

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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IN THE NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Elephant poachers are hard at work in Africa, and carbon dating proves it

ELEPHANT poaching is alive and well—and the elephants are not. A team of scientists examining seized shipments of elephant tusks from Africa have found that the vast majority of the ivory came from elephants that died within the last three years.

analyzed the DNA locked in 28 large seizures of ivory (at least half a ton each) made between 1996 and 2004, and matched it to 1,350 DNA samples taken from dung gathered at 71 spots across 29 different countries.

Now they could map the ivory's sources, and watch as patterns of poaching changed as elephants in one country dwindled or as political pressure ramped up.

But some suggested that these seized shipments might not be ivory from recently killed animals, but old ivory "leaking" out of government stockpiles.

"Some people were saying, 'Well, we don't need to worry so much because there's big stockpiles of ivory,' so we're getting legacy ivory into the market... and other people were saying, 'No, no, no, these are all recent

deaths,'" Cerling said.

To answer that question, the researchers analyzed 231 samples of ivory taken from 14 large caches

The sobering results, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, reveal that the killing of elephants for their ivory is continuing at a disturbing pace—even as elephant populations across

Central African forest elephants have fallen by an estimated 62 percent from 2002 to 2011. At the Selous Wildlife Reserve in Tanzania, savanna elephants have declined 66 percent from 2009 to 2013.

BusinessMirror

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Elephant poachers are hard at work...

thanks to the Cold War-fueled nuclear arms race.

The US and Russia's spate of nuclear testing in the 1950s and 1960s nearly doubled the global concentration of a certain carbon isotope, carbon-14, by 1963. That spike of carbon-14 is recorded in tree rings, in the bottom of the oceans, even in our own teeth. Because this isotope's abundance has been declining at a well-known rate in the years since, scientists can use the carbon-14 concentration to tell when a living tissue first formed.

The researchers found that some 90 percent of the ivory was taken from animals that died less than three years before the ivory was seized by government officials. Out of 231 analyzed specimens, only one had a lag time longer than six years, the authors wrote.

"That means all of the ivory that's being seized by customs is [from] very recently killed elephants," Cerling said. "So, indeed, the crisis is severe if we're going to preserve this species on our planet."

There's a small silver lining: The study showed that "legacy" ivory was not leaking out of sealed government stockpiles, as some had feared. "So that's a very positive finding, that we're

not finding government officials selling old ivory or allowing that to happen," Cerling said. Part of the problem is that, while demand for ivory in Europe and North America has dropped, markets in increasingly prosperous countries in Southeast Asia, such as China, Vietnam and the Philippines, have been growing.

"So, basically in 1989 in North America and Europe, most people said, 'OK, yeah, this is a bad thing,' and so ivory very quickly became something that's not a desirable object," Cerling said. "But that's not true in Southeast Asia—and so when their economy improved, it became a desirable object."

Educating potential consumers in these countries is key, he added—as is working with courts to ensure that they mete out severe sentences for breaking national and international laws on poaching.

"We've got a lot to do," Cerling said. "And we've got to do it fast."

Los Angeles Times/TNS

BusinessMirror

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THE overall elephant population has seen the worst declines in 25 years, mainly due to poaching over the past 10 years, according to the African Elephant Status Report launched by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources on March 1 in Nairobi, Kenya. SUN HUIBO/XINHUA/SIPA USA



