

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

THE REPORT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Calls seek multi-sector protected area convergence

Authorities are rallying multi-sector support for conservation and management of protected areas (PAs) nationwide so these sites can better sustainably provide ecosystem services and other benefits for the present and future generations.

"We can't do it alone," Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ramon Paje said in a message Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones delivered Tuesday (April 26) during the 2nd National PA Conference in Metro Manila, highlighting the task's extent and complexity.

Paje made the call for multi-sector convergence, noting PAs and biodiversity there are increasingly at risk for degradation from threats like climate change.

"Support extended will always be critical to PA protection and management," he noted.

Republic Act 7586 (National Integrated Protected Areas System) sets aside, for establishment as PAs, portions of the country's land and water

with unique physical and biological significance.

According to DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), the country has 240 PAs at present.

Among the Philippine PAs are Mt. Makiling Forest Reserve, Mts. Iglit-Baco National Park and Tubbataha Reefs Natural Parks.

Such areas among PAs featured in BMB's publication Guidebook to Protected Areas of the Philippines launched during the conference.

Environment advocate Senator Loren Legarda made a similar call, warning biodiversity worldwide is at risk for extinction due to climate change arising from a 1.5 degrees C to 2.0 degrees C increase in global temperature.

"We can't afford to be business as usual - PAs' protection is essential," she said at the conference.

She also cited need for PAs to be among beneficiaries of climate change adaptation and mitigation funding.

Paje and Legarda were part of the Philippine contingent at the Paris climate change agreement's high-

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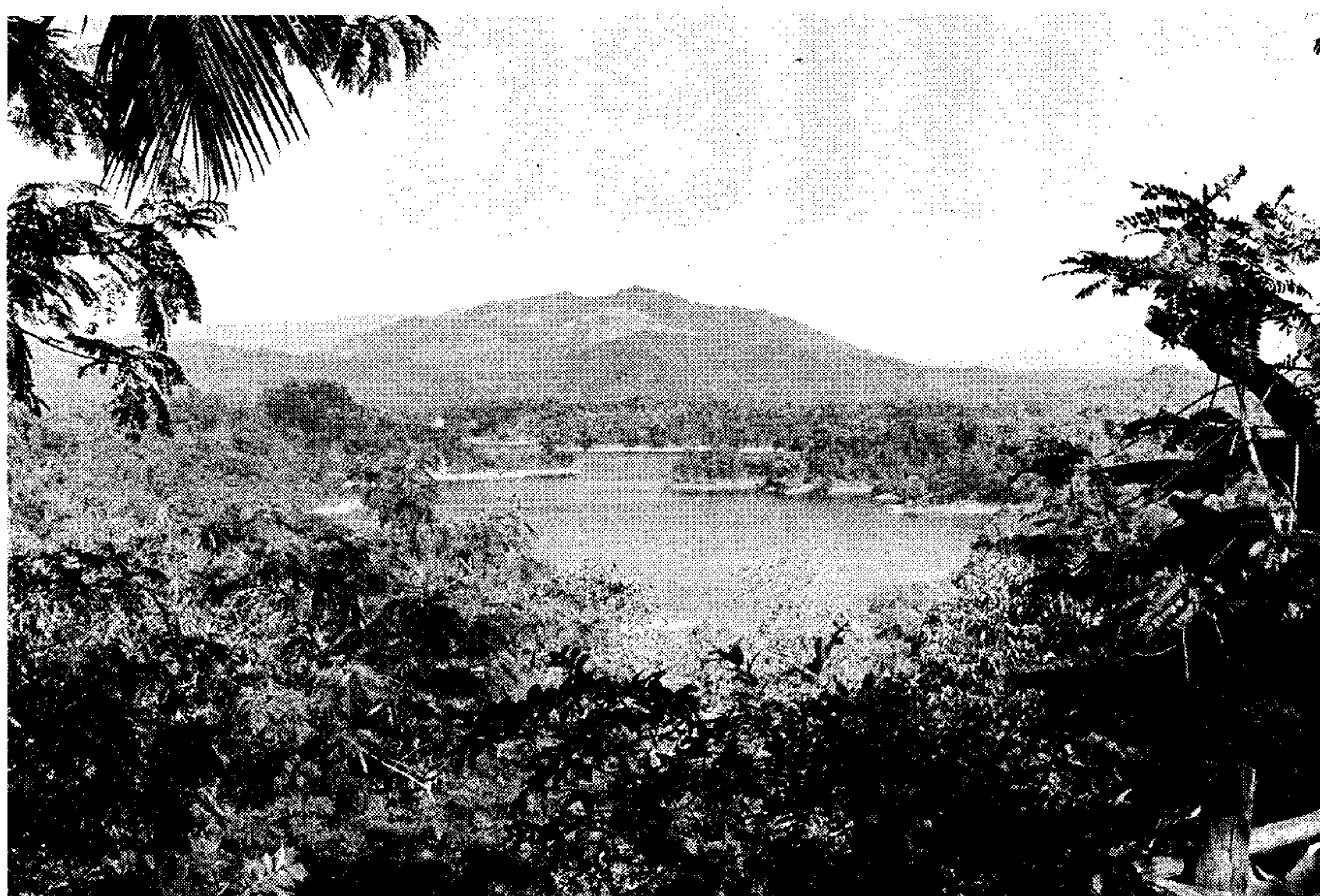
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CALLS CEEK...



Pantabangan protected area / Photo courtesy of readtiger.com

level signing ceremony in New York last week.

Malacañang designated Paje as the Philippines' signatory to the agreement.

The Paris agreement seeks limiting global greenhouse gas emissions' rise

to well below two degrees C so the world can avoid dangerous climate change.

Among the measures Paje cited as necessary for helping guard against threats to PAs are integrating conservation of these areas in local government planning and budgeting as well as scal-

ing up financing and management.

