

*STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE*

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DAY : Tuesday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### DENR, UP forge pact to create models of integrated area devt

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @joulmayuga

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will create models of integrated area development to promote social justice and sustainable human development.

Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said, initially, the DENR and the University of the Philippines (UP) are eyeing to enhance the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Rescue Center (NAPWC) in Quezon City, promising to turn the 25-hectare park into an "ecological paradise" and "tourist attraction."

The NAPWC is one of the few remaining "patches of green" in the city, which is also a repository of rescued wildlife.

Currently, the NAPWC is under the management and administration of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, an office under the DENR by virtue of Proclamation 723, dated October 25, 2004, signed by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The proclamation reestablished the park as a protected area and a component of the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas).

Along with UP Chancellor Michael Tan, the DENR signed a memorandum of understanding during a news conference last Thursday formalizing the collaboration between the DENR and UP. The DENR and UP vowed to do

"many things" together, starting with the NAPWC.

"It is good for the DENR and good for UP," Lopez said of the newly signed pact.

Lopez said they plan to put up innovative environmental technologies and turn the park into "an extension of the educational experience of students."

"The DENR can offer UP an exciting arena where they can parley their educational know-how, their skills, including community development, including architecture, agriculture, engineering and even housing," Lopez added. She said a series of meeting between the DENR and UP will ensue starting next year.

Tan, for his part, said the collaboration aims to make "a model for development," and prove that "environmental conservation is compatible with other needs for human communities."

"We will draw up the different plans next year," Tan said.

Lopez said the park will also be used for various research and development, including, among others, renewable energy technologies.

She said the Protected Areas Management Board (PAMB) of the Ninoy Aquino Parks, which is a Protected Area, is involved in the planned transformation that will take place starting next year.

Lopez said she is hoping that what will transpire in the Ninoy Aquino parks will be replicated in other areas with the help of other learning institutions.

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Eroding islet threatens 38,500 seabirds in Tubbataha Reefs

BY KEITH ANTHONY S. FABRO  
*Philippines News Agency*

**P**UERTO PRINCESA CITY—Some 100 species of birds in the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (TRNP) in Cagayancillo, Palawan, are at risk of losing their breeding ground following observations that the bird islet on the North Atoll is progressively eroding.

"If the erosion of the islet continues, we might lose it, and the birds

will no longer have a home, a place for breeding," Retch Pagliawan, Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) researcher told the Philippine News Agency in a chance interview over the weekend.

Pagliawan said the islet's vegetation area has also decreased, thus speeding up the erosion.

"The main impact of that is actually for the breeding birds," she said, adding that Tubbataha is the last intact seabird habitat in the Philippines.

The erosion, particularly on the northeastern part of the 1.5-hectare islet, has alerted the TMO, prompting it to seek help from the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI).

An oceanographer and geologist from UP-MSI will conduct a study in April 2017, and will propose biodiversity-friendly measures that would halt the erosion, Pagliawan added.

She explained that this natural phenomenon, caused by the move-

ments of waves and currents was already observed in 2004, when TMO started measuring the islet.

Latest TMO data shows that the two islets in TRNP—the Bird Islet at North Atoll and South Islet at South Atoll—now support at least 38,500 seabirds.

It is the main rookery and breeding ground of the seabird species Red-footed Booby, Brown Booby, Great crested Tern, Sooty Tern, Black Noddy and Brown Noddy.

The TMO also noted that "it is the only known breeding area of the worcestri subspecies of Black Noddy, one of the few breeding areas of Sooty Tern and Brown Noddy" in the country.

The critically endangered Christmas Island Frigate bird (*Fregata andrewsi*), regularly occurring with up to five individuals at a time, as well as the Chinese Egret, Swinhoe's Storm Petrel, Eurasian Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit, also seek refuge in the

islets on TRNP, according to TMO.

Believed to be locally extinct for more than 20 years, the Masked Booby reappeared again on the bird islet on May 11, 2016.

Considering most of the seabird species breeding at TRNP are threatened at national or regional levels, since last year it has been included in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, an international network created to conserve migratory birds and its habitats.

## LOPEZ: RID PANGASINAN NATIONAL PARK OF URBAN TRAPPINGS

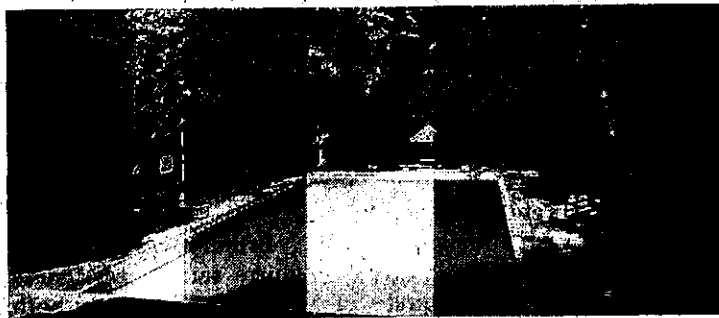
By Gabriel Cardinoza  
@gcardinozaINQ

**MANGATAREM, PANGASINAN**—The lush forest of Manleluag Spring National Park here may have impressed her, but Environment Secretary Gina Lopez said the local government should try to remove its urban trappings.