DoT promotes Tubbataha Reef

Tourism Secretary Wanda Tulfo-Teo presented the first ever coffee table book on Tubbataha Reef, at the sidelines of this year's World Travel Market (WTM), during her recent trip to London, England. "This book encapsulates the depth and breadth of our magnificent and rich marine heritage, and strongly amplifies our country's proud position as the center of marine biodiversity. More than enticing global divers to enjoy this God-given gift, this book will drive forward our advocacy on environmental conservation and protection," Teo said at the ExCel Convention Centre in London last Nov. 8, 2016. According to her, the Department of Tourism (DoT) is doubling its efforts to position the Philippines as a sports tourism hub, banking on the country's growing niche markets such as diving and marine sports. While latest data from DoT show that the Philippine diving industry only makes up 1.7 percent market share of the 7.3 million active divers worldwide, country draws a strong following from diving enthusiasts and environment advocates for possessing 97,030 hectares of waters and reefs comprising Southeast Asia's only purely marine Unesco World Heritage Site. The country is also proud for it being declared an Asean Heritage Site and a Flyway Network Site. The Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park was established in 1988 by late President Corazon Aquino. It exists as a wonderful testimony of biodiversity being home to 600 species of fish, 360 species of corals (half of all the coral species in the world), 21 species of sharks, skates and rays, 13 species of dolphins and whales, and two of seven species of marine turtles, namely the hawk bill and green. It is also an important source of livelihood and is a revenue generator being a leading dive tourism site. The reef is a protected area of the Philippines located in the middle of Sulu Sea. The marine and bird sanctuary consists of two huge atolls (named the North Atoll and South Atoll) and the smaller Jessie Beazley Reef covering a total area of 97,030 hectares. It is located 150 kilometers southeast of Puerto Princesa City, the capital of Palawan province. The uninhabited islands and reefs are part of the island municipality of Cagayancillo, Palawan, located roughly 130 kms to the northeast of the reef.

Ed Velasco

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

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'The Tubbataha: A National Treasure'



Department of Tourism Assistant Secretary Frederick Alegre (second from last) graced the launching of "The Tubbataha: A National Treasure," a coffee table book which features stunning photographs of one of Tubbataha's great fans, Maria Teresa Lainez, and is published by Marissa Florendo of the Don Antonio O. Florendo Sr. Foundation.

Tubbataha has been recognized as one of the most remarkable coral reefs on our planet.

The CNN travel website, *cnn.go.com*, ranked it among the top eight dive sites in the world.

EDITORIAL

Post-'Yolanda'

The past week was devoted to a remembering of the tempest called "Yolanda," which ended and upended thousands of lives in Eastern Visayas and elsewhere three years ago, and rearranged not only the physical landscape but also many people's cavalier view of the effects of climate change.

There had never been anything like Yolanda. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center in Hawaii cited its sustained 314-kilometers-per-hour winds, making it the strongest typhoon to ever make landfall anywhere. Horrific storm surges tore through the terrain and corpses littered the streets for days, weeks, afterwards. Was there any way to prepare for such a fearsome show of natural fury? The body count of over 6,000 remains staggering.

"I thought it was the end of the world," the Inquirer's Michael Lim Ubac, writing on Yolanda's aftermath in a 5-part series, quoted a survivor as saying. "Bureaucratic inertia and apathy coupled with misplaced priorities of the government—the local and the national levels—became a combustible mix that exploded" when Yolanda barreled in on Nov. 8, 2013, Ubac wrote.

Climate legislation had been in place after the earlier tumultuous passage of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" and Typhoon "Pepeng." But the government, for one reason or another, was sluggish in responding to Yolanda, taking a week to reestablish itself in Tacloban City, Ground Zero of the catastrophe.

Particularly sluggish was the Aquino administration's response to the housing crisis. For example, the National Housing Authority was supposed to build over 4,000 units in Concepcion, Iloilo, but none has been completed up to now. Many people's lives are still on hold three years after the fact. Sen. Loren Legarda has won-

2016, and expressed hope that the construction of permanent housing could be fast-tracked.

That things were and will never be the same again after Yolanda is quite clear. Yet it offered valuable lessons in survival and resilience, which the public sector continues to institutionalize, and the private sector has taken to heart, to help save lives in succeeding catastrophic storms.

The Board of Investments recently approved P76 billion in investments aimed at fast-tracking rehabilitation and redevelopment projects. Notable among these are the 12 renewable-energy projects which, according to Trade Undersecretary Ceferini Rodolfo, are crucial in stabilizing the stricken areas, and "aligned with the government's strategy to move into the medium- to long-term recovery and rehabilitation of areas highly affected by calamities."

President Duterte, in Tacloban for the commemoration of Yolanda's third anniversary, ordered officials to complete the new shelters for the homeless survivors by December. "I must admit that the government has fallen short, very short, of the expectations of the people," the President was reported as saying. He added that the rehabilitation projects "should all have been completed one year after" Yolanda.