"As government workers, responsible individuals and Filipinos, we need to keep up with demands of the present and push forward day by day," he noted.

He also said decision-making for PA protection and management must be science-based.

DENR spearheaded the conference to provide a venue for experts and authorities concerned to look into how to better sustain ecosystem services and benefits from the country's PAs.

Among the conference's expected outputs are documentation of PAs' contributions in sustaining ecosystem services and benefits as well as compilation of good PA management practices, noted BMB Director Theresa Mundita Lim.

"One other expected output is networking of partners on PA management," she said.

She added the conference seeks generating consensus on strategic directions and targets for improved PA management nationwide. (PNA)

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SC rules on mining contract dispute

By JEFFREY G. DAMICOG

The Supreme Court (SC) has declared that the President has the power to cancel mining contracts in the country including one of the companies belonging to the campaign contributor of presidential candidate Manuel "Mar" Roxas II.

In an 11-page decision, the Supreme Court Third Division made this determination after it denied the review on certiorari of petitioners Basiana Mining Exploration Corporation (BMEC), Basiana Mining Development Corporation (BMDC), and its president Rodney Basiana who sought the cancellation of Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) granted to SR Metals Inc. (SRMI) which is owned by Eric Gutierrez, a known campaign contributor of Roxas.

The High Court upheld in its ruling the amended decision of the Court of

Appeals (CA) dated June 18, 2009 which dismissed the petition of the petitioners and granted the motion for reconsiderations of the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and SRMI.

"Without stamping approval of the validity of the MPSA No.261-2008-XIII, the Court dismisses the petition for the simple reason that the petitioners' recourse to the CA was erroneous," read the SC's decision.

"The DENR Secretary, no doubt is under the control of the President; thus, his decision is subject to review of the latter. Consequently, the petitioners should have appealed its case to the Office of the President under A. O. No. 18, series of 1987, instead of directly seeking review by the court," advised the High Court.

In 1997, BMEC applied for a MPSA before the DENR so it can extract nickel and other minerals in Tubay and Jabonga in Agusan del Norte.

While the MPSA was pending approval, BMEC in April 2000 assigned its rights of the MPSA to Manila Mining Corporation which later in October 2005 passed it on to SRMI.

Using BMEC's application, the SRMI applied for an MPSA with the DENR for the extraction of nickel, iron and cobalt in Tubay.

However, the DENR Secretary issued in November 2006 a cease and desist order against mining operations due to excess in annual production, maximum capitalization and labor cost to equipment utilization.

Also, on December 2006, the Minerals Development Council told SRMI to stop mining activities in Tubay which were being done under the pretext of small-scale mining.

This prompted the BMEC to file before the MGB Panel of Arbitrators (MGB-POA) a petition to deny the application of MPSA to SRMI.

The Manila Times

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Palace told: Review cases of mining firm backing LP

BY JOMAR CANLAS
SENIOR REPORTER

THE Supreme Court (SC) has given the Office of the President (OP) the power to review cases involving exploration and small-scale mining operations of a corporation owned by a campaign contributor of President Benigno Aquino 3rd and former Interior Secretary Manuel Roxas 2nd.

In a ruling penned by Associate Justice Bienvenido Reyes and concurred in by Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco Jr., Diosdado Peralta, Jose Portugal Perez and Francis Jardeleza, the SC's Third Division denied a petition filed by Basiana Mining Exploration Corp. (BMEC), Basiana Minerals Development Corp. and its president Rodney Basiana against SR Metals Inc. (SRMI) and instead elevated the case to Malacanang.

SRMI was given a permit to extract Nickel and Cobalt (Ni-Co) in a 20-hectare mining site in Sitio Bugnang, Barangay La Fraternidad, Tubay, Agusan del Norte.

It was classified as a small-scale mining company allowed to extract 1.8 million metric tons of nickel ore from August 2006 to September 2007, but it was ordered to pay P7 million for over-extraction since the law allows small-scale miners to extract 50,000 MT of ore annually.

SRMI is owned by Caloocan City (Metro Manila) Rep. Edgar Erice and trader Eric Gutierrez,

the campaign financier of Aquino and Roxas.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte even accused Roxas of using the private helicopter of Gutierrez allegedly in exchange for protection of the mining activities of the businessman.

The SC ruling dated March 7, 2016, which was released to the media just recently, also affirmed an amended decision dated June 18, 2009 of the Court of Appeals (CA).

Basiana assailed the ruling, which granted motions for reconsideration dated January 21, 2009 and December 23, 2008 of the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and SRMI, respectively, reversed and set aside the CA's decision dated December 10, 2008 and dismissed the petition for review filed by the petitioners, among others.

Petitioner BMEC, headed by Basiana, applied on July 31, 1997 for a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) with the DENR for the extraction of nickel

and other minerals covering an area of 6,642 hectares in Tubay and Jabonga, Agusan del Norte.

On November 24, 2006, the DENR secretary issued a cease and desist order against the mining operations because of excess in annual production, maximum capitalization and labor cost to equipment utilization.

Basiana then filed a complaint before the Regional Trial Court of Butuan City on May 15, 2007 for rescission of contract, abuse of rights and damages against SRMI.

BMEC, then already known as BMDC, also filed a complaint for breach of trust, accounting and conveyance of proceeds, judicial confirmation of declaration of partial nullity of contract and termination of trust and abuse of rights with damages against SRMI, San R, Galeo, et al.

Subsequently, the director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), on January 10, 2008, recommended approval of APSA-000014-XIII filed by SRMI.

Thus, BMEC and Basiana filed with the MGB Panel of Arbitrators (MGB-POA) a petition to deny the application for MPSA and/or cancellation, revocation and termination of MPSA.

Pending resolution of the protest before the MGB-POA, the government, represented by the DENR secretary entered into another MPSA with SRMI for the development and commercial utilization of nickel, cobalt, iron and other associated mineral deposits in the area.

