental regulation," said Ms. Magno.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Nickel falls most in eight weeks on concerns over mine closures

**N**ICKEL fell the most in eight weeks, on speculation that the government may take longer than expected to close mines that don't meet environmental rules in the Philippines, the biggest supplier of ore to China.

The metal used in stainless steel advanced 12 percent last month, on concern that shipments from the Philippines to China will be disrupted as a new government enforces standards. While Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said an audit of mining operations will be completed in three to four weeks, speculation mounted on the timing of any closures.

"Now doubts have arisen as to

# 4.8%

**The drop in prices of nickel for delivery in three months**

whether those mines in the Philippines that are failing to meet the necessary environmental standards could really be shut down in the near future," Commerzbank AG analysts, including Daniel Briesemann, said in a note. Nickel for delivery in three months slipped 4.8 percent to settle at \$9,705 a metric ton at 5:52 p.m. on the London Metal Exchange (LME),

the biggest loss since May 9.

"It will take time for the Philippines to eventually shut the mines and cut supplies," Jia Zheng, a metal trader with Soochow Futures Co., said by phone from Shanghai. "Ultimately, China can diversify by purchasing from regions like Africa."

Copper for delivery in three months slipped 1.6 percent in London. Zinc, lead and tin also declined on the LME, while aluminum rose.

A gauge of 18 global base-metal producers tracked by Bloomberg Intelligence declined 3.9 percent, the first loss in more than a week. Phoenix-based Freeport-McMoRan Inc. led declines, slipping 8 percent. **Bloomberg News**



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### • DENR 8 recognition

CATARMAN, N. Samar – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 8 (DENR 8) based in Tacloban City has recently recognized its partners from Northern Samar. DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca has recognized local government units (LGUs) and peoples' organizations in Northern Samar for their valuable support and outstanding implementation of the government's National Greening Program (NGP). In a ceremony held at the Provincial Capitol of Northern Samar, DENR Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca lauded the support shown by the people's organizations and the LGUs to the government's greening program. "You all deserve to be recognized because you have contributed significantly in re-greening our forests," he said. (Restituto A. Cayubit)



# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## DENR man's death tied to drugs

KORONADAL CITY—An employee of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), who was killed by still unknown men on Monday, was allegedly involved in the illegal drug trade, police said.

Supt. Barney Condes, city police chief, identified the fatality as Noel Dungca, 54, a forester and DENR regional program coordinator, who was on the police watch list for drug traffickers.

"As to who silenced him, we are still investigating," Condes told reporters. He said he might have been killed by his acquaintances who are into the illegal drug trade, but he did not elaborate.

Condes said the police was to conduct a drug buy-bust against Dungca before he was executed.

Dungca, who graduated from the University of the Philippines Los Baños in Laguna, was driving his black motorbike near San Antonio Subdivision Phase 2 in Barangay Sta Cruz when he was attacked at 9:30 a.m.

Policemen recovered five empty shells for a .45-caliber pistol. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*





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### **DENR OFFICIAL DINEDBOL**

**KORONADAL CITY** — Isang opisyal ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pinagbabaril hanggang sa mapatay ng riding-in-tandem kamakalawa sa Bgy. Sta. Cruz sa lungsod na ito.

Kinilala ang biktima na si Noel Dunca, hepe ng DENR-Human Resource Office-Region 12.

Ayon sa ulat, lulan ng kanyang motorsiklo si Dunca nang sumulpot ang dalawang suspek na nakasakay din sa motorsiklo at pinagbabaril ang biktima.

Pinaghahanap na ngayon ng mga awtoridad ang mga suspek.



# HATAW!

## D'YARYO NG BAYAN

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## DENR official na pinatay, supplier ng drugs?