A result of the Yolanda experience, Ubac wrote, is that the Philippine government has become a champion for fighting climate change: "Overnight, Filipino officials metamorphosed into champions for climate action, joining world leaders at the 2015 Paris climate change summit in clamoring for an end to carbon emissions." Indeed, the Philippines, as a country most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, is making sure that it would not again be caught as flat-footed as when Yolanda hit.

The bottom line is this: The Philippines' post-Yolanda phase is a continuing rehabilitation, spanning administrations, shepherded by good intentions, intelligent planning, and a hopefully appropriate budget, even if occasionally stymied by bureaucratic red tape. But first, Let's ratify the Paris Agreement.

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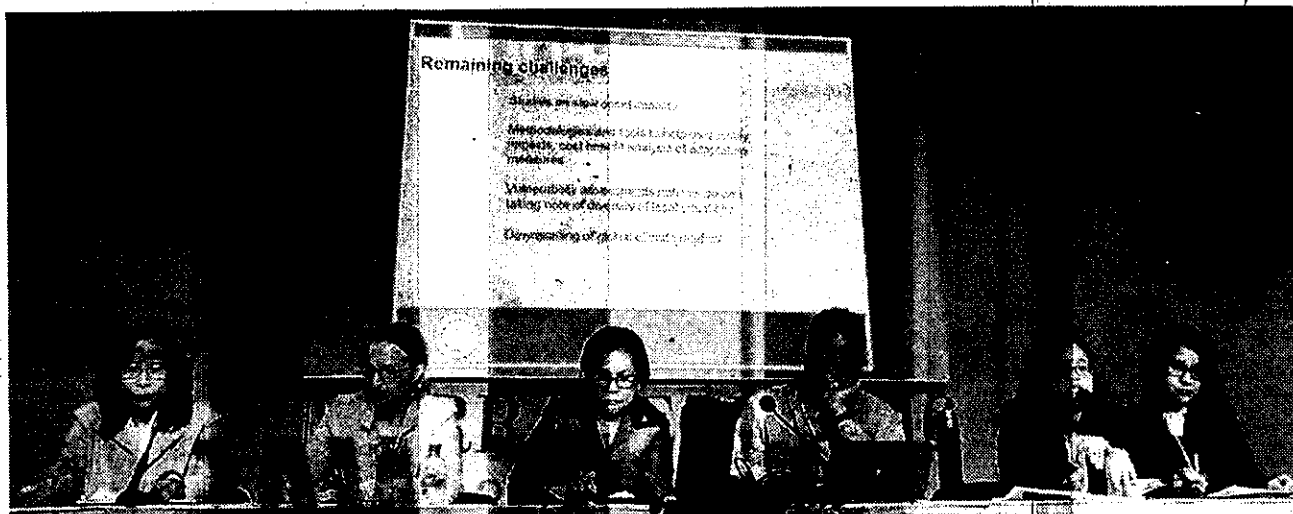
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

FEAR AND HOPE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND A TRUMP PRESIDENCY

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Perla Baltazar, Department of Agriculture; Julia Wolf, Food and Agriculture Organization; Undersecretary Gloria Mercado, serving as the Philippine Head of Delegation; Antonio La Vina, Ateneo School of Government; Railla Puno, Climate Change Commission; and Kathleen Anne Capiroso of the National Economic and Development Authority.

By Renee Karunungan

DONALD Trump has officially become the 45th president of the United States of America, a win that has sent some shock and worry for environmentalists and climate activists around the world.

The US elections came at the same time that the 22nd Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change was happening in Marrakech, Morocco. The COP is an annual conference of governments to discuss how to prevent dangerous man-made climate change.

Last year's COP in Paris produced the Paris Agreement, a climate treaty hailed as historical by many.