The petitioners then filed a

petition for review with the CA assailing the issuance of the same.

The appellate court initially granted the petition and declared the MPSA null and void, ruling that it should be stricken down because the DENR secretary has no authority and jurisdiction to approve SRMI's application.

It also found that the petitioners adopted the wrong mode of appeal when they filed a petition for review before it.

Nevertheless, the CA resolved to treat the petition as one for certiorari since it alleged grave abuse of discretion on the part of the DENR secretary in approving the application despite pendency of the petitioners' protest.

SRMI filed a motion for reconsideration of the CA decision, which the court granted.

The CA found the petitioners to have committed forum shopping as the petition for review was filed despite the pendency of the protest with the MGB-POA, prompting Basiana to elevate the case before the SC.

In its March 7, 2016 decision, which was released just recently, the SC held that "a premature invocation of a court's intervention renders the complaint without cause of action and dismissible."

"The DENR secretary, no doubt, is under the control of the President; thus, his decision is subject to review of the latter. Consequently, the petitioners should have appealed its case to the Office of the President... instead of directly seeking review by the court," it pointed out.

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Mining firms plant trees

CLAYER, Surigao del Norte – True to its mandate of keeping a tight watch on the environment, the 24 mining companies- holders of Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSAs) spread all over Northeastern Mindanao (Caraga region) have pledged to continue planting trees without let up under respective mining rehabilitation (tree planting) programs in their areas of operation. Aside from massive reforestation and tree planting activities, these mining companies also pledged their commitment to continue environment preservation and forest protection as well as their social responsibility to host communities like health, education and livelihood programs. This year, with the close supervision of the officials and staff of the regional office of the Mines Geo-Sciences Bureau (MGB 13), these mining companies planted tree seeds of various species and are targeting to plant one million tree seedlings this year. Based on the record of MGB 13, about 6, 792, 808 trees have already been planted in 6, 175.29 hectares at various mining areas under the government's "greening" program, said MGB 13 Regional Director Alilo C. Ensomo, in an exclusive interview with Manila Bulletin. (Mike U. Crismundo, Alexander D. Lopez)

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A broader look at today's business

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Oceana Philippines calls for stronger protection measure for Tañon Strait

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @jonlmayuga

MOST local government units (LGUs) within the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape (TSPS) still do not have an updated or long-term Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and Integrated Coastal Resource Management Plan (ICRMP), an ocean-conservation advocacy group said.

Oceana Philippines is calling on LGUs that share jurisdiction over the 521,000-hectare protected seascape between the provinces of Cebu and Negros to come up with CLUPs and ICRMP to strengthen the Tañon Strait against destructive human activities.

While crafting their CLUPs and ICRMP, LGUs should also declare a moratorium on development projects that threaten one of the country's most important fishing ground and priority conservation areas, Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice

president of Oceana Philippines, said in an interview.

Tañon Strait, declared as a protected area by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 1234, signed by President Fidel V. Ramos on May 27, 1998, pursuant to RA 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act, is threatened by "unbridled" development and other destructive human activities, such as unchecked commercial-fishing operations until now, she warned.

The proclamation placed the entire Tañon Strait Protected Seascape under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). LGUs, according to Ramos, need to do more to help enforce various environmental laws, such as the RA 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act; and the RA 8550, or the Philippine Fisheries Code.

Destructive development

projects, particularly the ones that require massive land reclamation, she added, should be stopped to conserve the Visayas's most important coastal ecosystem.

"Why are LGUs in charge of protecting the municipal waters are not implementing these laws? They have no updated or long-term CLUPs. LGUs should be doing that," Ramos said.

She added the Office of the Ombudsman should look into the failure of the LGUs to protect the Tañon Strait in the same breadth it is now moving against LGUs that failed to implement the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

"Unfortunately, Tañon Strait, there are coal-fired power plants, mining, depot of oil and gas. Water in Tañon Strait is contaminated with mercury," Ramos said.

Oceana Philippines is batting for the approval of the General Management Plan for Tañon Strait (GMPTS) that was crafted by the various stake-

holders, led by the DENR (Central Visayas) last year.

In an interview, DENR Regional Director Isabelo I. said GMPTS for Tañon Strait is waiting for final approval of environment secretary. He LGUs to come up with an CLUPs and ICRMP to be in line with the GMPTS.

According to Oceana Philippines, Tañon Strait is one of the most important habitats for dolphins and whales in the Philippines. Around 200 protected areas, 14 species have been found in Tañon Strait.

Meanwhile, the DENR is holding a conference that aims to sustain efforts toward sustainable management of protected areas in the region. Around 200 protected areas managers and stakeholders from indigenous communities and society are taking part in the conference in Mandaluyong City from April 26 to 28.



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Albay, DENR launch coastal management program vs climate change

Albay has launched a sustainable ecosystem management program with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to mitigate the impact of climate change in the province.

The Albay-DENR partnership agreement was signed in mid-April, providing for the establishment of the Sustainable Coral Reef Ecosystem Management Program (SCREMP).

The program will initially cover the municipalities of Oas, Libon, Pioduran and Ligao City, all in the

west coast of the province.

It will include a livelihood component to be managed by people's organizations.

Under the agreement, Albay and DENR will donate P100,000 to each of the four municipalities for the livelihood of the people, especially hog, goat and poultry raising, marketing and production, and fishing.

A 30-foot fiber glass boat with 16HP engine and P40,000 worth of gasoline was also donated to each of the four municipalities, for use

in surveillance and enforcement of environment laws.

In a statement, Albay Gov. Joey Salceda said SCREMP aims to promote sustainable management of coastal and marine resources, including biodiversity, through habitat protection, conservation and rehabilitation.

The program also aims to raise public awareness and social and environmental consciousness on the value of coral reefs, and associated coastal and marine ecosystems to mitigate the impact of climate change.