KORONADAL CITY - Nadis-supplier bago sumuko sa kobre sa nagpapatuloy na pulisya. imbestigasyon ng pulisya, Napag-alaman, may nasa drug watchlist ang tanggap na death threat pangalan ni Dr. Noel Dungca ang biktima bago siya pinaslang. regional program coordinator ng DENR-12 na pinatay ng riding-in-tandem suspects. Malaki ang paniniwala ng pulisya na dating kasamahan ni Dungca ang nagpapatay sa kanya

Ito ang kinompirma ni Supt. Barney Condes, chief of police ng Koronadal City PNP.

Ayon kay Condes, transaksyon sa ilegal na droga ang tinitingnang motibo sa pagpatay kay Dungca pasado 10:00 am, nitong Lunes sa harap mismo ng kanyang bahay sa Phase 2, San Antonio village, Brgy. Santa Cruz, Koronadal City.

Inihayag ni Condes, isa ang opisyal ng DENR na nag-surface o sumuko sa kanilang himpilan at lumagda sa 'affidavit of undertaking' na hindi na magtutulak pa o gagamit ng droga.

Sinabi ni Condes, ang napatay ay isang dating drug





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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## EDITORIAL

### Save a septic tank?

**WOULD you eat fish and other aquatic food grown in a filthy septic tank?**

As early as the 1990s, health and medical experts have declared Manila Bay a virtual open septic tank.

This means that the water there is highly polluted with toxic sewage biological waste, and industrial effluents.

This makes the vast bay area, world-famous for its sunset, our version of the Dead Sea.

But not to a lady lawmaker whose family is into politics and the highly lucrative real estate business.

She insists that the bay area be left alone in its "pristine" state.

Apparently, she believes the marine area is the ecological equivalent of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, a vast marine sanctuary and a UNESCO WORLD heritage site.

Thus, she ferociously opposes any and all developments in the area even if they would redound to the benefit of the greater majority of the people.

Isn't this counter-productive?

Is she afraid of competitors or developers doing business in the family's own virtual backyard in Las Piñas?

Does her heart truly bleed for the urban poor who survive on marginal fishing in the dirty bay?

What are her real motives?

Sen. Cynthia Villar appealed to companies who have expressed interest in reclaiming Manila Bay to reconsider given the adverse effects reclamation would bring to the communities and the livelihood of more than 300,000 fishermen in the area.

"At first glance, development in Manila Bay looks like a lucrative business venture but I appeal to companies interested in these reclamation projects to also consider the effects on the residents and fishermen depending on the bay for livelihood," Villar said.

The Philippine Reclamation Authority has approved a National Reclamation Plan which proposes to reclaim 26,000 hectares of Manila Bay.

Among the proposed reclamation projects are the P50.2-billion (660 hectares) "Future City" sought by SM Prime Holdings, Inc. that will house government offices as well as commercial and residential buildings, and the 148-hectare entertainment hub "Solar City" by the Manila Gold Coast Corporation said to be twice the size of Luneta Park.

The San Miguel Group and San Jose Builders are also proposing a P338.8 billion public-private partnership project to reclaim part of Manila Bay to build an expressway, a commercial area, a coastal sea barrier and flood control system.

Mayor Edwin Olivarez of Parañaque is also reviving the \$13-billion Manila Bay international airport project. Under the plan, the proposed airport would make use of 157 hectares of Freedom Island.





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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Come up with climate change plans, LGUs told

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has urged local government units (LGUs) to come up with a local climate change action plan by the end of next year.

CCC secretary Emmanuel de Guzman said yesterday the capacity of LGUs to adapt to climate change and reduce their risk to weather-related disasters should be enhanced to protect the poorest individuals, who bear the brunt of climate change.

By JANVIC MATEO

"Out of 1,700 LGUs... only 160 would have a plan," De Guzman said.

More than being a requirement of the law, De Guzman said LGUs have the "moral responsibility" to come up with a climate change plan.

"Non-action on climate and disaster risks is a social sin and a form of injustice to the poor and the most vulnerable," he said.

With a climate change plan,

De Guzman said LGUs would have access to the P1-billion People's Survival Fund that would finance their adaptation initiatives.

