

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DENR chief to help 'existing mines' than accept new ones

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLORES**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is more than willing to help existing mines "get their act together" than accept new mining

projects.

That's what Environment Chief Gina Lopez said when asked if she will be ready to approve new mining projects in order to make up for the possible shortfall in nickel production that would result from the DENR's audit on exist-

ing operations, which spared only 11 compliant firms.

"I would rather that mining companies get their act together and the existing mining companies improve further. We will do a total economic valuation of the existing mine sites and create mas-

sive economic and social impact in their areas," Lopez told Manila Bulletin.

She then said she won't allow new mining projects until the country's mining industry is fixed.

"Right now, I say no [to new mining permits], until the mining industry gets

its act together. We need to fix things, increase social and economic impact, and lay a model, which we don't have yet, before we start anything new," Lopez further said.

"Let the existing ones get their act together. Also

going to do a study on the carrying capacity of the country for mines. We may have even surpassed it given the perils of climate change. I just saw a powerpoint presentation [about it]. It's scary. It's there and we can't do anything about it," she added.

For his part, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines Vice President for Policy Ronald Recidoro said there's a good side and bad side to the secretary's stand.

As for the good side, Recidoro told Manila Bulletin that at least, the government has pledged to help the existing mines but he is also worried that if no new projects would be allowed to progress over the next six years, the country would be missing out a lot in terms of utilizing its rich mineral resources.

"The downside is worrying because she [Lopez] has to realize that the country has a large mineral potential. If she does not allow exploration, we are depriving the country and the communities that may be hosting these projects the significant impact of utilizing your mineral resources."

which states that the country has the responsibility to explore and utilize its mineral resources.

"That's what we need to do. We only need strict implementation," Recidoro said.

Contrary to what Lopez wants, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Mario Luis Jacinto said the agency is now working on policy recommendations that will pave the way for the approval of new mining projects.

MGB is an attached agency to DENR tasked to develop and regulate the mining industry.

Jacinto said that policy recommendations that will possibly lead to the abolition of Executive Order (EO) 79 will be ready by the end of this year.

Under EO 79, no new mineral agreements shall be approved until a legislation rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms shall have taken effect.

"The review is ongoing and we are still consulting with various groups and

To recall, only 11 companies out of 41 metallic mines have passed the government's nationwide audit.

Lopez said she wants to see a cleaner mining industry by December as an immediate result of this audit.

But unlike before when she thinks it's impossible for mining companies to become responsible, Lopez had somehow loosened up, even promising to lend support to the suspended companies and those that are up for suspension.

"I need to make it clear. We will help the mines with our experience and technologies so that they can have a much greater impact with the money that they have allocated to communities. Everyone will be happier. But the stand on the environment is non-negotiable. We just want their SDMP [Social Development and Management Program] funds to have much greater impact. It's win-win for everyone," Lopez said.

"When there is a will there is a way. They don't only have to fix the mess done, they have to show us that they have instituted the necessary measures that it won't happen again. It's totally up to them. The ball is in their court."

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Group warns MGB vs letting Pichay firm sell ore

SURIGAO CITY—Environmental activists here threatened to sue officials of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) if they allow a nickel mining firm, owned by a congressman, to continue shipping millions of pesos worth of ore despite a government order that suspended the firm's operations for violations of environmental laws.

"While the environment department is busy suspending erring mining companies in the country, it apparently continues to allow a suspended mine in Surigao del Norte to profit out of Mother Nature's misery," said Edgar Canda, provincial coordinator of the militant group Bayan Muna.

Canda, whose group is part of environmental watchdog Caraga Watch, issued the warning amid reports that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is likely to allow Claver Mineral Development Corp. (CMDC) to sell two more shiploads of nickel ore to China.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay is owner and president of CMDC.

The suspended mining company was granted permit to sell three shiploads of ore to China in June but it was able to sell only one after Environment Secretary Gina Lopez halted the other shipments amid the DENR's nationwide audit of mining companies.

Verbal order

Daniel Bilderol, MGB Caraga officer in charge, confirmed that CMDC had been allowed to sell

"Undersecretary Jasareno instructed us to issue the two OTPs (ore transport permits)," Bilderol said. He said Jasareno's verbal order was given in the presence of Pichay at the sidelines of the hearing for the proposed 2017 budget of the DENR at the House of Representatives on Sept. 5.

Bilderol said Jasareno, Lopez and other high-ranking MGB and DENR officials were present in the hearing for the DENR's P9-billion budget for next year.

Three days before the DENR budget hearing, Pichay called Lopez "crazy" for seeking the closure of all mining firms in the country.

Bilderol, however, said the MGB Caraga office has not formally issued the permits to

CMDC pending Jasareno's written memorandum.

Bilderol said when the MGB Caraga office tried to obtain written approval from MGB Director Mario Luis Jacinto, the official declined and told them to get the permits from Jasareno instead.

The operation of CMDC was suspended in 2012 for environmental violations but it managed to sell shiploads of ore for "environmental" reasons.

Environmental risk

Months after suspending CMDC in 2012, then MGB Director Jasareno allowed CMDC to sell four shiploads of low-grade ore supposedly obtained from "wastes" generated by the company's rehabilitation activities.

In June, days before President Duterte was sworn into office, Jasareno again granted CMDC three transport and export permits because the ore stockpile presented environmental risks.

This prompted environment activists to ask whether Pichay's company had an endless supply of ore classified as waste.

CMDC earned P174 million from four shipments in 2012, while the shipload that the company managed to sell in June this year turned in over P20 mil-

lion, records from MGB Caraga showed.

"In 2012 they (MGB) said the wastes needed to be shipped out because of environmental risks," said Rev. Pio Mercado, Caraga Watch spokesperson.

"Four years later, they still have the same alibi, so we're really wondering if this company has unlimited supply of wastes," he said.

Mercado and Canda said Caraga Watch would file corruption cases against MGB and DENR officials at the Ombudsman as soon as they allow CMDC to continue selling ore.

"We are disappointed that, despite President Duterte's marching order against irresponsible mining and corruption, there are still elements within MGB and DENR who don't get the message," Canda said.

The group also called on Lopez to review the rehabilitation program of CMDC and determine its real ownership before issuing any permit to the firm.