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El Niño dries up Panay river basins

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY – Environmental officials observe that the dry spell resulting from the El Niño climate phenomenon has sorely affected major river systems of Panay Island.

“The physical manifestation is already there,” Jesse Vego, Assistant Regional Director for Technical Services of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in

Region 6 (DENR-6), told Manila Bulletin in a phone interview.

Citing a creek in Dingle town Iloilo province that has dried up, Vego noted that the water levels in the river basins of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, and Iloilo provinces are becoming narrower.

However, DENR-6 has no comprehensive data as to the impact of El Niño, which started in the last quarter of 2015 on the Panay River Basin, the Jalaur River Basin, the Tigum-Aganan River Basin, and Sibalom-Baguingin

River Basin.

These river systems play a pivotal role in the efficiency of watersheds, which is needed by water districts to provide supply for consumers and to irrigate farmlands.

Vego noted that there is no immediate response that can reverse the effect of less volume of water in these river systems or its tributaries during this El Niño season.

“What needs to be done is strengthen long-term solutions,” Vego said.

For instance, DENR-6 is campaigning for the creation of a Forest Use Land Plan by local governments that can be integrated into the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

Vego explained that creating a CLUP can help protect natural habitats, particularly watersheds.

Meanwhile, DENR-6 Regional Director Jim Sampulna reiterated a call to implement water conservation techniques including recycling wastewater.

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DENR-8 rehab more than 13,000 hectares beach and mangrove plantations

By **RESTITUTO A. CAYUBIT**

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office 8 (DENR 8) based in this city has rehabilitated more than 13,000 hectares of beach and mangrove plantations which were damaged by the calamities last year.

DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca told reporters in an interview that series of calamities last year have damaged several thousands of hectares of established beach and mangrove plantations.

Sibbaluca said that Eastern Visayas was a recipient of Mangrove and Beach Forest Development Project (MBFDP) in response to the destruction of mangrove and beach forest during typhoons. "A total of 13,633.1 hectares were reportedly rehabilitated in various municipalities in the region. Other major activities are the Barangay Forest Program and Mechanized Nursery Project wherein both reported an area planted of 2,997 and 2,900 hectares respectively."

Sibbaluca said aside from the internal instituted re-greening program of his office, support to the National Greening Program from other institutions and private sectors, which includes the Mining Industry through the Mines-Geo Sciences Bureau office in the region, also contributed 77.75 hectares of new plantation in their respective area of concession.

Sibbaluca also cited the cooperation and support of the local government units on the approved and implementation of ordinances or protection measures of the migratory sites in order to protect and manage the bay and mangrove areas of Ormoc, Carigara as well as adjoining town of Barugo, Leyte.

"Strategies that could be undertaken to address the issues are to conduct intensive Information Education Campaign with the concerned communities, provide livelihood opportunities in order to minimize the impacts of illegal activities on mangrove stand, coastal areas, and migratory birds," Sibbaluca said.

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BoI: Bamboo plan 'nearing completion'



AFP

FARMER DEYOY Avellana (left) and his son Gilbert carry bamboo after a massive smoldering lava deposit (top right) buries their vegetable farm on the outskirts of Mabinit village, Albay, in this Aug. 10, 2006 file photo.

STAKEHOLDERS went over a draft blueprint for the Philippines' bamboo industry, and an updated version is almost complete, the Board of Investments (BoI) said in a statement yesterday.

"The enhanced version of the Philippine bamboo roadmap — the blueprint that will guide the bamboo industry to achieve growth and competitiveness, is nearing completion as various stakeholders from the industry, academe, and concerned government agencies engaged themselves in an industry road-mapping exercise to discuss and gather inputs to finalize the roadmap," the statement read.

"The continuously growing advocacy for green products can be attributed to the already \$8 billion per annum global market for traditional and non-traditional bamboo products," the BoI noted. "Bamboo is fast becoming a cost-effective and attractive complement and/or alternative to plastic, metal, and wood materials and can generate more jobs and self-employment opportunities in both rural and urban areas."

The BoI held the Bamboo Industry Development Roadmap Workshop recently to present the draft roadmap and address industry concerns: the state of the industry, support for its development, profitability, strategies and timelines, opportunities for cooperation among stakeholders, and the roadmap's implementation.

Bamboo producers and processors' issues included the availability of raw materials, government policies and regulations, research and development, and competitiveness.

Participants also shared information on newly developed bamboo products and "big-ticket projects" for the industry, according to the statement.

After stakeholders accept a new roadmap that has incorporated feedback from the workshop, the BoI will set up a Technical Working Group to implement it.

The version presented during the workshop included the short-term goal to have a law passed or an executive order (EO) issued by 2017

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BoI : Bamboo plan 'nearing completion'

to strengthen the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council (PBIDC). An inventory of and data management system for bamboo resources and enterprises should also be established by that year.

The draft roadmap recommends enacting two bills: the proposed Act Institutionalizing a Philippine Bamboo Development Program authored by Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV (Senate Bill 3206); and a yet unnumbered bill that would amend EO 879 to expand the PBIDC's mandates and provide for more personnel and funds for the Council Secretariat.

Then, in 2018, the first five-year Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Program (BIDP), including a Bamboo Research Program, "is expected to sail through Congress and [be] up for approval by the President," the BoI statement read.

By the year 2020, around 16,000 hectares (ha) of bamboo plantations are expected established.

Among the medium-term goals, a second BIDP should be enacted and implemented through 2025. "By then, at least 25-million culms [stalks] will be available for the industry," the statement read.

By 2030, an additional 42,000 ha of bamboo are expected established for culm production, with 75 more for shoot production and at least 45 million culms available.

"As part of the long-term goals, the third cycle of the bamboo industry

development will be in full motion through 2035 with 68-million culms available. By 2040, culm production will spread to around 80,000 hectares," the statement read.