### La Niña

Meanwhile, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said there is 50 to 75 percent chance that La Niña would occur in the country.

"We expect near to above normal rain in most parts of Luzon beginning August to December and near to above normal rain in most parts of the Visayas and Mindanao beginning this month to December," said Ana Lisa Solis, PAGASA senior weather specialist.

Solis said La Niña would bring more tropical cyclones with nine to 15 cyclones expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility until December. — With Helen Flores



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Local gov'ts urged to draw up climate-change action plans

By Janina C. Lim *Reporter*

THE CLIMATE Change Commission (CCC) has urged local government units (LGUs) to draw up local climate change action plan (LCCAP) by next year, a move expected to boost capacities of local communities in reducing disaster risks and adapting to climate change impacts.

"Each LGU should have a local climate change action plan as mandated by the Climate Change Act of 2009. Thus far, out of 1,700 LGUs including provinces, only 160 would have a plan," Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman, vice-chair of the CCC, said in a statement.

Section 14 of the Climate Change Act of 2009 or Republic Act No. 9729 mandates that LGUs pilot the formulation, planning and implementation of climate change action plans in their respective areas, consistent with the provisions of the Local Government Code, the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change and the National Climate Change Action Plan.

"Based on our timeline, we should have 500 plans by the end of the year and all LGUs, municipalities, cities and provinces should have their own LCCAP by the end of next year," he added.

Mr. De Guzman said "non-action on climate and disaster risks is a social sin and a form of injustice to the poor and the most vulnerable," adding that these sectors are the most susceptible to the ill effects of climate change.

These sectors, in addition, have narrow financial safety nets or insurance mechanisms to help them cope with climate change-related shocks like failed harvests linked to extreme weather patterns, Mr. De Guzman also noted.

LCCAP puts into detail a community's strategies in strengthening local risk governance, enhancing rural livelihood, ensuring ecosystems integrity, and building cultural resilience.

"Implementing these strategies surely reduces disaster risk and builds the adaptive capacity and resilience of communities to climate change impacts," Mr. De Guzman explained.

With the LCCAP, LGUs could also have access to the P1-billion People's Survival Fund (PSF) that will finance local initiatives.

As provided in the National Expenditure Program, the PSF may be used to finance adaptation activities such as water resources and land management; risk insurance for farmers, agricultural workers and other stakeholders; infrastructure development and protection of natural ecosystems; and monitoring of vector-borne diseases triggered by climate change.

The special fund may also be used for forecasting and early warning systems; contingency planning for droughts and floods in areas prone to extreme climate events; strengthening and establishing information networks to support adaptation initiatives and projects; and other community support programs by organizations accredited by the CCC.



# BusinessMirror

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Only 160 out of 1,700 LGUs have climate-action plans—CCC

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @jonlmayuga

**T**HE Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Wednesday said only about 160 out of the 1,700 local government units (LGUs) have their own local climate-change action plans (LCCAP) required by the Climate Change Act of 2009.

This means that 1,540 LGUs, which include provinces, cities and municipalities have not crafted a plan to boost the capacities of local communities to reduce disaster risks and adapt to the impact of climate change.

In a statement, the CCC urged all LGUs to have their own LCCAP by the end of next year.

CCC Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman said, "There is an urgent and compelling need to enhance the capacity of LGUs to adapt to climate change and reduce their risk to weather-related disasters in order to protect the nation's poorest who bear the brunt of climate-change impacts."

"Based on our timeline, we should have 500 plans by the end of the year and all LGUs; municipalities, cities and provinces should have their own LCCAP by the end of next year," he added.

According to de Guzman, having a LCCAP is more than compliance to what is required by law, but more of a moral responsibility of every LGU, saying that "nonaction on climate

and disaster risks is a social sin and a form of injustice to the poor and the most vulnerable."