The Paris Agreement was built on the foundation of trust and was built on more than two decades of negotiations. While over a hundred countries have already ratified it and while it has officially taken effect last Nov. 4, it still stands on fragile

The United States is an important party to the negotiations. It has, and have, until today, influenced the negotiations strongly. This is largely because the US ranks first out of 185 countries, responsible for 30 percent of global historic emissions from 1850-2012. From 2012, the United States has ranked second to China, producing 17 percent of global emissions. This means that without the United States, the biggest carbon emitter, the Paris Agreement will mean nothing.

Trump, a vocal climate skeptic, has sent fears of a reversal of the progress that has been made in recent years in terms of climate action. Trump, during his campaign, has said that climate change "was created by and for the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive" and that if elected president, he will "cancel" the Paris

Agreement. He has also said that he will take out all funding from US climate change-related programs, including giving funding to the UNFCCC. Trump is known to support extracting and drilling for oil, coal, and natural gas.

In fact, in the lineup of possible cabinet positions, Trump has seemed to make it a priority to put all climate skeptics in his administration. According to an article by Politico, Trump might put Forrest Lucas, an oil executive, or Sarah Palin, whose campaign in 2010 was "Drill, baby, drill!" as interior secretary.

According to Jesse Bragg of Corporate Accountability International, the interior secretary is an important position as it oversees the National Parks System in the US and more importantly the Bureau of Land Management.

"These are where lease agreements for fossil fuel extraction happen on national lands. It's an important position for stopping expansion of fossil fuel extraction projects in the US," says Bragg.

And quite more obviously, the energy secretary and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) also play an

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Continuation...

FEAR AND HOPE! CLIMATE CHANGE AND A TRUMP PRESIDENCY

The EPA is seen to be handed over to Myron Ebell, a known climate skeptic and an official at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. It is an organization well-known for opposing progressive environmental policy. They have also been involved in the investigation on Exxon Mobil on spreading climate denial despite knowing about climate change in the 1970's.

Harold Hamm, on the other hand, is a candidate as energy secretary. Hamm is the CEO of Continental Resources, a major oil producer, and has been advocating to cut down on oil and gas regulations so that the US can produce more.

Trump's clear stand on climate change, together with these new people in his government will certainly hamper any efforts being made today by the rest of the world.

But while many have become quite fearful that the US might pull out of the Paris Agreement soon, Segolene Royale, French minister for environment and COP 21 president, assured that it will not be too easy for the US to do so.

"The Paris Agreement prohibits any exit for a period of three years, plus a year-long notice period, so there will be four stable years," she said.

Carroll Muffet, president of Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL),

also sees it as a must for the US to keep to its promise.

"The Paris Agreement was signed and ratified not by a President, but by the United States itself. As a matter of international law, and as a matter of human survival, the nations of the world can, must, and will hold the United States to its climate commitments," said Muffet.

Other organizations are now trying to see this as an opportunity for Trump, who is also a well-known businessman, to invest in renewable energy able to compete with other countries starting to do so.

"President-elect Trump has the opportunity to catalyze further action on climate that sends a clear signal to investors to keep the transition to a renewable-powered economy on track. China, India, and other economic competitors are racing to be the global clean energy superpower, and the US doesn't want to be left behind," said Tina Johnson of Climate Action Network US.

Meanwhile, the negotiators inside COP 22 continue with business, knowing that climate change will not wait for the US to take action before it hits any of their countries.

Karunungan is an outreach manager for Climate Tracker.

Bringing back the glory of the PH Ylang-ylang

By BASA INIGO

MANGATAREM, Pangasinan — With the target of planting 1,000 ylang-ylang (*Cananga odorata* or “ilang-ilang” in Tagalog) across over 1,000 hectares in this province’s 2nd District until 2017, Pangasinan stands to be the world capital of the essential oil from the plant indigenous to the Philippines.

Philippines used to be the world’s main supplier of ylang-ylang essential oil for perfume production. But through the years, its production has diminished.

The country’s ylang-ylang industry died over the years when the French planted and produced better-quality ylang-ylang on Comoro Island using trees from the Philippines.

Now, Pangasinan 2nd District Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil initiated the project of planting ylang-ylang trees in partnership with Chemworld, owner of Reyes, owner of the country’s leading perfume manufacturers.