The contribution of the bamboo industry to gross domestic product is integrated that of wood, cane, and rattan articles. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that manufacturing value added of the group amounted to P13.30 million in 2014 or 0.19% of the P1.66-billion total manufacturing value added that year.

There are about 95 bamboo enterprises in the country, according to the BoI statement, which cited industry figures in numbering bamboo workers at 190,000.

In terms of exports, bamboo products are lumped in with furniture, furnishings, and houseware. Such exports have increased from \$2.053 million in value in 2010 to \$10.791 million in 2014, according to data from the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Export Marketing Bureau.

The BoI, which is the DTI's industry development and promotion arm, also noted EO 879 calls for bamboo to be used to make 25% of the Department of Education's annual public school desks and chairs requirement.

"This translates to P250 million for bamboo desks and chairs, which the bamboo industry can take advantage of," the statement read.



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UN calls for more funds for El Niño mitigation

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

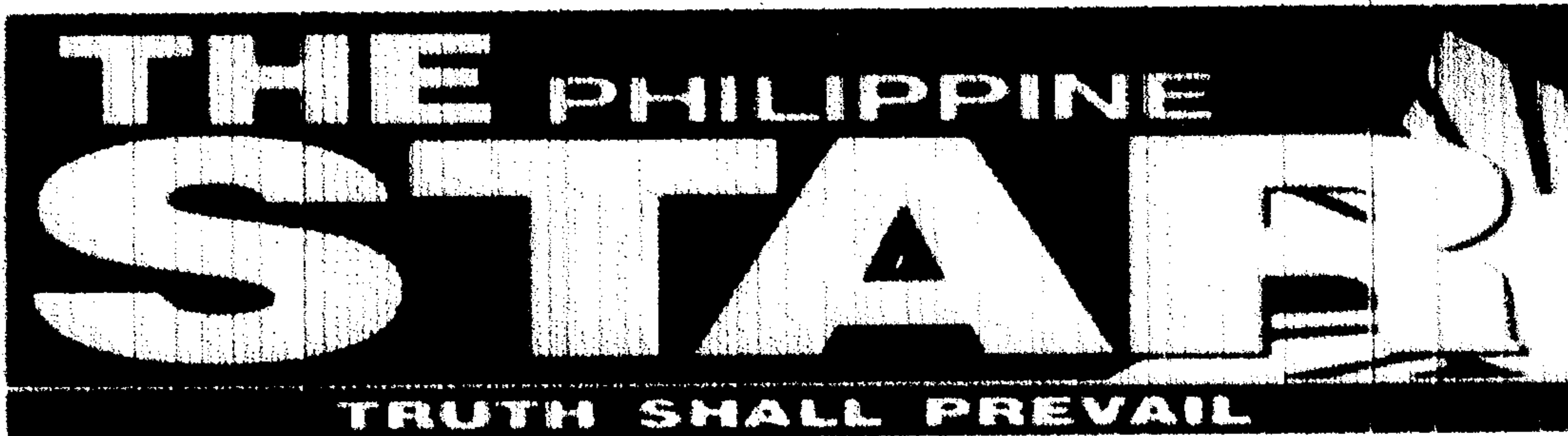
El Niño has severely affected the health and food security of many families and communities around the world and the worst case scenarios could become reality without more funding for El Niño response, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned.

According to the UN, the current El Niño is one of the strongest on record. It is affecting around 60 million people, including some of the most vulnerable in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and the Pacific.

The impact of El Niño-induced drought is picking up in late 2016 and early 2017. The situation could become worse if La Niña, which often follows El Niño, strikes toward the end of this year.

"I am deeply worried about rising acute malnutrition among children under five and the increase in water- and vector-borne diseases. People urgently need food, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene as well as health services," said Stephen O'Brien, UN undersecretary general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator.

He called on the international community to act now to address urgent humanitarian needs and support building communities' resilience to future shocks, with 60 million people across the world affected by drought, floods and other extreme weather events triggered by El Niño.



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UN CALLS...

"I am here to sound the alarm. Again. We must act today to help people whose entire way of life and survival is threatened. Together we can avert the crisis from worsening. But the longer we wait, the longer and more costly our response will need to be," he added.

O'Brien noted that inaction also risks undermining decades of investments in development. For instance, the El Niño of 1997-1998 killed around 21,000 people and caused damage to infrastructure worth \$36 billion.

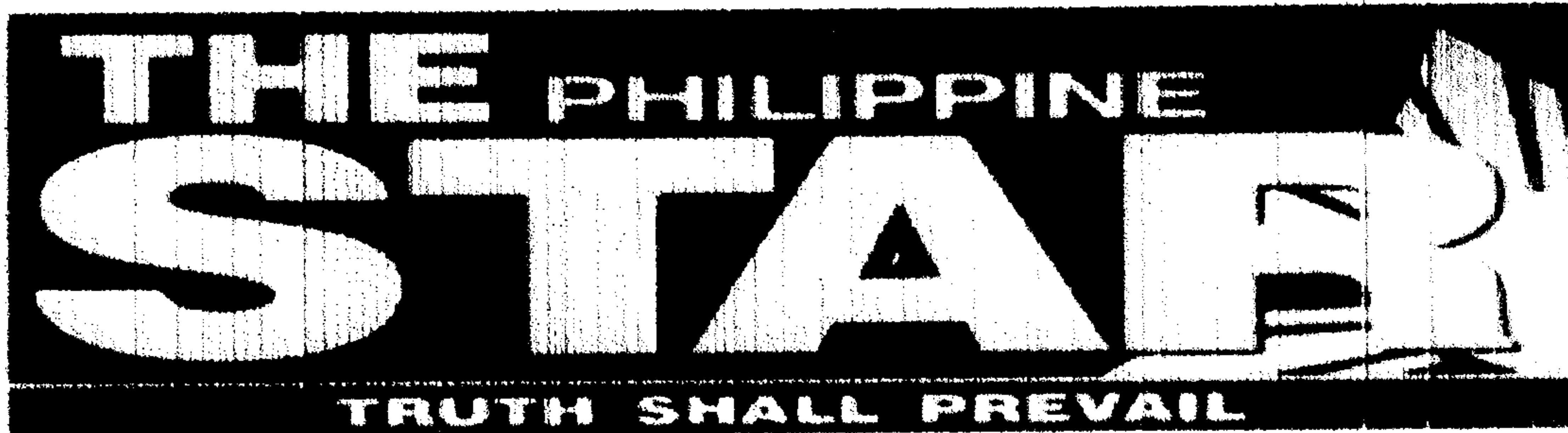
"We must respond quickly to immediate, life-threatening needs, but we must also help people to become more self-reliant and build individual and community capacity to respond to future shocks," he said.