The poorest of the poor, such as farmers, fishermen and informal settlers living in danger areas, have a higher chance of experiencing the adverse impact of climate change, de Guzman said.

These sectors, he said, also have limited safety nets or insurance mechanisms to help them cope with climate change-related shocks, like failed harvests linked to changing weather patterns and loss or damage linked to weather extremes.

"An LCCAP could well define the strategies of a community for strengthening local risk governance, enhancing rural livelihood, ensuring ecosystems integrity and building cultural resilience," de Guzman said.

With the LCCAP, de Guzman said LGUs could have access to the P1-billion People's Survival Fund (PSF) that will finance local adaptation initiatives.

In November last year all 13 project proposals sought for funding under the PSF were found to be insufficient in form and substance, and thus, were "returned to sender by the CCC."

The CCC, which acts as the secretariat of the PSF Board, is tasked to screen the proposals sought for PSF funding. The call for project proposals was launched last October 28.

According to de Guzman, the

PSF may be used to finance adaptation activities, such as water resources and land management; risk insurance for farmers, agricultural workers and other stakeholders; infrastructure development and protection of natural ecosystems; and monitoring of vector-borne diseases triggered by climate change.

The special fund provided in the National Expenditure Program may also be used for forecasting and early-warning systems; contingency planning for droughts and floods in areas prone to extreme climate events; strengthening and establishing information networks to support adaptation initiatives and projects; and other community support programs by organizations accredited by the CCC.

De Guzman said they plan to empower LGUs against climate change by rolling out in the coming months a network of learning centers, which will offer standardized training modules on adaptation and mitigation measures.

Section 14 of the Climate Change Act of 2009, or Republic Act 9729, mandates that the LGUs shall be the frontline agencies in the formulation, planning and implementation of climate-change action plans in their respective areas, consistent with the provisions of the Local Government Code, the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, and the National Climate Change Action Plan.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### LGUs enjoined to hatch climate change action plans

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is seeking the compliance of all local government units (LGUs) nationwide to have a local climate change action plan (LCCAP) by the end of 2017, as it aims to increase the capacities of communities in reducing disaster risk and adapting to climate change.

"Each LGU should have a local climate change action plan as mandated by the Climate Change Act of 2009. Thus far, out of 1,700 LGUs including provinces, only 160 would have a plan," CCC Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman, vice-chairperson of the CCC, said.

"Based on our timeline, we should have 500 plans by the end of the year and all LGUs; municipalities, cities

and provinces should have their own LCCAP by the end of next year," he added.

But beyond the requirements of the law, De Guzman said it should be a moral responsibility of every LGU to come up with the plan, as "non-action on climate and disaster risks is a social sin and a form of injustice to the poor and the most vulnerable."

De Guzman said sectors mired in poverty, such as farmers, fisherfolk and informal settler families living in danger areas, have a higher chance of experiencing the ill effects of climate change since they often live, farm or hold assets in areas more exposed to droughts and floods, which put their homes, crops, livestock and even their

own lives at greater risk.

These sectors, he said, also have limited safety nets or insurance mechanisms to help them cope with climate change-related shocks like failed harvests linked to changing weather patterns and loss or damage linked to weather extremes.

"An LCCAP could well define the strategies of a community for strengthening local risk governance, enhancing rural livelihood, ensuring ecosystems integrity, and building cultural resilience. Implementing these strategies surely reduces disaster risk and builds the adaptive capacity and resilience of communities to climate change impacts," De Guzman explained. (Ellalyn B. de Vera)



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## 'Less than 1 percent of LGUs ready for disasters'

BY JOEL M. SY EGCO  
SENIOR REPORTER

LESS than one percent, or only 160 out of 1,700 local government units (LGUs), have existing action plans to deal with disasters, a fact that makes poor people more vulnerable to calamities, according to an official of the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

CCC Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman said the discovery compels them to require all the LGUs to formulate their respec-

tive local climate change action plans (LCCAPs) by the end of next year.