Lopez said she was dismayed to see the pools and concrete walkways and picnic sheds in the area.

"What you have is beautiful. Preserve it and don't create an urban environment because your specialty is the fact that it's not urban. Why will people come here to see an urban environment?" she said during a visit to the park on Friday.

The 1,935-hectare park in Barangay Malabobo was declared a national park in 1940



The Manleluag Spring National Park in Mangatarem town, Pangasinan, features a pool where water from a natural hot spring is collected. —WILLIE LOMIBAO

and a protected area in 2004. It is managed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

According to Paquito Moreno, DENR regional director, about 900 ha of the park had been designated as a multipurpose zone, where a 100-ha recreational area was developed. The park, which is 6.5 kilometers

from the Tarlac-Pangasinan Road, features a hot spring, two swimming pools, a pavilion and several picnic sheds.

"Put up eco-lodges made of bamboo ... serve healthy food and then keep the place beautiful and ban smoking so people can enjoy the fresh air," Lopez said.

"I suggest you put trails for jogging, hiking and biking for

people to enjoy nature. Manila is so polluted and you can come here and have fresh air and [engage in] bonding [moments]," she said.

Pangasinan Rep. Amado Espino Jr., who was the governor from 2007 to 2016, said he had asked the DENR to allow the provincial government to manage the national park.

He said the provincial government spent P25 million to improve the access road leading to the park, aside from the many tree-planting activities he conducted in the area.

"This is the first beautiful place in Pangasinan that tourists can visit through the Tarlac-Pangasinan Road," he said.

Lopez said that she would convene a committee to look into Espino's proposal for the province to manage the park. INQ

# PEOPLES JOURNAL

12-20-2016

DATE

13

PAGE

UPPER HALF

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LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Gov't allots P9M to develop Aurora Memorial National Park

**MARIA AURORA, Aurora** – The national government has set aside P9 million for the development of eco-tourism facilities at the 5,000-hectare Aurora Memorial National Park in this town.

Arturo Salazar, assistant regional director for technical services of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said the funding will be used to set up comfort rooms, information center and hiking area in the AMNP. About 40,000 hectares of the AMNP are located in this province and the rest in Nueva Ecija.

Salazar said that next year, they are eyeing funding allocations for the Dinadiawan River Protected Landscape (DRPL) in Dipaculao, Aurora and the Pantabangan-Carranglan Watershed Forest Reserve in Nueva Ecija.

Raizza Lico, chief of the protected areas management (PAM) and biodiversity conservation section (BCS) of the DENR in Region 3, said that aside from the AMNP, other protected areas which received allocation in the region are the Bataan National Park (BNP) worth P5 million, the Biak-na-Bato National Park in Bulacan (P13 million), the Minalungao National Park (MNP) in Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija (P13 million) and the Mt. Arayat National Park (MANP) in Pampanga (P5 million).

The AMNP is considered a protected area apart from the 6,471.08-hectare Amro River Protected Landscape (ARPL) in the municipality of Casiguran, the 3,371.332-hectare DRPL in Dipaculao town, the 2,266.47-hectare Simbahan-Talagas Protected Landscapes (STPL) and the 3,526.29-hectare Talaytay Protected Landscapes (TPL), both in Dinalungan.

The protected-area conversion of the four was contained in Senate Bill 1901 introduced by Sen. Loren Legarda entitled "An Act declaring as Protected Areas and Buffer Zones the parcels of lands designated as such by the President of the Republic of the Philippines pursuant to Republic Act 7586 otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act, providing for their management and for other purposes."

**Manner Banez**

12-20-16

DATE

12

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## BFAR: Plastic, steel wires killed whale in Samal

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – Garbage and toxins were found inside the stomach of a 38-foot juvenile sperm whale that was beached offshore in the Island Garden City of Samal over the weekend.

A backhoe had to be used to pull its carcass to the shore of Barangay Miranda, Babak district.

Based on experts' estimate, the whale may possibly have been seven years old or more.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said in its necropsy report that various toxic foreign contents were found inside the stomach of the distressed mammal such as plastic, fish net and hooks, a piece of hard wood with nail, rope and steel wire – all ultimately causing its premature death.