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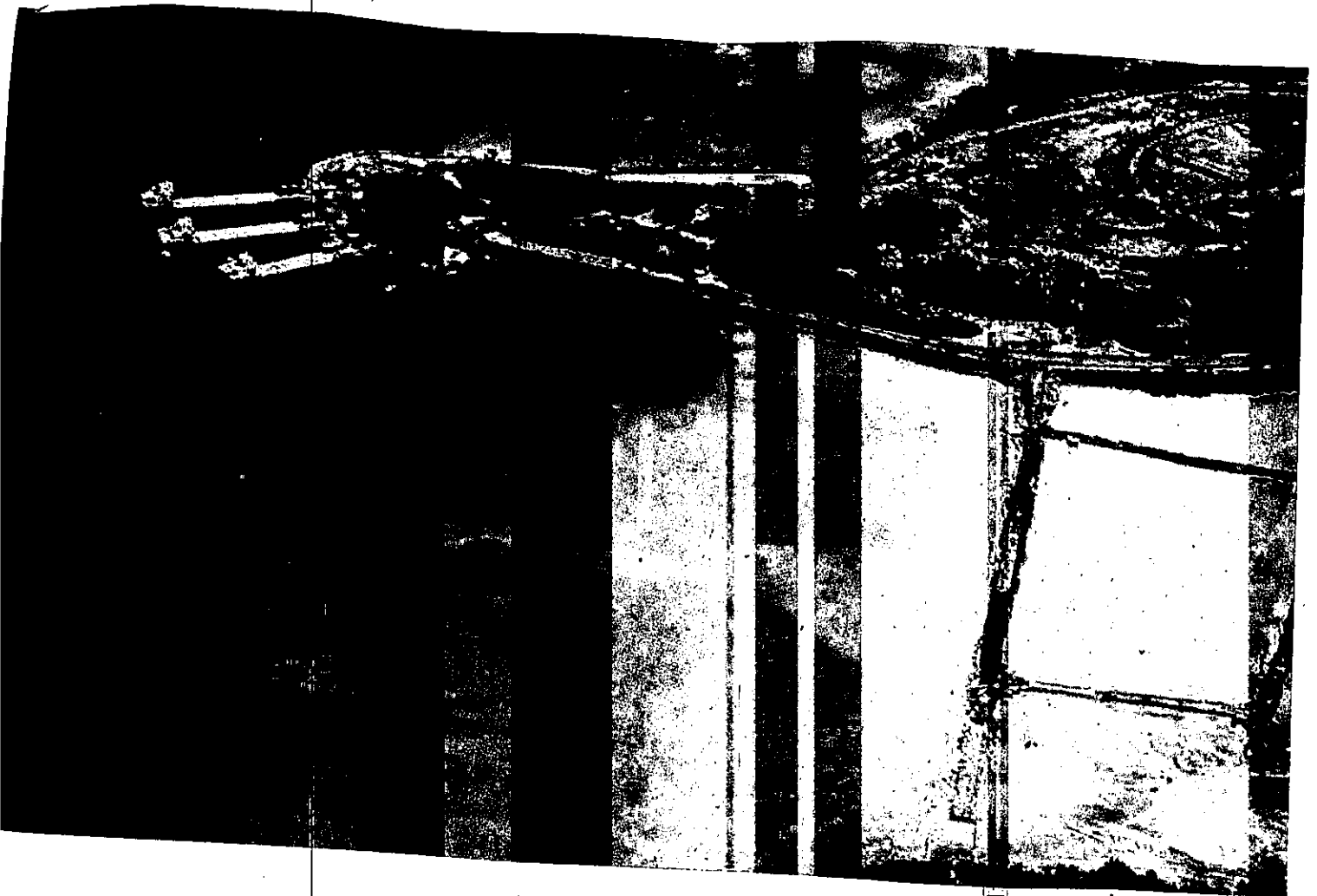
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Group warns MGB vs letting Pichay firm sell ore



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Need for environmental literacy

By Moises Norman Z. Garcia
and Maria Rosario Virginia
Cobar-Garcia

NOWADAYS, no one could deny the urgency of the major environmental problems, particularly global warming and climate change, because of the threat to humanity's existence.

The cause is the unprecedented greenhouse gas emissions, mostly carbon dioxide, from major anthropogenic activities leading to the augmentation of the greenhouse effect.

The effects on humans and the environment include food and water scarcity, biodiversity loss, leading to premature extinction, rising sea levels, rapid spread of deadly viral diseases and extreme weather conditions.

Thus, there is a serious need for global citizens to gain appropriate knowledge, raise further their consciousness and take more action to mitigate if not adapt to these worsening conditions. This could be achieved by environmental education complemented by science education.

Education issue

Felipe Calderon, former president of Mexico, stressed that climate change was an education issue. Citing a Yale study, he said that the single strongest predictor of public awareness of climate change was educational attainment, which fills knowledge gaps on climate change nature, challenges apathy and furnishes technical knowledge needed to build a better future through innovation.

Thus, sound environmental education (EE) and science education (SE) are needed in the advancement of the citizens' environmental literacy, leading to better understanding of the nature, scale

literacy

Inquiry-based

In order to comprehend complex environmental concepts like nutrient cycling, flow of energy in an ecosystem and global warming, there is a need for SE to address this pedagogical task.

In this field, research has shown that learners could hardly grasp these ideas because of their abstract nature. In other words, in order for students to appreciate these concepts, they have to be observable using the senses and apply this to their everyday lives.

An example of this strategy is the implementation of the Science, Technology and Society (STS) in school in which learning goes beyond the confines of the classroom through the science inquiry and constructivism framework. Thus, it would be a

big challenge for science educators to conduct innovative teaching strategies anchored on STS in order for the students to understand fully and apply these ecological concepts in addressing environmental problems.

Indeed, SE and EE have their own unique set of epistemologic objectives that should complement one another. SE focuses primarily on teaching scientific knowledge and skills like the concept of global warming and the means to mitigate it, therefore developing the learner's science literacy.

EE emphasizes instilling environmental values, cultivating proenvironmental attitudes and eliciting proenvironmental action among the learners. Thus, the convergence of these two disciplines in improving citizens' environmental literacy is necessary.

Government initiatives

The UN declarations and national initiatives in EE led to the enactment of Republic Act No. 9512, or the Environmental Awareness Education Act of 2008.

This law mandated the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and other relevant agencies to: 1. Consider the total environment; 2. Integrate EE in all subject areas; 3. Teach it in all grade/year levels; 4. Utilize diverse teaching and learning strategies; 5. Suit EE to the cognitive level of students at different year levels; 6. Enable students to develop their own sense of values and commitment through problem-solving and decision-making situations; and 7. Promote the value of local, national and international cooperation.

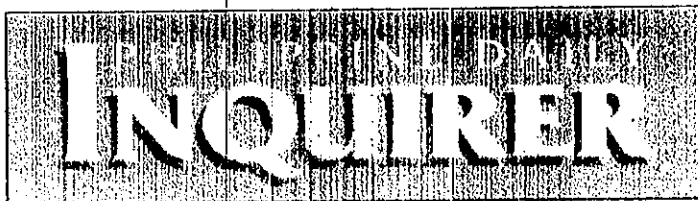
Other pertinent, mandated provisions of this act include:

- Incorporation of environmental education and activities as part of the National Service Training Program (NSTP) through its Civic Welfare Training Services component, where all students in baccalaureate degree courses and vocational courses are required to undergo

- Declaration of November as the "Environmental Awareness Month" every year

- Assignment of the DOST to create programs, ensuring learners to receive science-based quality information on environmental problems

- Conduct of capacity-building programs nationwide by the different concerned agencies.



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Need for environmental literacy

Schools Organization (YES-O).

This was the resolution adopted by participants of a summer camp on April 30 to May 4, 2003. This is a school-based, voluntary, cocurricular organization that would serve as the setting for learners' actions toward the protection and conservation of the environment for future generations.

To comply with this law, after three years of enactment, the department issued DepEd Order No. 52, s. 2011 on the "Strengthening Environmental Education in Public and Private Schools."

It urged all private and public schools to lead in raising awareness of students by enhancing EE through the pursuit of effective school-based activities that seek to protect and conserve the environment.

As of now, the following activities should have been undertaken:

- Intensifying lessons regarding the environment on all science subjects.

- Using varied instructional materials that would promote learners' participation in environmental activities and advocacies.

- Encouraging teachers to participate in capacity-building activities related to environmental education.

- Establishing YES-O pursuant to DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2003 for elementary and secondary schools, both public and private.

- Establishing, registering, monitoring, evaluating and reporting YES-O activities.

A follow-up to the foregoing directive, the department released DepEd Order No. 93, s. 2011 regarding the "Mandat-

ed Programs, Projects and Activities, Various Forms and Targets Pertinent to the Youth for Environment in Schools Program."