He noted that an action plan will enable the LGUs to increase the capacities of local communities to reduce disaster risk and adapt to climate change.

"Each LGU should have a local climate change action plan as mandated by the Climate Change Act of 2009. Thus far, out of 1,700 LGUs including provinces, only 160 would have a plan," de Guzman, vice chairman of the CCC, said.

►DisastersA2

The official added that there is an urgent and compelling need to enhance the capacity of the LGUs to adapt to climate change and reduce their vulnerability to weather-related disasters in order to protect the nation's poorest, who bear the brunt of climate change impacts.

"Based on our timeline, we should have 500 plans by the end of the year and all the LGUs, municipalities, cities and provinces, should have their own LCCAP by the end of next year," he said.

The absence of such action plans, de Guzman pointed out, is a "social sin" because it is contrary to the interest of the most vulnerable sectors of society.

"Non-action on climate and disaster risks is a social sin and a

form of injustice to the poor and the most vulnerable," he said.

With the LCCAP, de Guzman further noted, the LGUs could have access to the P1-billion People's Survival Fund (PSF) that will finance local adaptation initiatives.

The PSF may be used to finance adaptation activities such as water resources and land management; risk insurance for farmers, agricultural workers and other stakeholders; infrastructure development and protection of natural ecosystems; and monitoring of vector-borne diseases triggered by climate change.

De Guzman said sectors mired in poverty such as farmers, fisherfolk and informal settlers living in danger areas have a higher chance of suffering ill effects of climate

change since they often live, farm or hold assets in areas more exposed to drought and floods, which put their homes, crops, livestock and even their own lives at greater risk.

These sectors, he added, also have limited safety nets or insurance mechanisms to help them cope with climate change-related shocks like failed harvests linked to changing weather patterns and loss or damage linked to weather extremes.

"An LCCAP could well define the strategies of a community for strengthening local risk governance, enhancing rural livelihood, ensuring ecosystems integrity and building cultural resilience. Implementing these strategies surely reduces disaster risk and builds the adaptive capacity and resilience of

communities to climate change impacts," de Guzman explained.

He said they plan to empower the LGUs against climate change by rolling out in the coming months a network of learning centers that will offer standardized training modules on adaptation and mitigation measures.

De Guzman cited Section 14 of the Climate Change Act of 2009 or Republic Act 9729 that mandates LGUs as frontline agencies in the formulation, planning and implementation of climate change action plans in their respective areas, consistent with the provisions of the Local Government Code, the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change and the National Climate Change Action Plan.



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## Editorial

### Good—NIA, NFA and PCA again under Agriculture Department

**P**RESIDENT Rody Duterte immediately granted the request of Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol for a presidential executive order placing the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), National Food Authority (NFA), and Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) back under the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The President also gave Piñol control over the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization (OPAFSAM), which former President B.S. Aquino had created on May 5, 2014. Aquino made the head of OPAFSAM a Cabinet member. Aquino also made it the overseer of the four largest government agencies that used to be under the DA. These are the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA), NFA, NIA, and PCA.

It was an unwise and a bad management decision of BS Aquino to break up the cluster of offices and agencies under the control of the agriculture secretary. The breakup only exacerbated the lack of concern of Aquino for the agriculture and agrarian sector.

A farmer himself, Piñol personally knows what the agriculture sector, and with it, agri-business, needs to become the leading component of the Philippine economy. The most recent data says unemployment has increased by 2 million—11 million jobless

**“A farmer himself,  
Piñol personally knows  
what the agriculture  
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Filipinos. Most of these are in the rural, the agricultural, areas. Agriculture is where most of our labor force is located because we are still essentially an agricultural country. We are not an industrial economy, and the service sector (BPOs mainly) has unhealthily become the most dominant and productive segment. We must make excellent use of our agriculture resources.

The NFA, NIA, FPA and PCA are the most essential agencies that should serve the aims of the agriculture secretary to achieve the principal goal of Duterte for our country to have food security.