Bataoil said the project is a three-fold mission: livelihood for the people; response to climate change; and bringing back the glory of the country’s very own Philippine ylang-ylang.

Back to livelihood

He is optimistic that the target

area for ylang-ylang plantation will be accomplished next year with the continuous seedling production and transplanting now being undertaken in this town.

The congressman said the process would speed up if residents realize the importance of propagating ylang-ylang and choose to plant it themselves in their own plots of land.

Explaining how promising it would be as a livelihood source, Rep. Bataoil said an ylang-ylang seedling will bear flowers in five years’ time and it will do so all-year-round.

“If well taken care of, a tree will yield three kilos of flowers weekly and fetch a price of ₱60 per kilo. That equals to ₱180 per tree in a week,” he said. “An extraction facility and a buying station will be put up by an investor in our district to assure planters of a ready market,” he added.

Climate change response

The Philippines, being a partner in the worldwide call for environmental protection and climate change mitigation, promotes the National Greening Program (NGP) and ylang-ylang planting serves that purpose. It organized and accredited Peoples Organizations (POs), supports them to plant timber in wide barren public lands.

Under the project, a hundred hectares have already been planted with ylang-ylang in Aguilar, Bugallon and Mangatarem.

With the rebirth of the Philippine ylang-ylang in this town, Bataoil wants to prove that since the tree is native to the country, it would easily cover large tracts of land in no time.

“This is why, seedling production and transplanting is continuously being done

upcoming planting season by June 2017 to cover and finish the 1,000 hectares of plantation in the entire district.

Reviving lost glory

“The Philippines used to be the main supplier of ylang-ylang essential oil for perfume, but we lost that opportunity when other countries ventured into it,” bewailed Bataoil.

He is thankful though that, like him, Chemworld’s Reyes shares the belief that the Philippines can regain its status as the world’s main essential oil supplier.

Last week, Reyes joined Bataoil in inspecting the plantation areas and donated three Hydraulic Ram Pumps to ensure that the seedlings are provided with water especially during summertime.

Part of project is also putting up a modern distillation facility in Mangatarem where Korean technicians already surveyed the area.

“The technical and marketing requirements for the project will be taken care of by Chemworld,” Reyes assured.

Cloudy but surely, Bataoil believes

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Funding to combat land degradation lagging; urgent action needed

NAIROBI, Kenya — Land degradation already affects millions of people, bringing biodiversity loss, reduced availability of clean water, food insecurity and greater vulnerability to the harsh impacts of climate change.

According to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), 2 billion hectares of productive land are currently degraded worldwide. An additional 12 million hectares are degraded every year.

Delegates meeting at the 15th Session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC-15) held in Nairobi last month agreed that urgent action is needed to address the problem.

But for efforts to combat land degradation to succeed, huge financial resources must be mobilized. UNCCD has proposed the creation of the Impact Investment Fund for Land Degradation Neutrality (Land Degradation Neutrality Fund). Although not yet operationalized, the fund is intended to bring together institutions committed to addressing the global challenge of land degradation.

It will support large-scale rehabilitation of degraded land, for sustainable and productive use, with long-term private-sector financing. The fund also aims to contribute to the achievement of global and local food and water security, and to mitigate climate change by sequestering up to 20 percent of carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. The fund hopes

to mobilize \$50 billion to rehabilitate 300 million hectares of land worldwide in the next 20 years, reducing carbon emissions by an estimated 20 billion tons.

The Global Mechanism is spearheading the establishment of the fund. The fund plans to provide a structured framework in which private and public actors will be able to engage with the aim of achieving land degradation neutrality (LDN). The private-public partnership will include provision of funds and technical assistance.

The LDN concept was introduced at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012. According to the UNCCD, attaining LDN means ensuring that the amount of land resources that every household, region or country depends on for ecosystems services, such as water, remains healthy, productive and stable.

The resolve resonates with target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN in September 2015 in New York. The target is to achieve LDN by 2030.

The Global Mechanism, UNCCD's operational arm, was identified as the body to administer the fund to support initiatives that aim to reach LDN.