Over the past months, UN agencies, governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other relief partners have stepped up El Niño-related preparedness and response work.

The OCHA indicated that response plans have been completed in 13 countries, requesting some \$3.6 billion to meet critical needs for food and agricultural support, as well as nutrition, health and emergency water and sanitation needs.

But OCHA said the funding gap for the combined global El Niño-related response stands at over \$2.2 billion. The figure is expected to rise as some countries have not yet finalized their humanitarian response plans.

The UN said the World Humanitarian Summit, to be convened by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in Istanbul next month, provides a critical opportunity for the international community to change the way it manages climatic risks, including future El Niño and La Niña events.



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By PRECIOSA S. SOLIVEN

Human activities contribute to disturbing climate changes

The orbiting of earth on its side is causing great changes in solar and lunar energies affecting human life and the biosphere (living creatures on land, water and air). In addition, people do not completely understand how modern technology in food production, transportation, and the water system have added to environmental problems.

Atmospheric and man-made gases

To comprehend climate management, key terms must be explained:

GREENHOUSE GAS. Natural and anthropogenic gases in the atmosphere absorb and secrete energy at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of long-wave radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, the atmosphere and the clouds. This property causes the greenhouse effect. Water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide, methane, and ozone are the primary greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere, but there are a number of entirely man-made greenhouse gases such as the halocarbons and other chlorine- and bromine-containing substances. The irresponsible use of these man-made gases were dealt with under The Montreal Protocol, which is "an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of numerous substances that are responsible for ozone depletion."

CARBON DIOXIDE EQUIVALENT (CO₂e). A measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases, based on their global warming potential (GWP).

KYOTO PROTOCOL to the UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC). Adopted in 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, it contains the legally binding commitments of countries under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or OECD that have agreed to reduce their anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions by at least five percent below 1990 levels.

How transportation aggravates greenhouse gas emissions

International trade, travel and a growing dependence on motor vehicles are making transportation one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for nearly one-quarter globally. The primary force behind this is the increasing mobility of goods and people associated with a consumer lifestyle, urban sprawl and affluence. Passenger vehicles (cars, motorbikes, etc.) and truck travel contribute to the bulk of these emissions by about 75 percent worldwide, with shipping and air travel following suit. The total passenger journey worldwide via air is predicted to reach 7.4 billion in 2020. The International Energy Agency (IEA), foreseeing a doubling in transport energy use by 2050 based on current data, is pushing for a dramatic cut in associated CO₂ emissions as part of an over-all sustainability strategy to cut energy-related CO₂ emissions by 50 percent.



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Human activities contribute to disturbing climate changes

Food security

Climate change threatens food security, although crop yields in temperate regions may improve. Agriculture is highly adaptable: crop calendars can be adjusted to avoid extreme hot periods, new varieties of plants can tolerate a range of conditions, and good soil management can overcome water stress. With economic incentives, world food production should not be adversely affected by climate change over the next 50 years or so.

Agriculture accounts for about a third of global emissions of CO₂, greenhouse gases, methane and nitrous oxide, but in many developing countries it is the main economic activity of the rural population. It is essential to meet basic needs: food, employment and income.

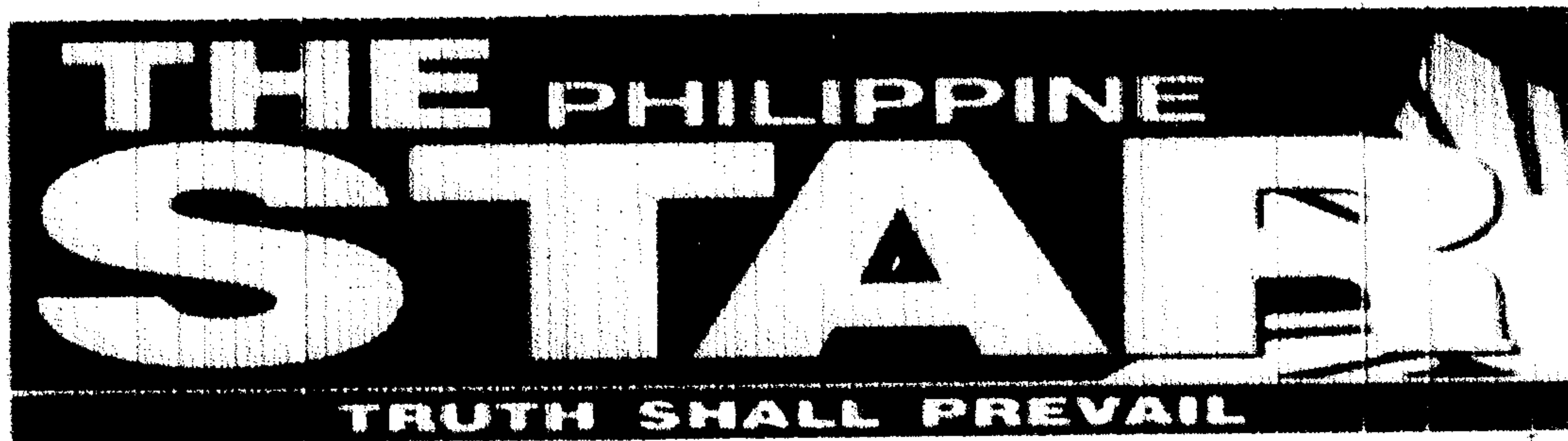
Threats to health

Climate change threatens human health. Where people are already vulnerable to disease as a result of poverty and malnutrition, even small changes in climate have an effect on health. The poorest regions are likely to be the hardest hit.