These projects of YES-O include: Seed bank and nursery establishment; planting, growing and caring for trees; awareness campaigns and symposia on environmental issues and actions; outreach programs—cleanup drives, adopt a forest, adopt a river, adopt a community; waste-management program; plastic-free environment; watershed protection and conservation; energy and water conservation—rain-water harvesting; fire prevention and disaster risk reduction and management; promotion of local ecotourism sites; and environmental camps.

Tertiary level

It was mentioned earlier that EE should be incorporated in the NSTP as mandated by RA 9512. As of now, there are already 90 CHED-approved higher education institutions (HEI) offering environmental courses and its allied programs mostly in state colleges and universities at least at the baccalaureate level. In Metro Manila, there are only nine HEIs offering environmental programs, two state universities and seven private schools.

At this point, let us narrate our academic experiences as HEI mentors as we perform our role in the realm of instruction, community service and research with the aim of promoting our environmental advocacy.

In delivering lectures in our respective classes in environ-

mental science, we make sure that at the end of the course our students not only acquired significant scientific knowledge but also a change in their behavior toward environmental protection and conservation.

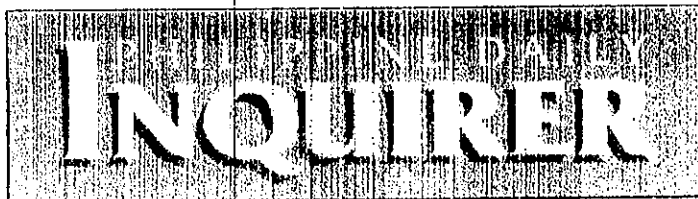
As a terminal project, groups of learners are tasked with creating an investigative documentary film about common environmental problems, such as water and air pollution in their respective localities. This is the highest pedagogical undertaking under Bloom's taxonomy.

Community outreach

As active participants of a college-initiated Simbahayan community outreach program at University of Santo Tomas in Manila, we are regularly involved in providing seminars and workshops among the rural folks of a remote barangay at the foot of the Sierra Madre mountain range in Barangay Ariendo, Bongabon, Nueva Ecija regarding the 3Rs of solid waste management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity conservation.

There were instances when we spend a day or two, socially immersing with the locals just to convey our message and environmental advocacy to the community.

This advocacy is extended into the field of research, wherein we are also research associates at the university's Research Center. Our research interest is on designing instructional materials, i.e., modules, that will cause behavioral change among the learners even outside the domain of environmental science.



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More effective

Our just-concluded research suggests that formal, in-school EE is more effective in imparting scientific concepts and behavioral change than the nonformal, after-school EE because of the serious treatment and undertakings of the learners in the former.

Its implication is that, as much as possible EE should be taught and implemented in a formal, in-school setting. At present, we are evaluating the environmental literacy of elementary and middle-school teachers, both public and private, in two regions in Luzon.

Teaching, learning gaps

With due respect to the pre-service and in-service teachers, their level of science literacy should also be evaluated and if not developed before they could impart environmental literacy to their students. It is unfortunate that not all elementary and high school teachers are science majors, who could provide the proper science and environmental pedagogy to their learners.

Shortage of teachers

The study by Savellano in 1999 revealed that only 15 percent of the in-service teachers enrolled in these two degree programs actually preferred the sciences as their major. This would lead to a shortage of teachers trained in science or there could be teachers handling subjects for which they are not prepared, contributing to the nation's teaching and learning gaps in science and the proenvironment-

Mathematics and Science Study revealed the regrettable state of science literacy in the Philippines in its 1999 and 2003 studies. The country ranked 43 out of 45 nations.

This could be attributed to the lack of science inquiry activity in Philippine classrooms, according to Bernardo et al (2008) of De La Salle University. Furthermore, the foregoing appalling scenario could probably explain the country's present environmental conditions despite conservation efforts of various government agencies.

Performance index

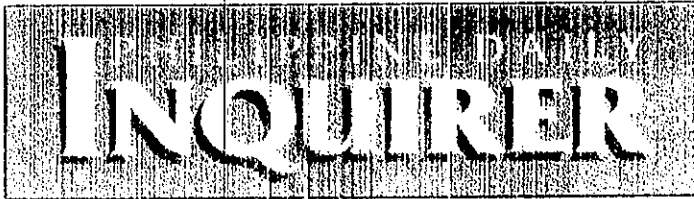
The Philippines is lagging behind other nations when it comes to its Environmental Performance Index in 2015, manifested by the country's overall ranking at 114th among 178 countries. This is based on a nation's performance to address high-priority environmental issues—the protection of human health from environmental hazards and ecosystems protection.

Even by just observing, one could easily surmise the lack of environmental and science literacy among the people as tons of garbage are washed along the coast of Manila Bay after every weather disturbance, not to mention the lack of discipline and the continuous destruction of our rainforests. Thus, aside from environmental education, curriculum planners should also promote and improve the country's science education system.

Probably, the initial step for this purpose is to provide more scholarships to education students who intend to take up science as their major. This should be the thrust of the present leadership of the DepEd.

(Moises Norman Z. Garcia, Ph.D.
Science Education, DepEd Cebu)

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Need for environmental literacy

Environmental education chronicles

18th century: Height of the Industrial Revolution—need for environmental education (EE) was recognized.

1972: *Stockholm Declaration*, a UN Environmental Program, formalized the modern EE movement.

1975: *Belgrade Charter* proposes a global framework for EE (International Workshop on Environmental Education)

1977: *Tbilisi Declaration*.

Unesco convenes 1st Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education.

1984: *World Commission on Environment and Development* (WCED). UN convened 22 leaders to identify long-term environmental strategies for the international community.

1987: *Brundtland Report*. WCED introduces the term "sustainable development" in "Our Common Future" report.

1989: *Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development* was implemented.

1992: *Agenda 21* at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro.

178 countries, including the Philippines, signed it.

1992: The *Philippine Council for Sustainable Development* was created, making the Philippines the first country to establish a national council for sustainable development.

1997: The *Philippine Agenda 21*, the National Agenda for Sustainable Development, was conceptualized.

2002: UN General Assembly declares 2005-2014 the "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development."

2004: The National Environmental Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development was conceptualized.

2006: Asean formulates the Asean Environmental Education Action Plan for 2008-2012 in Burma (Myanmar).

2008: Republic Act No. 9512, or "An Act to Promote Environmental Awareness through Environmental Education and for other Purposes" was enacted and signed into law.



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EDITORIAL

P. Star

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Killer air

Many people who look like candidates for extermination by the shock troops of the administration may be thin and gaunt not because they are abusing drugs but because of illness as well as malnutrition from poverty. And health experts have linked illnesses including chronic respiratory problems, strokes, heart disease and lung cancer to air pollution.

In a comprehensive study on the scourge of air pollution, the World Health Organization reported that 6.76 billion people — 92 percent of the global population of 7.35 billion — live in places where air pollution exceeds recommended health limits. Among the worst hit, the WHO reported last

Philippines passed the Comprehensive Clean Air Act or Republic Act 8749 way back in 1999. As in many laws in this country, however, enforcement of RA 8749 has been spotty. This is most evident in Metro Manila and other urban centers, where vehicles particularly jeepneys, buses, trucks and motorcycles emit black smoke despite the requirement for emission tests during vehicle registration. Open burning of solid waste adds to the problem, with residents living near city dumps suffering from chronic diseases.

These are problems that are not impossible to address, if given sufficient official attention. More pressure can be exerted to compel industries to comply with clean air standards. The govern-

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WHO Ambient Air quality guidelines to address rising pollution woes

SOME 6.5 million people are dying annually from air pollution, the United Nations said, stressing the need for the world to act fast to address the problem.