The vision of the LDN Fund is to combat land degradation and finance rehabilitation of 12 million hectares of degraded land a year. When in place, it will also complement and leverage existing initiatives by creating a link between the bottom-up approach

(projects developed on the ground) and the top-down initiatives (government targets and institutional initiatives). Markus Repnik, managing director of the Global Mechanism, said \$450 billion is required annually to combat land degradation and desertification. He noted that climate funding is growing, but more resources are needed. Repnik added that states have spent \$200 billion but total financing is less than \$400 billion.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF), a financial mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is aiming to provide half of its funds for climate-change adaptation measures.

Repnik noted that the African Development Bank wants to triple climate financing by 2020.

He said there is abundance of funding initiatives and systems, but there is no single measure to show how finances are being mobilized. "In-depth data on global financing is required. It should be known how much has been spent, where it came and who provided it in addition to ensuring data compatibility and reliability," Markus said.

He called upon parties to consider how they will mobilize resources to implement the convention. The EU delegation to the UNCCD's CRIC 15 urged parties to explore more funding mechanisms instead of relying on multilateral partnerships. They said innovative measures to source funds from the private sector should be explored. *IPS*

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PUBLIC WARNED VS UNSAFE XMAS DECOR

By Joel E. Zurbano

THE Ecowaste Coalition urged the government to take action against the proliferation of unsafe and sub-standard Christmas lights and lighting chains being sold in public markets all over Metro Manila.

"We remind consumers to be extra vigilant in buying seasonal items such as Christmas lights as some of these products have not undergone safety evaluation and may cause electric shock, fire and chemical exposure," said Ecowaste Project Protect coordinator Thony Dizon.

"For the safety of your family and the environment, please do invoke your right to be protected against harmful and poor quality products, which is guaranteed by the Constitution, all the time," he emphasized.

Section 9 of Article XVI of the Constitution declares: "The State shall protect consumers from trade malpractices and from substandard or hazardous products."

Pursuant to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)-Bureau of Philippine Standards (BPS) Product Certification Scheme, importers of Christmas lights are required to obtain an Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) certificate before putting their products for sale in the domestic market.

The BPS last September 2, 2016 also issued Memorandum Circular 16-04 reminding importers that "to ensure that all Christmas lights/lighting chains are affixed with the appropriate ICC stickers or Philippine Standard certification mark before distribution in the local market."

Early this month, the group purchased Christmas lights from street and mall vendors in Divisoria to check if holiday lighting products conform with the regulatory requirements.

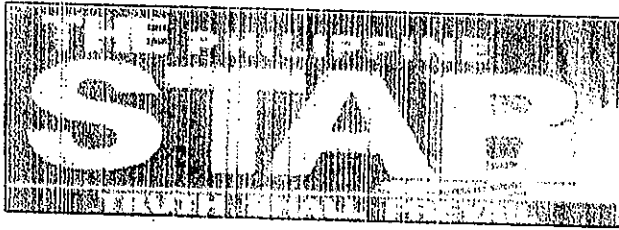
Out of the nine samples of Christmas lights bought for P50 to P250 per set, none had a valid ICC hologram sticker.

Two of these products are included in the list of valid ICC certificates and stickers for Christmas lights issued by the DTI as of October 6, 2016 and could be counterfeit goods.

None of the products gave information about their importers or distributors, which is important, especially if the consumer is to file a complaint and seek redress.

Out of nine samples, three indicated voltage and wattage specifications, and four gave instructions for safe use.

Furthermore, Ecowaste revealed that eight samples contained lead above the 1,000 parts per million (ppm) limit under the European Union's Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS).



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Phl opens doors to Malaysia for palm oil production

President Duterte is pushing for the development of about 80,000 hectares in the country for palm plantation with Malaysia as target market.

After arriving from a two-day visit in Malaysia, Duterte said he wants to integrate the program under the administration's efforts to reach out to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing New People's Army (NPA).

He noted that many areas occupied by the NPA are good for palm plantation.

He cited the vast lands in Agusan del Sur and other swathes in Mindanao as possible areas for palm plantation as soil quality in the South is generally appropriate for palm

production.