In the reintegration of these agencies with the DA, Piñol simply wants to restore the correct structure. He correctly saw that there was “absolutely NO SENSE in separating the NFA, NIA, FPA and PCA from the DA.

Piñol has also spoken of proposing to the President the creation of a “national food authority council.” He sees that council as the coordinating body to harmonize all the efforts of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), DA, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and “even the weather bureau” to ensure the success of programs for food production and greater agricultural productivity.

He had observed that these agencies were uncoordinated; each one going its own way. He saw early on for the activities of the agencies must be consolidated, with each agency going for the same goals and all heading to the same direction.

Duterte has also spoken of his plan to create a department for fisheries and aquatic resources. Piñol hopes to see this department to be formed soon. He laments the neglect by all previous governments of the fisheries sector, which has a huge potential for the Philippines because we have the fifth-longest coastline in the world.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Breakthrough

By **ELFREN S. CRUZ**

### Philippine claims primer

On July 12, the United Nations Arbitral Tribunal will finally announce its rulings regarding the Philippine claims in the West Philippine Sea. But the UN tribunal is not going to declare a winner and loser like in a boxing match.

For those who would like to know what to look for when the final rulings come out, here is a short primer that can serve as a guide on July 12. I have tried to simplify it as much as possible but international law is truly a complex area of study. My principal sources for this primer was a personal interview with China expert Chito Sta. Romana and an article written by Paul Gewirtz "Limits of Law in the South China Sea."

First, there is much confusion caused by a misunderstanding of the issues in most media. The UN tribunal will not make any ruling on the "sovereignty" or ownership over the territory called the South China Sea. But, the rulings are still very relevant because they could be used as basis for any ownership claims by the Philippines and for disputing claims by China.

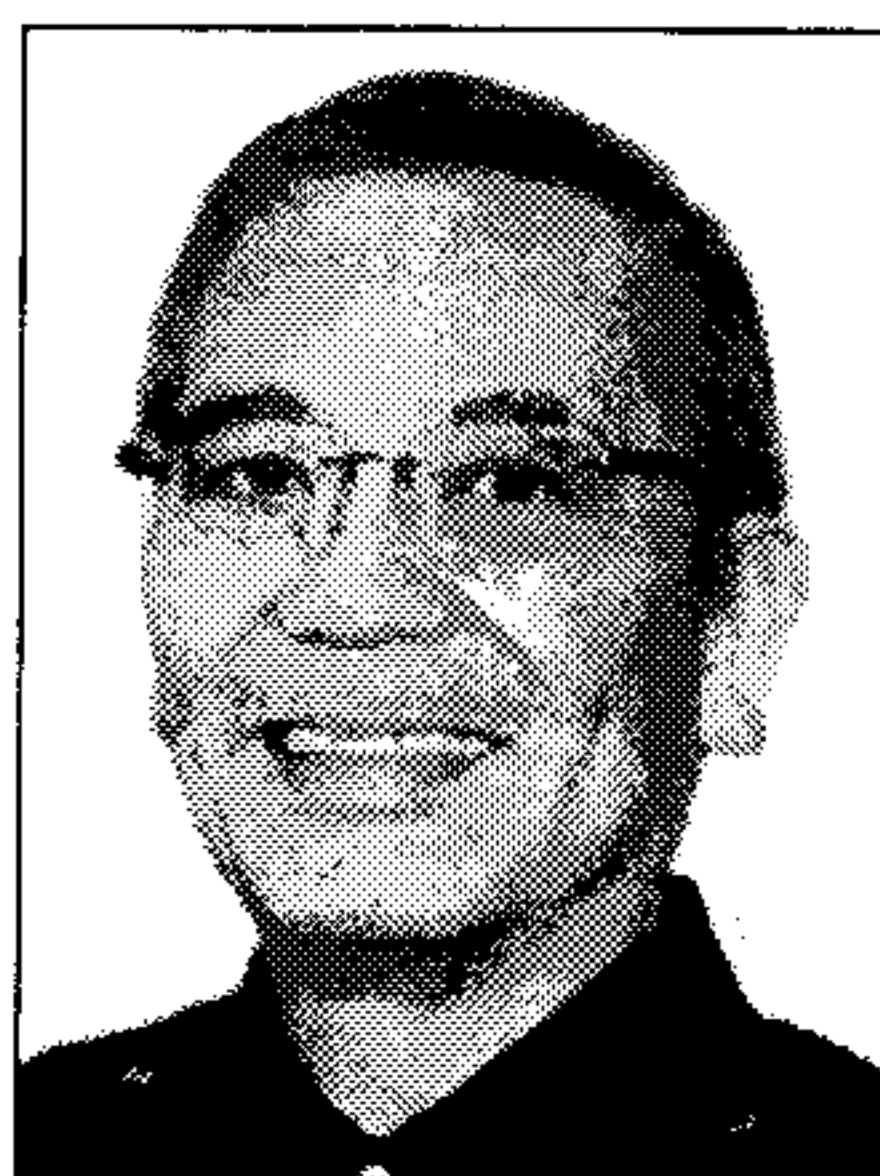
Second, it is highly unlikely that the Philippines will win a favorable ruling in all its 15 claims against China. However, there are certain claims that are very important to the interests of the Philippines.