Rainfall, temperature and humidity have a major influence on the distribution of disease pathogens and pests. Warmer temperatures, longer growing seasons, the absence of pest-killing sub-zero temperatures, and increased rainfall all extend the habitat ranges for diseases, as well as for insects, rodents and other organisms that carry them. Climate changes favor the spread of diseases into previously unaffected areas.

While fewer people die from cold, warmer weather leads to increased heat stress. It also leads to higher levels of air pollutants from forest fires in rural areas, including the formation of ozone and volatile organic compounds in urban areas. Thus, the number of deaths related to respiratory conditions is expected to rise even more.

Flooding increases the risk of water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and dysentery, as well as mosquito-borne diseases, including malaria, yellow fever and now the zika virus. The cumulative effects of environmental stresses including malnutrition, further reduces the ability to fight off infections.



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Human activities . . .

Threatened water supplies

Water is a vital resource often taken for granted. With populations increasing in some regions and a rising demand for water to irrigate crops throughout the world, water supplies are already a cause for concern in many countries.

An increase in temperature makes surface water evaporate more quickly, reducing supply and increasing demand, especially for water to irrigate crops. Warmer and longer summers also cause snow packs and glaciers to melt more quickly. More rapid melting increases river flows in the spring, but may reduce summer flows. Over the long term, a reduction in snow and ice may seriously threaten many river basins.

If water supplies fail completely, contaminated water, lack of hygiene and thirst will take their toll.

Many of the effects of climate change can be countered by prioritizing the most urgent uses, adopting water-saving technology and more efficient irrigation methods. However, less-developed countries in drier parts of the world, which lack the technology and infrastructure to effectively manage their water resources, will suffer the most.

Renewable energy to adapt to change

Increasing the use of renewable energy sources is an important way of reducing greenhouse gas emission, while continuing to provide power. It could be the technological key to economically and socially sustainable societies.

SMALL-SCALE HYDRO. Hydro systems generate electricity from running water. They can provide power for isolated villages, or feed power into the electricity grid. Small-scale hydro does not involve artificial reservoirs, and so avoids the formation and release of methane from decaying biomass.

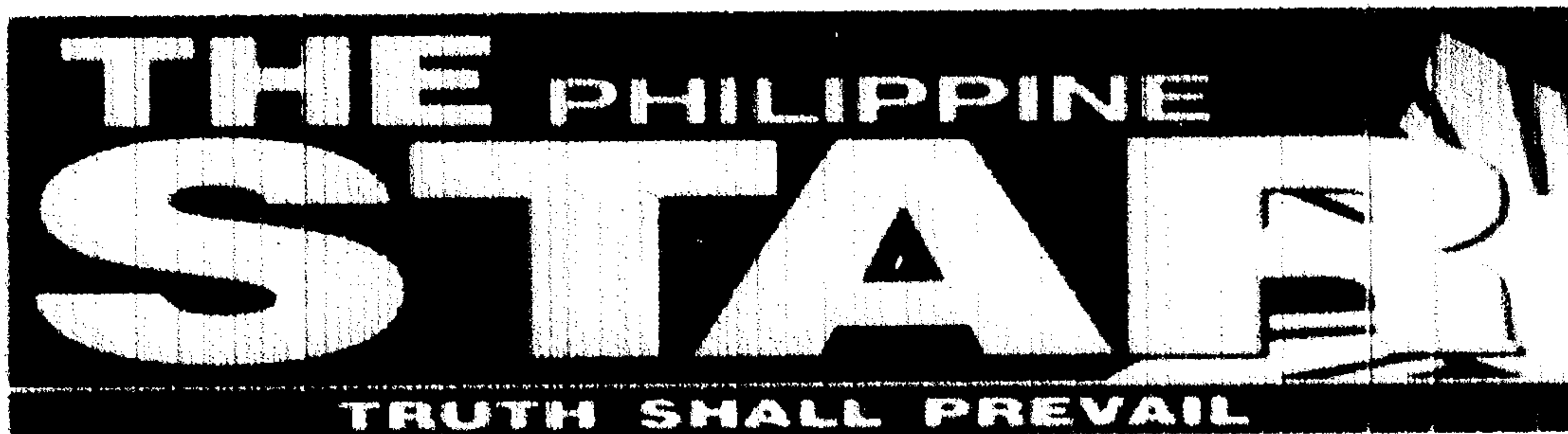
BIOMASS. Plant material – purpose grown or waste – can be burned or fermented, and used to generate electricity or heat. The CO₂ released is the same amount as was removed from the atmosphere during the plant's lifetime, so biomass is considered carbon neutral.

GEOHERMAL. In geologically active areas, the earth's intense heat can fuel power plants. Elsewhere, its temperature, which remains constant at 1.5 meters below the surface, can be used to heat and cool buildings.

SOLAR. Photovoltaic panels convert the sun's radiation into electricity. Thermal panels convert the sun's radiation into heat.

WIND. Wind turbines of varying sizes are used to generate electricity for the national grid or for isolated communities.

TIDE, WAVE, OCEAN. The movement of the sea can be used to generate electricity.