Duterte also wants to put closure on the Paquibato incident that involved the killing of Lumads. He said had the violence not erupted between government forces and the NPA, Malaysian firms would have pushed through with the development of a palm plantation there.

Duterte said violence stemmed from experts' findings that the land in Paquibato was suitable for palm oil production.

"What happened is that suddenly, the NPA put up banners everywhere, simply saying no to palm oil," Duterte said.

Reports said a tribal leader and two church workers were killed in the encounter on June

14, 2015 in Paquibato district.

Duterte said this time, he wants to make sure that investors would be secured once they conduct site inspections. And there is no better time to pursue the projects because the government has restarted peace negotiations with the CPP-NPA.

"I really do not know but I think somebody should talk to them again. Maybe this would be one project that we can ask about in Oslo because while waiting for the final result, whatever it is, we have to improve the lives of the people," he added.

The peace talks between the government and the CPP-NPA are held in Oslo, Norway with Malaysia as third-party

facilitator.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Malaysian investors are upbeat in investing in palm oil production after the President's official visit. There are plans to expand the investment to about 300,000 hectares throughout the Philippines.

"Malaysia has \$63 million in investments in the Philippines. But with the strengthening of ties, we expect more investments," Abella added. "Malaysian companies are also interested in infrastructure and energy investments."

The Malaysia-Philippines Business Council is also pleased with the assurances Duterte gave them in terms of protection, development of very good conducive business

environment and corruption-free government when they invest more in the Philippines.

Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez said the Malaysian business sector feels more assured and bullish towards pouring more investments in the country as Duterte discussed his government's thrusts.

Malaysia-Philippines Business Council president Tan Sri Azmil Khalid would relay to colleagues Duterte's message, especially those relating to halal, agriculture and infrastructure.

"It increased their confidence in reinvesting in the Philippines and they are more assured that these investments are protected. They are also assured that there will be no corruption or extortion," Lopez said, citing the

government's renewed efforts to streamline government processes and transactions relating to business.

Duterte wanted to shorten the processing time for permits and licensing transactions in all local government units to only three days at most.

Ambassador Eduardo Malaya earlier said many Malaysian businessmen feel that they are missing out on the Philippines with only about \$63 million invested.

Malaya said Duterte's two-day introductory visit in Malaysia last week signals the strengthening of economic relations between the two countries and raising it to the next level. — Christina Mendez, Giovanni Nilles

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26K puno sa Angat watershed puputulin

Aabot sa 26,000 matatandang punong-ka-hoy sa Angat watershed area sa Norzagaray, Bulacan ang nakatakdang putulin upang higit na patibayin ang rehabilitasyon ng Angat Dam na gugugulan ng P1-bilyong piso para hindi ito sumabog sakaling tumama ang isang malakas na lindol matapos makumpirmang 200 metro lamang ang layo ng reservoir sa West Valley Fault.

Base sa impormasyong nakalap sa tanggapan ni Gladys Sta. Rita, pangulo ng National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR) at dating Provincial Ad-

ministrador ng Provincial Capitol- Malolos City, kinakailangan ang 26,000 puno na puputulin sa watershed area para higit na maging matatag ang rehabilitasyon ng Angat Dam ngunit kaagad itong papalit ng 2.6 milyong punla.

Ipinaliwanag ni Sta. Rita na kinakailangang higit na maging matatag ang Angat Dam na inaasahan sa tubig na maiinom ng 97 porsiyento ng Metro Manila residents dahil higit na malaking trahedyang idudulot nito sakaling tumama ang isang malakas na lindol kaya kailangang

patatagin ang Dam ng libu-libong puputulin na puno sa watershed area.

May impormasyong may mga ga-hiblang buhok na bitak ang ilang bahagi ng Angat Dam na 49 taon na mula ng itayo noong 1967 kaya kinakailangan ang madaliang rehabilitasyon at pagpapatatag nito na matatapos sa taong 2018 at sakaling matapos ang konstruksyon ng reservoir, maaaring kayanin nito ang 7.2 hanggang 7.8 magnitude na lindol kahit dikit ang Dam sa fault line. (Jun Borlongan)