The UN also said 92 percent of the world's population live in places where levels exceed recommended limits and nearly 90 percent of the deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, with a major out of three occurring in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific regions.

Action to tackle air pollution can't come soon enough, top UN World Health Organization (WHO) environmental official Li Junfeng said of the new air quality model, which takes into account that high pollution is within countries exceeding WHO limits. The world's population reached 7.35 billion last year, according to UN figures.

"Solutions exist with sustainable transportation, solid waste management, access to clean household fuels and cook-stoves, as well as renewable energies and industrial emissions reductions," Dr. Neira added.

Major sources of air pollution include inefficient modes of transport, household fuel and waste burning, coal-fired power plants, and industrial activities. But not all air pollution originates from human activity. For example, air quality can also be influenced by dust storms, particularly in regions close to deserts.

Developed in collaboration with the University of Bath, United Kingdom, the guidelines WHO's most detailed outdoor air pollution-related health data ever, based on satellite measurements, air transport

and ground station monitors for more than 3,000 locations both rural and urban.

Some three million deaths a year are linked to exposure to outdoor air pollution. Indoor air pollution can be just as deadly. In 2012, an estimated 6.5 million deaths (91.5 percent of all global deaths) were associated with indoor and outdoor air pollution together.

Ninety-four percent of the deaths are due to non-communicable diseases, notably cardiovascular diseases, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and lung cancer. Air pollution also increases the risks for acute respiratory infections.

"This new model is a big step forward towards even more confident estimates of the huge global burden of more than six million deaths - one in nine of total global deaths - from exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution," said Dr. Neira, who is WHO Director, Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health.

WHO's Ambient Air quality guidelines limit annual mean exposure to particulate matter with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers (PM2.5), such as sulfate, nitrates and black carbon, which penetrate deep into the lungs and cardiovascular system, posing the greatest health risks.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, adopted at a UN summit last year, call for substantially reducing the number of deaths and illnesses from air pollution. In May, WHO issued a new road map for accelerated action with local health sectors increasing monitoring and assuming a greater leadership role in national pol-

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Editorial

Mga dyipning pupugak-pugak, walisin na sa kalsada ng MM

MARAMING lumang sasakyan, (kasama ang mga dyipni) ang pinag-aaralang alisin na sa mga kalsada. Ang dahilan: Nagdudulot sila ng trapiko. Kapag tumirik ang mga karag-karag na dyipni, grabeng trapik ang idudulot. Ang mga ito rin ang dahilan ng mga aksidente kung saan inaararo ang mga kabahayan sapagkat nawalan ng preno. Marami nang aksidente ang nangyari kung saan may mga namatay dahil binangga ng karag-karag na dyipni.

Ang mga karag-karag na sasakyan din ang pinag-mumulan ng air pollution sa Metro Manila. Ang mga makina ng dyipning ito ay mahigit nang 15 taon at hindi na namimintina kaya naman ang ibinubugang usok ay mas maitim pa sa tinta ng pusit.



Larry Goy'16
10.2.16

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), 80 percent na pinanggagalingan ng air pollution ay mga lumang sasakyan. Bawat buga ng usok ay nagdaragdag sa pagkalason ng kapaligiran. Ang usok na ito ang nalalanghap ng mamamayan na nagdudulot ng sakit.

Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), ang mga sakit na idinudulot ng air pollution ay allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases. Ayon pa sa DOH, nakaamba ang panganib sa mga pasahero at pedestrians dahil sila ang nakalantad sa maruming hangin.

Panukala ng DENR na i-phaseout na ang mga dyipni na lampas 15 taon para mabawasan na ang mga lumalason sa kapaligiran. Sinabi mismo ni DENR Sec. Gina Lopez, na sa sobrang pagkalason ng kapaligiran sa kasalukuyan, maski ang mga anghel ay hindi bababa sa lupa. Nagsasagawa ng anti-smoke belching campaign ang DENR sa kasalukuyan at hindi umano sila titigil hangga't may mga sasakyang nagbubuga nang nakamamatay na usok.

Makipagtulungan naman ang LTO at LTFRB para mawalis ang mga kakarag-karag na dyipni sa kalsada. Huwag nang i-renew ang mga registration nito. Nararapat din namang ayudahan ng pamahalaan ang

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SA CALOOCAN

**'No septic tank, no building/
business permit policy, ipapatupad**

Nakatakdang ipatupad ng pamahalaang lungsod ng Caloocan ang "no septic tank, no building/business permit policy" sa inaasahang pagpasa sa panukalang ordinansa na naglalayong maisaayos ang "sewage at septage systems" sa lungsod.

Ang panukalang ordinansa No. 10-001, Series of 2016 nina Konsehal Anna Karina Teh, Tolentino Bagus, at Carmelo Africa III, ay susog sa Republic Act No. 9275 o "Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004" na layon na maproteksyunan ang kalikasan at kalusugan ng publiko.

Nakasaad dito ang pagiging "mandatory" ng pagkakaroon ng "septic tanks o waste water treatment facility" ng lahat ng bahay-tirahan, mga establisimentong komersyal, industriyal, pampamahalaan at institusyunal na istruktura sa loob ng lungsod. Kinakailangan na may akreditasyon ang paglalagay nito mula sa Septage Haulers ng Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Department of Health (DOH).

Sa ilalim nito, hindi bibigyan ng "building permit" ang lahat ng itatayong bagong estab-

lisimento hanggang hindi nakakasunod sa panuntunan habang kinakailangan din na makakuha ng "discharge permits" buhat sa DENR, DOH o sa Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA).

Kailangan din na mapasipsip ng regular ang laman ng mga septic tanks kada tatlo hanggang limang taon ng mga pribadong kompanya na may akreditasyon buhat sa DENR o DOH.

Kapag ganap na maging ordinansa, ang mga lalabag ay papatawan ng parusang: Sa mga "residential homeowners- "Notice to comply" sa unang paglabag; P1,000 multa o pagkakulong ng isang buwan sa ikalawang paglabag; P5,000 multa at kulong ng tatlong buwan sa ikatlong paglabag depende sa diskresyon ng korte.

Para sa mga "commercial, industrial establishments": "notice to comply" sa unang paglabag; P2,500 multa o isang buwang kulong at suspensyon ng business permit sa ikalawa; at P5,000 multa o pagkakulong ng anim na buwan at kanselasyon ng business permit. (Danilo Garcia)

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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1980
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Baguio air quality still breathable

By ZALDY C. COMANDA

P/S ype
BAGUIO CITY – The city government underscored the city's air is still breathable amidst a report from the World Health Organization (WHO) that the city is one of the most polluted cities in the country.

City Environment and Parks Management Office (CEPMO) head Cordilla Lacsamana said the WHO report on Baguio City is based on the old 2013 and 2014 studies presented some time ago citing the Summer Capital as among

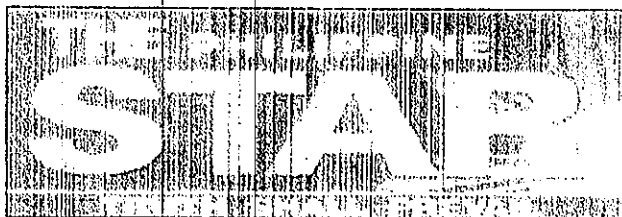
the most polluted.

"This report is passé," said Lacsamana, adding that an updated 2016 air monitoring report prepared by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) labeled the city's air quality as "good to fair."

This report represents air monitoring for the first and second quarters of the year, she said.

"We have not been remiss our air quality program," Lacsamana said.