Third, there is no enforcement mechanism for the rulings. But the Philippines hope that favorable rulings for the critical claims will give the country leverage in any bilateral talks with China. Also, the expected favorable rulings could also be used, by the international community, to persuade China to act as a responsible and peaceful world power.

**Definition of Land Features** – The central issue for most of the Philippine claims is in asking the UN Tribunal to determine the legally relevant UNCLOS categories they fall into – a "low tide elevation," a "rock" or an "island." Here are some important things to remember.

First, countries may claim islands and rocks as sovereign territory. Although the UN Tribunal will not decide which country has ownership, if the area, like a reef or shoal, is classified as "low tide elevation" then no country can claim ownership and the area then legally belongs to the "exclusive economic zone" of the nearest land mass or island.

Second, if the land feature is declared an island, the country having sovereignty has rights to a 12-mile territorial sea and a 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf.



Third, if the land feature is deemed a rock and not an island, the country with sovereignty gets only a 12-mile territorial sea, and not a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

**Summary of Claims** – For a better understanding of the Philippine claims, here is a summary of the 15 claims:

1. China's maritime entitlements may not extend beyond those permitted by UNCLOS.

2. China's "nine dash line" claim is contrary to UNCLOS.

3. Scarborough Shoal generates no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf.

4. Mischief, Reef, Second Thomas Shoal, and Subi Reef are all low tide elevations. As such they are not subject to appropriation or ownership.

5. Mischief Reef and Second Thomas Shoal are within the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of the Philippines.

6. Gaven Reef and McKennan Reef are low tide elevations. They generate no maritime entitlements, but may be used to measure baselines.

7. Johnson Reef, Curteron Reef and Fiery Cross Reef generate no maritime entitlements to an exclusive economic zone or continental shelf.

8. China has interfered with the Philippine exercise of sovereign rights over resources located in the Philippines' maritime entitlement zones.

9. China has failed to prevent Chinese nationals and Chinese flagged vessels from exploiting living resources in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone.

10. China prevents Philippine fishermen from pursuing their livelihoods around Scarborough Shoal.

11. China has violated environmental obligations under UNCLOS to protect Scarborough Shoal and Second Thomas Shoal.

12. Chinese occupation of and construction on Mischief Reef violates UNCLOS provisions on artificial islands and environmental protections, and are unlawful acts of attempted appropriation.

13. China has breached UNCLOS obligations by dangerous operation of law enforcement vessels around Scarborough shoal.

14. China has unlawfully aggravated and extended beyond dispute by interfering with the Philippines' right to navigation around Second Thomas Shoal preventing the resumption of Philippine personnel at Second Thomas Shoal and endangering the health of these personnel.