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Human activities. -

Local commitment to climate/ disaster management

Most countries have acknowledged the problem of changing climate by signing the Convention on Climate Change. However, in many places, local and regional authorities are developing more aggressive emission reduction policies than federal governments. Cities around the world are not waiting for the national governments to debate its implementation. They have signed their own commitment as part of the campaign, Cities for Climate Protection.

In the USA, mayors urged the national government to slow the rate of global warming. In February 2005, the mayor of Seattle issued a Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to curb the greenhouse gas emissions at the local level. The agreement was endorsed by the US Congress of Mayors and by May 2006, 230 mayors had signed up.

In Curitiba, Brazil, the city's urban planning is fostering more efficient public transportation. In the same light, in Hyderabad, India, traffic flow is being improved in order to reduce the amount

of time vehicles spend on the road.

In Rayong, Thailand, a biogas facility has been installed to handle municipal wastes and provide an alternative fuel source. Meantime, heat-reflective paint has been used on the roof of the Mareeba Heritage Museum in Queensland, Australia to reduce the temperature in the building, as well as its air-conditioning needs.

Individual efforts are an essential starting point, but

the major changes in the design of efficient buildings, transportation, energy and other systems will require long-term vision, leadership, cooperation, innovation, and investment from business and governments at all levels. *Assuring a public commitment to action is as important as our individual efforts.*

(Reference: *The Atlas of Climate Change* by Kirstin Dow and Thomas E. Downing)

(For feedback, email to precious.soliven@yahoo.com)

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

60 million worldwide hit by El Niño – UN

GENEVA (AFP) — Some 60 million people worldwide need assistance due to havoc wreaked by the El Niño climate phenomenon, but a shortage of funding could threaten the delivery of life-saving aid, the UN warned Tuesday.

"The numbers are truly alarming," UN humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien told reporters in Geneva.

The El Niño effect, which comes with warming sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific, causes heavy rains in some parts of the world and drought elsewhere.

The 2015-2016 El Niño was one of the most powerful on record, and has caused significant damage across 13 countries across Africa, Asia, Central and South America and the Pacific, sending malnutrition levels spiralling and leading to greater spread of diseases.

In addition to some 60 million people directly affected by El Niño, "there will be millions more who are at risk," O'Brien said, following a meeting in Geneva with representatives of affected countries and aid

organisations.

Floods and failed rains caused by El Niño have sparked a dramatic rise in the number of people going hungry in large parts of Africa, with some 32 million people in the southern part of the continent alone in need of some form of assistance.

Ethiopia, which is experiencing its worst drought in half a century, is considered "ground zero" in the crisis, with some 10 million people in need of aid, Care International Secretary General Wolfgang Jamann said.

But getting aid to all those in need is no easy task.

The UN estimates that at least \$3.6 billion is required to meet critical needs for food and agricultural support, as well as health and emergency water and sanitation needs linked to El Niño, and O'Brien warned that figure was likely to rise.

But even if the needs remain stable, less than half of what is required – only \$1.4 billion – has been provided.

"So far what has been raised is far

short of what we need," he said, cautioning that "lifesaving programmes, including the food pipeline in Ethiopia, are at risk of being cut short."

"We have weeks, not months to get this right."

Making matters worse, the communities still reeling from the impact of El Niño are likely to get slammed again later this year by a return swing of the pendulum with its opposite number, La Nina.

In addition to providing desperately needed aid, the world should now be preparing for La Nina, which is characterised by unusual cool ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific, said the UN's Izumi Nakamitsu.

"If La Nina happens, the local community level coping mechanism is already quite low, because they have been coping with El Niño impact," she told reporters.

"So when that hits, the community will be again devastated, and possibly even much worse," she said.



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EARTH DAY 2016, IPINAGDIWANG NG U.S. EMBASSY SA ANTIPOLO

NAGKAISA ang Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Antipolo, U.S. Embassy at SM Supermalls sa pagdiriwang ng ika-46 taon ng Earth Day noong Abril 22, 2016 sa Hinulugang Taktak Protected Landscape (HTPL), Brgy Sta. Cruz kung saan pinangunahan ni U.S Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Klecheski ang pagtatanim ng 1,000 punla ng

punong kawayan.

"Sa ngalan ni Mayor Jun Ynares at mamama-yan ng Antipolo, malugod namin kayong tinatanggap sa lugar na patuloy na nililinang. Maraming salamat sa pagpili sa aming lungsod upang pagdausan ng isang mahalagang pagdiriwang na ito. Nawa'y ang inyong pananatili rito – gaano man kaikasi – ay hindi niyo malilimu-

tan. Salamat sa lahat ng dumalo ngayon na nagkakaisa sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan," pahayag ni Konsehal Ronald Barcena.

Halos 400 katao mula sa English Access Microscholarship Program, Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, U.S Embassy Green Team, SM Cares, at pamahalaang lokal ang lumahok sa programa upang makiisa sa rehabilitasyon ng naturang parke.

Dumalo rin sina Rizal Provincial Vice Governor Frisco S. San Juan Jr., SM Supermalls

Liza Silerio, Director ng SM Cares Program on Environment & Sustainability, SM Supermalls Vice President Rommel Y. Ng ng Operations, SM Supermalls Atty. Pearly Joan Turley, Asst. Vice-President ng Human Resource, Konsehal Loni Leyva at Konsehal Barcena.

Isang pribilehiyo para sa lungsod ng Antipolo na ganapin sa HTPL ang Earth Day na nagiging dausan na ng malalaking programa gaya ng Le Tour de Filipinas noong Pebrero at Ron-da Pilipinas noong Abril.

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SAGAD SA SHOWBIZ • BULGAR SA BALITA

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SURVIVING THE HEAT - Despite the worsening impact of drought, this vegetable farmer has managed to grow some tomatoes in her farm in the mountain village of Bagumbayan in Sultan Kudarat province. (Kelth Bacongco)