"We remain to be aggressive in the implementation of various programs and projects geared towards improving the city's air quality and we were able to go so far in sustaining and innovating our interventions that helped improve the air quality around the city. Our city's air remain to be breathable and appropriate advises have also been issued to individuals with conditions aggravated by pollutants in the air to stay away from the few identified areas that have been considered to be with fair air quality."



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Ilocos Norte bans coal power plants

B-2 UPM
The Ilocos Norte provincial board recently passed a resolution eliminating coal from the province's electric supply.

In its 7th regular session held on Aug. 15, the board unanimously approved Provincial Resolution 017-2016, authored by environment committee chairman Mariano Marcos II, declaring Ilocos Norte as a "clean, green and coal-free province."

"No office or instrumentality of the provincial government of Ilocos Norte shall issue any permit, authorization, endorsement or any expression of support to the development of coal projects in the province," the resolution said. The board encouraged all two cities and 21 municipalities of the province to refrain from issuing coal permits.

The resolution was backed by environmental advocacy groups, as well as the province's largest electric companies. It also makes Ilocos Norte the first province to phase out coal use and become a total renewable energy consumer.

With its solar, wind and hydroelectric energy sources, Ilocos Norte is already generating about 50 percent of its power requirement from clean or renewable energy.

With a 264-MW installed wind energy capacity as of 2015, Ilocos Norte is already dubbed the undisputed wind energy capi-

Ilocos Norte to become home to the 150-megawatt (MW) wind-power project of Energy Development Corp. (EDC), a unit of First Gen Corp., in Burgos; the 81-MW Caparispisan wind station of Northern Luzon UPC Asia Corp.; and the 52-MW Bangui wind project of Northwind Power and Development Corp.

The province is also emerging as the country's, if not Southeast Asia's, renewable energy capital with the further development of the five MW Agua Grande hydroelectric power plant in Pagudpud and solar farms like the 20-MW solar power facility of Soleq Philippines Inc., in Barangay Paguludan in Currimao, and the 4.1 MW and 2.6 MW solar farms in Burgos of EDC.

"The leadership of Ilocos Norte has consciously supported renewable energy development not only because the province is endowed with the essential natural environment but also because it is the only way to promote the

economic prosperity of present and future generations of Ilocanos that is friendly to the environment and is not harmful to the people's health and well-being," the resolution said.

"Renewable energy has also given the people of Ilocos Norte reason to be

proud for significantly contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions that harm the environment and sadly render the country and the Filipinos among the most vulnerable in the world to the devastating effects of climate change," the resolution added.

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ENZYMES VS STENCH - To address the problem of stench from garbage dumped on the Inayawan Landfill, the Cebu City Government has started spraying enzymes or good bacteria developed by scientists and tested in other countries where landfills have posed problems to nearby communities. (Juan Carlo de Vela)

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ESTERO EMERGENCY Rescuers pull out one of the injured at Estero de Balete in Ermita, Manila, on Saturday.

MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Platform crash mars Manila creek cleanup; 1 dead, 11 hurt

By Kristine Felisse Mangunay

A BARANGAY *tanod* (village watchman) was killed and 11 others were injured while taking part in a waterway clean-up drive in Manila on Saturday, after a concrete platform collapsed under the weight of the garbage collected from a creek.

Johnny Yu, head of the city's disaster risk reduction and management office, said the incident took place at 9:15 a.m. at a flood-control pumping station operated by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority in Estero de Balete in Ermita.

"They were putting the (collected) waste on an improvised platform which gave in and landed on some people underneath," Yu told the *INQUIRER*.

The official identified the fatality as Al-

where he was declared dead on arrival.

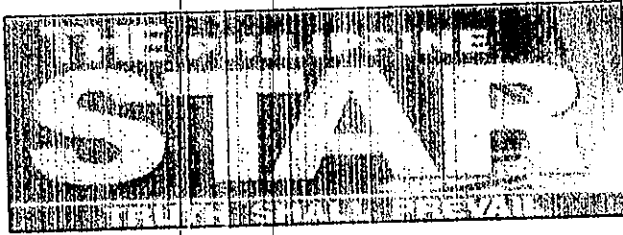
A report to Yu's office identified some of the injured as Jenny Sussing, Marilou Silus, Siera Mate, Jerry Dizon, Joven Padilla, Edfel Arevalo and Joel de Su-long. The majority of the injured sustained bruises and at least five were treated on the site, he said.

The incident would be formally reported to Mayor Joseph Estrada and the city government's legal department would determine the liable party and whether charges would be filed for negligence, Yu added.

He noted that the five-inch thick platform that collapsed was made of concrete but had no steel bars for reinforcement.

Saturday's clean-up activity was in line with International Coastal Cleanup Day and drew participants from the environ-

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1 dead, 12 hurt in cleanup drive mishap

By GHIO ONG

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A Barangay watchman died and 12 others were hurt during a cleanup drive of an estero or waterway in Ermita, Manila yesterday.

Barangay 664, Zone 71 *timod* Alfredo Quijano was declared dead on arrival at the Manila Medical Center, reported the Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO).

He reportedly suffered cardiac arrest when the platform at the flood pumping station – which collects debris from the waterway – near the Romualdez Bridge collapsed.

Six of those injured are un-

der observation at the hospital while others were discharged after being treated for minor injuries.

Some of those injured were identified as Jenny Soseng, Marilou Silos, Shiela Mati, Jerry Dizon, Ruel de Suloc, Joven Padilla and Edfel Arevalo.

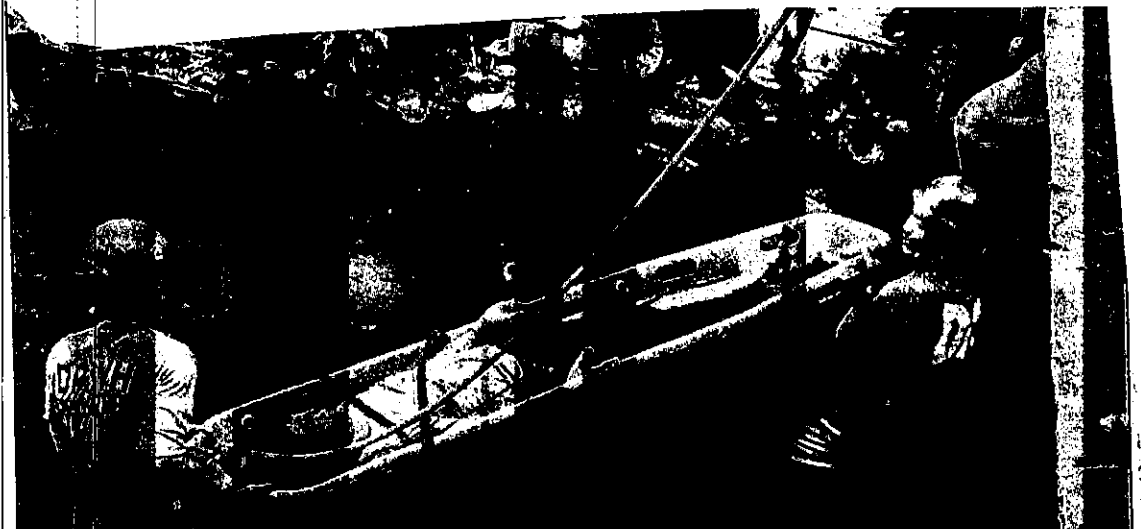
The incident happened when personnel from the city government, barangay, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Department of Pub-

lic Works and Highways and Department of Environment and Natural Resources were cleaning the MMDA pumping station at around 7:30 a.m.

Around 20 persons were standing on the makeshift platform, all removing trash from the estero, when it collapsed, said Angeles Bosmente, MMDA Balete pumping station plant engineer.