15. China shall desist from further unlawful claims and activities.

The most hopeful sign for the Philippine claims is that the UN Tribunal has already asserted jurisdiction in 7 of the claims in a favorable way for the Philippines. Based on the summary above, these are Claims 3,4,6,7,10, 11 and 13. Four of these claims – 3,4,6,7 – are asking the UN Tribunal to categorize the land features according to UNCLOS categories of "islands," "rocks" or "low tide elevations." If the UN Tribunal upholds the Philippine claims that the land features listed in Claims. 3,4,6,7, are "low tide eleva-



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Floods, landslides warning up due to 'Butchoy'

By ELLALYN B. DE VERA  
and FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) warned yesterday of possible floods and landslides due to heavy rains brought about by a stronger typhoon "Butchoy" (international name "Nepartak") as it moves closer to Taiwan on Wednesday.

Tropical cyclone Signal No. 1 has been

hoisted over the Batanes group of islands. Butchoy was estimated at 615 kilometers (km) east of Basco, Batanes, packing maximum sustained winds of 210 kilometers per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 245 kph as of yesterday afternoon.

It has maintained its northwest track at 30 kph and is still not expected to make landfall over any part of the Philippines.

Should it maintain its speed and direction, Butchoy will be outside the country's area of responsibility by Friday.

PAGASA said the Batanes group of islands is expected to experience 30-60 kph of winds and moderate

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to heavy rains.

Earlier, PAGASA's Marine Meteorological Services Section chief Rene Paciente said the enhanced southwest monsoon or habagat will bring light to moderate to at times heavy rains over most parts of the country until the weekend.

While it is not expected to make landfall, Butchoy will continue to enhance the southwest monsoon bringing light to moderate rains and thunderstorms over Metro Manila, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Batangas, Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, Albay, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Masbate, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, the whole Visayas, Bukidnon,

Camiguin, Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Occidental and Davao Oriental.

Meanwhile, partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms will prevail over the rest of the country.

PAGASA advised fisher folk not to set sail into the northern and eastern seaboards of Luzon.

By Thursday afternoon, Butchoy is expected at 250 km northeast of Itbayat, Batanes, and at 455 km northwest of the same island town by Friday afternoon.

By Saturday afternoon, it will be at 795 km north-northwest of Itbayat.

Disaster preparedness  
National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council

(NDRRMC) Executive Director Ricardo Jalad said they are closely monitoring the typhoon and has activated disaster response teams. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has activated response cluster in the affected areas while the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has issued directives to affected regions for Oplan Listo.

"We have also directed regional directors of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) of affected regions to also conduct PDRA (meetings) to monitor their respective situations," Jalad said.

"The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will try to determine landslide prone areas based on inputs that will be coming from PAGASA," he said.

The NDRRMC has been on blue alert status since Monday.

Jalad said they expect heavy rains starting today up to Saturday.



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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

## Leyte landslides ibinabala

Binalaan ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang lahat ng mga residente sa lalawigan ng Leyte sa posibleng pagguho ng lupa sa bundok at dalampasigan gayundin ang pagbagsak ng mga bato.

isinagawang Coastal Geohazard Assessment ng Marine Geological Survey Division ng MGB bilang paghahanda sa pagpasok ng La Niña phenomenon.

Iginiit ng MGB na kailangang maabisuhan ng maaga ang mga residente partikular na sa mga bayan sa hilagang kanluran at silangang

bahagi ng lalawigan upang mailayo sila sa tiyak na kapahamakan at trahedya.

Lumitaw sa pag-aaral ng MGB na malaki ang posibilidad na muling magkaroon ng trahedya sa naturang lalawigan sanhi na rin ng naging epekto ng mga nagdaang bagyong Yolanda at Ruping. (Lhean Angeles)