She stressed that before the cleanup, MMDA personnel warned volunteers that the platform could hold only three people and three cubic meters of garbage at a time.

Some of the victims were stuck in debris and garbage at



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

IMPROVISED PLATFORM BUMIGAY

Clean-up drive sa estero: 1 patay, 10 sugatan

Nauwi sa trahedya ang sama-samang paglilinis ng estero nang gumuho ang tinatapakang improvised platform sa ibabaw ng isang pumping station na ikinasawi ng isa at ikinasugat ng 10 pa sa Romualdez Bridge, sa Ermita, Maynila,

kahapon ng umaga,

Dead-on-arrival sa Manila Medical Center ang barangay tanod na si Alfredo Quijano ng Brgy. 664, Zone 71 sa Ermita, habang ginagamot pa ang nasa 10 katao na 7 pa lamang ang nakilala na sina Jenny So-

seng, Marilou Silos, Shiela Mati, Jerry Dizon, Ruel de Suloc, Joven Padilla at Edfel Arevalo.

Sa ulat ni SPO2 Jonathan Bautista at PO3 Joseph Kabigting ng Manila Police District-Homicide

NI LUDY BERMUDO

Section, ang insidente ay naganap dakong alas-7:30 ng umaga kahapon, habang abala sa pagkuha ng mga basura sa nasabing estero sa Balet Pumping Station ang mga tauhan ng barangay, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), at Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Bumulusok umano sa estero ang nasa mahigit 20 katao na nakatuntong sa platform na yari sa semento

at bakal na may kalumaan na.

Nahulog sila sa maburak at nakaistak sa tambak ng basura at naipit pa si Suloc sa bakal na agad namang nirespondehan ng mga tauhan ng Philippine Red Cross (PRC) at isinugod sa ibat-ibang pagamutan maging ang iba pang sugatan.

Ayon kay MMDA Balet Pumping Station plant engineer Angeles Bosmente na ang naturang platform ay ginagamit sa pagkolekta ng mga basura sa estero ngunit ang kapasidad lamang ay 3 katao at 3 metriko kubikong basura.

Nagbabala naman umano sila sa mga volunteer na bahagi ng clean-up drive na mahina na ang platform.

Tiniyak naman ng MMDA na sa kabila ng trahedya ay gagana pa rin ang pumping station ngunit kinakailangang sumakay ng bangka ng mga trabahador sa pag-aalis ng mga basurang babara rito.

Paiimbestigahan naman ni Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (MDRRMC) director Johnny Yu, ang nasabing insidente kung bakit gumuho ang nasabing platform at kung sino ang dapat papanagutin.



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TRAHEDYA SA LINIS ESTERO

Tanod patay, 10 pa ang sugatan

PATAY ang isang barangay tanod habang 10 iba pa ang sugatan nang mauwi sa trahedya ang isinasagawang dredging at clean up drive sa isang pumping station sa Ermita, Manila, matapos na gumuho ang tinutuntungan nilang lumang improvised platform, na ginagamit sa pangunguha ng mga basura.

Naisugod pa sa Manila Medical Center ang biktima ng si Alfredo Quijano, nasa hustong gulang, at tanod ng Barangay 664, Zone 71 sa Ermita ngunit dead on arrival na ito.

Ayon kay Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office head Johnny Yu, ilan sa mga nasugatan ay kinilala naman na sina Jenny Soseng, Marilou Silos, Shiela Mati, Jerry Dizon, Ruel de Su-

loc, Joven Padilla at Edfel Arevalo.

Batay sa ulat, nagsasagawa ng dredging at clean up drive ang mga tauhan ng Manila City Government, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at barangay, sa naturang pumping station, malapit sa Romualdez bridge sa Ermita, dakong 7:30 ng umaga nang maganap ang trahedya.

Ayon kay MMDA Balet Pumping Station plant engineer Angeles Bosmente, nakatuntong ang may 20 volunteers sa lumang platform at nagtanggap ng basura sa estero nang bigla na lang itong gumuho.

Sinabi ni Bosmente na ang naturang platform ay ginagamit talaga sa pagkolekta ng mga basura sa estero ngunit ang kaya lamang nitong dalhin ay tatlong tao at tatlong metriko kubikong basura.

Aniya, binalaan naman nila at pinabababa ang mga biktima mula sa platform dahil hindi nito kakayanin ang kanilang bigat, ngunit hindi umano sumunod ang mga ito dahil sa pursigidong makuha ang maraming basura na nakabara sa estero.

Nagkatotoo nga ang pangamba ng mga opisyal nang biglang gumuho ang platform at nahulog ang mga biktima, na naistak sa ilalim ng mga debris at basura, ngunit agad din namang naihapon.

Naisugod pa sa Manila Medical Center si

Quijano ngunit nasawi rin, habang sinasabing ilan sa mga biktima ay kritikal ang kondisyon at ang iba pa ay nasa maayos naman nang kalagayan matapos magtamo lamang ng minor injuries.

Tiniyak naman ang MMDA na sa kabila ng trahedya ay gagana pa rin ang pumping station ngunit kinakailangang sumakay ng bangka ng mga trabahador sa pag-aalis ng mga basurang babara rito.

Habang isinusulat naman ang balitang ito ay iniimbestigahan pa ni Det. Joseph Kabigting ng Manila Police District (MPD)-Crimes Against Persons Investigation Section (CAPIS) ang pangyayari at inaalam pa kung sino ang mga dapat managot dito. **ANA ROSARIO HERNANDEZ**

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DISASTER REDUCTION— Philippine Marines help in the coastal clean-up and building of a bamboo nursery in celebration of 'International Day for Disaster Reduction' at the Las Piñas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Eco Tourism yesterday. The men were joined by Sen. Cynthia Villar, Metro Manila Development Authority Assistant General Manager for Operations Julia Nebrija, and representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, CAVITEX-CARE, and the Philippine Coast Guard. (Camille Ante)

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Lake Lanao rehab gets push from nat'l gov't

By Nash Maulana
Cotabato City

THE NATIONAL government has finally committed to help rehabilitate the Lanao Lake after decades of environmental degradation.

Environment Secretary Gina Lopez said a joint undertaking between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the provincial government is in place to push for sustainable implementation of an Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Program (Inremp) in Lake Lanao.

Lanao del Sur Gov. Hadja Soraya Alonto-Adiong said she had signed the Inremp memorandum of agreement (MOA) on Sept. 21 in Quezon City, with regional environment director Ruth Tawantawan.

According to the MOA, the program is aimed at establishing "effective management of the Lanao Lake River Basin, as well as watershed rehabilitation and conservation, and reduction or reversal of environmental degradation in the river basin."

Both parties in the MOA foresee "increased revenues from watershed management and livelihood investments, leading to a sustainable socio-economic and ecotourism development in Mindanao."

Alonto-Adiong said the program "will change the lives of the

Maranaos," adding that the term "M'ranao" was derived from the word "Ranao," meaning "lake."

Maranaos are notably identified as the "People of the Lake."

"I'm glad that after 12 years of advocacy, coordination and discussions on the development of Lake Lanao since the time of my late husband, Congressman Mamintal Adiong Sr., this change is finally coming to the lives of the Maranaos," the governor said.

Secretary Datu Abul Khayr Alonto, of the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA), said it was time to preserve and protect Lake Lanao.

But the governor promptly pointed out that the Maranaos are not claiming exclusive rights over Lake Lanao, saying it has served many Filipinos as well as this lake is the source of water that propels the turbines of the six hydroelectric plants operating through the Agus River trough.

Geographically, Lake Lanao largely covers territories and water borders of areas within the ARMM, particularly the municipal boundaries of Lanao del Sur province and parts of Northern Mindanao and Eastern Mindanao.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Protected Sierra Madre means life for IPs, the whole nation

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉@jonlmayuga

Conclusion

ACCORDING to the Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance Inc. (SSMNA), citing a 2004 study by Eken, et al. and a 2007 study by Langhammer, et al. key biodiversity areas (KBAs) are identified nationally using simple, globally standardized criteria and thresholds, based on the needs of biodiversity requiring safeguards at the site scale.

The Sierra Madre has at least 201 species of mammals, 556 species of birds, over 85 species of amphibians and 252 species of reptiles, of which 48 percent are endemic, with many of these near-threatened, critical, vulnerable and endangered.

According to SSMNA, a recent study published by the University of Kansas revealed that the northernmost part of the range has yielded 101 species of amphibians and reptiles, suggesting further that more species within the range are yet to be discovered.

Furthermore, the study of Larry Heaney on the mammals highlighted Luzon, where the expansive mountain range resides, as the most endemic oceanic island in the whole world.

Besides the KBAs within the mountain range are three national parks and at least nine other protected areas.

SSMNA said its watershed supports the water supply in Central Luzon and Cagayan Valley, including Metro Manila.

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park's (NSMNP) 16 watersheds alone provide water to more than 1.5 million people.

It has a total land area of 2.8 million hectares, stretching from Cagayan Valley in the north of Luzon to Calabarzon in the south of Luzon, encompassing the 10 provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Aurora, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna and Quezon. There

An IP territory

MANY of the people living within Sierra Madre Mountain Range (SMMR) belong to different indigenous people's (IP) tribes. It is a shared territory by different IP tribes who had been its protector against various threats for centuries.

According to records at the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), 11 IP tribes are living on Sierra Madre. They are the Agta or Dumagat, who occupy territories in Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Isabela, Aurora and Quezon; Bungkalot in Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and Aurora; Isinai in Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya and Dupax Norte and Dupax Sur; Gaddang in Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela, Quirino and Cagayan; Ibanag in Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya and Isabela; Itawes in

Northern Cagayan; Kalahan in Southern Caraballo and Central Sierra Madre; and Yogad in Isabela.

There are a total of 15 different IPs with Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs) or ancestral domain claims groups. These include six in the Cagayan region; five in Central Luzon; and four in Calabarzon.

Oldest form of conservation

DIRECTOR Theresa Mundita Lim of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau said IPs have long been the DENR's partner as steward of the environment.

Lim underscored the role of IPs in the sustainable management of the country's natural resources, particularly within their so-called ancestral lands.

"For as long as they maintain their tradition, practice and culture, they are considered as our formidable partner in environmental protection," Lim said.

She said the DENR has recognized IPs in some areas where conservation is at its finest. In June the DENR-BMB launched the project called Strengthening National "Systems to Improve Governance and Management of

The program, funded by the United Nations Development Programme, seeks to identify IPs and their communities, and give them due recognition for successfully protecting environment and conserving their natural resources, which they consider their sacred tribal ground, from land and water, to the wildlife that thrive within them.

There are Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA) sites, which the DENR-BMB, through the project, aims to popularize in support of the country's international commitment, particularly Target 11 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The 10 ICCA sites are in the provinces of Kalinga, Ifugao, Nueva Vizcaya, Aurora, Bataan, Palawan, Bukidnon, Agusan del Norte and North Cotabato. According to Lim, ICCAs may be sacred spaces or ritual grounds, such as sacred forests and mountains, indigenous territories and cultural landscapes or seascapes; territories and migration routes of nomadic herders or mobile IPs; sustainably managed wetlands, fishing grounds and water bodies; or particularly sensitive ecological settings, such as sacred areas on the mountain and hilltops.

ICCA is the oldest form of conservation, but many of these conservation practices were not properly documented, and some are even forgotten. Lim said IPs should be at the forefront of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation, considering that they are the ones who will be the ultimate beneficiaries of a healthy ecology.

As such, Lim said they should be empowered to become the government's partner and ultimate protector of their sacred tribal grounds.

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Alexandra Cousteau inspires students during visit in PHL

OCEANA senior advisor Alexandra Cousteau wrapped up her two-week tour with a diving trip to El Nido in Palawan, which she described as a "world-class" destination worthy of protection. Speaking before students at the Silliman University in Dumaguete and at the University of Cebu, she focused on the role of the oceans for human survival.

"The ocean is part of our lives. It gives us food, transportation, oxygen—all critical reasons to save it," she stressed.

Cousteau showed a film of her grandfather, the renowned undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau, that showed how marine resources are fast disappearing due to overexploitation and destructive fishing.

"What brings us together is the opportunity to restore abundance and diversity in the oceans," she said. "It is not just about sea turtles, dolphins and the whales and corals, but it's also about restoring resources that support people, especially the poorest of the poor. There's an opportunity to protect communities from typhoons and in creating livelihood for sustainability and tourism."

Cousteau visited the Philippines from August 29 to September 11 to promote awareness on sustainable fisheries management and the global fight against illegal-fishing practices.

"When you think about the world that my grandfather started scuba diving in 70 years ago, it was a world that didn't know what was under the surface of the ocean. As we've learned more about the oceans in the past 70 years than ever before, we've also lost more of the oceans," she told a media forum on her last day in the country.

She urged Filipinos to conserve the

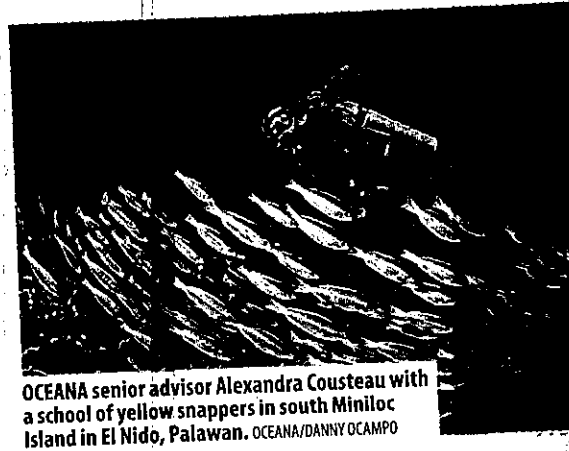
Palawan and El Nido with my own eyes, and it is world class," she said.

On Apo Island in Negros Oriental, she swam with sea turtles in the marine sanctuary that has become a model for protected-area management. In the tourist town of Moalboal in Cebu, Cousteau got a glimpse of the sardine shoal that provides livelihood for fishers. She was treated to dance numbers showing the fragility of the oceans by young pupils, whom she exhorted to be vigilant in conserving their resources to ensure food security in the future.

In Manila Cousteau met with Vice President Maria Leonor G. Robredo and legislators, including Sens. Cynthia Villar, Risa Hontiveros, Miguel Zubiri and Juan Edgardo Angara, as well as Rep. Pia Cayetano. They expressed interest in Oceana's campaigns as embodied in the slogan "Save the Oceans, Feed the World," and vowed to help craft programs and laws that would promote wise use of marine resources.

Cousteau had a meeting with Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez, who promised not to grant any permits that would destroy the deep-sea reefs in the Benham Rise and the coastal and marine habitats. Cousteau also met with Drusila Esther Bayate, assistant director for technical services of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, a vital partner of Oceana and fishing communities in law-enforcement efforts.

"We are extremely honored to host Alexandra on her first visit to our country," said lawyer Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president for Oceana in the Philippines. "She has tremendously helped in highlighting our overarching goal to restore fisheries abundance in the country, increasing citizen awareness on the compelling need to act and protect our oceans and in securing commitments



OCEANA senior advisor Alexandra Cousteau with a school of yellow snappers in south Miniloc Island in El Nido, Palawan. OCEANA/DANNY OCAMPO

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Davao wildlife stars in full-length film

VARIOUS native wildlife are featured in a full-length film shot in Davao City, which will be screened in this year's Quezon City International Film Festival 2016 or QCinema 2016.

The film titled "*Baboy Halas: Wailings of the Forest*" tells the story of forest dwellers coping with the unusual changes in their environment with the intrusion of tribes from the plains.

Filmmaker Bagane Fiola said he shot most of the film in Marilog, in one of the remaining forests in Davao City, deep inside the ancestral domain of the Matigsalog indigenous people.

"Among the wildlife to be featured in the film includes the wild boar or *baboy halas*, Philippine deer, Philippine civet, flying Lemur, owls and for-

est frogs," Fiola said.

"They will be shown in the movie except for the *kagwang* (Flying Lemur) which escaped when we were shooting the film," Fiola said.

Parts of the wildlife shoot for the film was also made at the Philippine Eagle Foundation center in Malagos, Calinan district where aside from the majestic Philippine Eagle various species of endemic animal species are also kept.

Fiola said he wanted his viewers to experience the forest in his film, the people and the wildlife living in it.

Eschewing professional movie actors, the cast of the film are from the indigenous Matigsalog community, the protagonist of the film is a real-life hunter in his tribe.

Marilog district in the upland area of Davao City is home to remnants of old-growth forests threatened by logging and encroaching human development.

Fiola says he wants to show the Davao of old, when the place was still blanketed with forests and the indigenous people depended on the jungle for their shelter and sustenance.

His film is one of the two films from Mindanao to be featured in an annual film festival held in Quezon City. Fiola's production is a recipient of a grant from the organizers to help fund his film.

The other film from Mindanao is Sheron Dayoc's *Women of the Weeping River* which was shot in Zamboanga. **PIA**



WILD. Filmmaker Bagane Fiola

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Green healing: National global perspectives

It is with great pleasure that I take part in this gathering of delegates from the health care sector. I see this as an opportunity to build stronger partnerships with you as we seek to create solutions for the growing social, economic and development challenges caused by environmental degradation and disasters arising from natural hazards made stronger by climate change.

One way to perceive how the climate works is to allude to it like the engineering of the human body—complex and interconnected.

The body is an amazing creation, made of parts that are integral to making it function. Millions of pathways combine to form cells, tissues and organs that allow us to be human.

It is the same way that our climate and our planet's environment are interconnected. Even a minor change in the climate creates impacts that are large and encompassing, affecting every living thing.

The Climate Crisis and Public Health

Climate change did not happen overnight, and it has taken us super typhoons and tsunamis, sinking islands, parched and unusable land, and staggering numbers of lives displaced and perished to visualize what scientists and environmental activists have been warning us for decades—that among other effects, "climate change will be the biggest global health threat of the 21st century."

As climate change alters rainfall patterns and brings deadly, intensified and frequent calamities, it will affect public health. Governments, organizations, businesses and the private sector will face conundrums that include the spreading of deadly dis-

eases and viruses, decrease in well-being of citizens, not to mention medical relief needed with each catastrophe.

According to a study conducted by the World Bank, "the average global cost of adaptation in the health sector for the prevention and treatment of diarrhea and malaria alone will reach \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion per year over the period 2010-2050."

A United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) study estimates the adaptation cost in the health sector to range from \$2 billion and \$14 billion over the period 2010-2030.

But what has caused this constant warming of the Earth's temperature that has led to the climate crisis?

Key findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) revealed that climate change is "unequivocal" and that there is 95 percent likelihood that human activity is the cause of global warming.

Human activity released 545 gigatons of carbon dioxide—the main greenhouse gas (GHG) from 1750 to 2011. In the last decade, 90 percent of rise in carbon dioxide levels was due to burning of fossil fuels.

Unless drastic cuts are introduced, global temperatures are projected to increase by 0.3 to 4.8 degrees Celsius by the end of this century.

The Role of Health Care Sector in Climate Change

The health care sector has also contributed to the climate crisis.

According to Health Care Without Harm, hospitals use twice as much energy per square foot as a traditional office space especially since they operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Moreover, many health care facilities



Keynote Speech of Sen. Loren Legarda delivered during the International Academy of Medical Specialists, Inc.'s 6th Annual Convention held at Novotel Hotel Manila, Quezon City on 25 September 2016 — Ed.

occupy aging and energy inefficient buildings and generate tons of waste everyday.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has discovered various health risks caused by unsafe disposal of health care waste such as contaminated needles and syringes. The improper and unsafe disposal of contaminated needles and syringes may lead to dangerous consequences because it can be reused or sold to be used again since these materials may be scavenged from waste areas and dumpsites.

Data from WHO showed that in 2010, injections with contaminated needles and syringes caused 33,800 new HIV infections, 1.7 million hepatitis B infections and 315,000 hepatitis C infections.

A waste management assessment of the WHO and UNICEF conducted in 2015 in 24 countries, showed that 58% of sampled health care facilities had adequate systems in place for the safe disposal of health care waste; which means that about 42% of health care facilities do not have proper waste disposal methods.

How can the health care sector turn these issues and challenges into opportunities for positive action towards

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Green healing: National global perspectives

climate change adaptation and mitigation?

The Health Care Without Harm and Practice Greenhealth toolkit for the health care sector aims to increase participation in addressing climate change. Opportunities for action are in the following areas:

Transportation

Health care facilities rely heavily on transportation to move patients, workers, supplies and waste. Hospitals can reorganize their fleets to include high-fuel efficiency, hybrid, and alternate fuel ambulances, shuttle vans and supply transportation vehicles.

Energy

Health care facilities can make their operations more energy efficient by using LEDs and energy efficient equipment. Turning down thermostats, even by just one or two degrees, can have a big impact too. Hospitals that will be built, refurbished or retrofitted should incorporate green building principles such as day lighting, natural ventilation and green roofs.

Waste management

Best practices in waste management include putting up a materials recovery facility (MRF) and installation of wastewater treatment systems. Some hospitals are using innovative gas capture technology, which will capture, reclaim and purify gases used in operating rooms and will then be reused by the hospital. The procedure extends gases' lifecycle, thus saving money and reducing GHG emissions.

Food service

It has been estimated that 18% of all GHG emissions are associated with meat consumption, and food that come

from distant places utilize more energy for transportation and preservation, resulting in greater carbon emission. Hospitals can lessen GHG emissions by reducing the amount of meat protein on their menus, buying local, organic and in-season food, composting food waste, and eliminating bottled water.

Whole-of-society approach

Addressing the climate crisis needs a whole-of-society approach. We need the government to lead, but other sectors of society, including the health care sector, must give their whole-hearted commitment and take action as well.

In the Senate, we continue to improve legislation and practice our oversight functions to ensure the implementation of our laws. We already have the necessary laws to aid us towards building a healthy, resilient, sustainable and climate-adaptive nation. We have the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Ecological Solid Waste Management Law, Renewable Energy Act, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Law, Climate Change Act, and People's Survival Fund Law, among many others. But what is more important is to take proactive, urgent and continuous action.

We live in only one planet and by now climate change should make us realize that we are all connected and we suffer the consequences of this crisis together.

Each of us has opportunities to make a difference for our future. We must take hold of the opportunity to responsibly manage our environment. Let us make the Earth a sustainable, safe and healthy planet for all of us and for the future generations.

Thank you.