It added that the whale's stomach also contained fish eyes, fish bones and cartilage, different sizes of squid beaks and numerous stomach worms.

Darrell Dean Blatchley, ce-

tacean expert and proprietor of D'Bone Collector Museum, said the cause of death must have been internal due to the lack of evident physical injuries.

He added that the Davao Gulf is host to at least 18 of 27 species of whales seen in the country.

Blatchley's museum actually houses 53 of the total 58 whale skeletons that he has preserved through the years.

"Among the 53 whales and dolphins recovered in the last seven years in Davao Gulf, only four died due to natural causes. The rest of them died because of plastic waste, were caught by nets or killed through dynamite fishing or were unable to feed in the sea. A majority of them died because of humans," Blatchley said.

The dead whale had to be deboned and transported to a sanitary landfill where its remains will be buried.

DNA samples were taken from the whale and turned

# THE PHILIPPINE STAR

**TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL**  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE \_\_\_\_\_

UPPER HALF \_\_\_\_\_

LOWER HALF \_\_\_\_\_



**Residents look at a dead juvenile sperm whale on Samal Island in Davao del Norte on Saturday.**

DEAN ORTIZ

over to the BFAR for further study by experts, while the skeleton will be brought to a museum in Davao for cleaning and processing.

"Then it will be sent back to Samal where it will be

placed in an education center so people will have a view of the kind of animals they could encounter around Samal and the Davao Gulf," Blatchley said.

He added that it would

also teach people of the need to "take care of our environment."

The preserved remains of the whale will be the largest on display in the country, he also said. - With Yahoo News

# PEOPLES JOURNALS

12-20-2016

DATE

11

PAGE

✓  
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### UN sounds alarm over increasing marine debris

MARINE debris, mostly plastic wastes, is negatively affecting more than 800 animal species and causing serious losses to many countries' economies, according to a United Nations report.

The report, *Marine Debris: Understanding, Preventing and Mitigating the Significant Adverse Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity* found that the number of species affected by marine debris has increased from 663 to 817 since 2012. This waste is an increasing threat to human health and well-being, and is costing countries billions of dollars each year, the UN report said.

"I hope that this report will provide governments and other stakeholders with the information needed to take urgent actions to address marine debris, one of the most prominent threats to marine ecosystems, and support healthy and resilient oceans as a critical aspect of achieving sustainable development," said Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Director of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Marine debris is usually defined as any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of, or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment. Three-quarters of all marine debris is plastic, a persistent and potentially hazardous pollutant, which fragments into microplastics that can be taken up by a wide range of marine organisms.

The most common types of marine debris are: food wrappers, bottle caps, straws, grocery bags, beverage bottles and cigarette butts. Five of these items are made of plastic.

Marine and coastal species – fish, seabirds, marine mammals and reptiles – are affected by marine debris mostly through ingestion or entanglement. According to the report, 40 per cent of cetaceans, and 44 per cent of seabird species are affected by marine debris ingestion. The effect of ingestion is not always understood, as many ingest microplastics – little pieces or fragments that are less than five millimeters in diameter.

Plastic is a very common material in our daily lives – eight per cent of global oil production is used to make plastic items. However, it is hard to dispose of and many times is discarded after a single use – think of plastic bags to carry groceries, wrapping for packages, among many others.

Annual plastic production has substantially increased over the last 60 years, from 1.5 million ton in the 1950s to 288 million tons in 2012, with approximately two-thirds of production occurring in East



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Party-list group urges DENR: Be fair to small-scale miners

BY MARVYN N. BENANING  
Correspondent

**A** PARTY-LIST group on Monday asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to help alleviate the situation of small-scale miners "instead of threatening them of losing their decades-old source of livelihood."

Party-list Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate of Bayan Muna, who chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources, issued the call during a gathering of small- and large-scale miners in Itogon, Benguet.

In the meeting, Zarate described the Mining Act of 1995 as being "lopsided in the favor of large-scale mining corporations."

"The DENR cannot just dismiss the operations of small-scale miners as illegal and demand them to stop. This is livelihood for thousands of people, and it has been so for generations, especially here in the Cordillera."

"Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez must heed the plight of the ordinary small-scale miners. Instead of closing them down, it must push for the modernization of our



"Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez must heed the plight of the ordinary small-scale miners. Instead of closing them down, it must push for the modernization of our small-scale mining industry and support more healthful and ecological practices in mining."

small-scale mining industry and support more healthful and ecological practices in mining," Zarate said.

"The DENR is forcing small-scale miners to supposedly legalize their operations but under a regime that requires very stiff requirements, with little to no support at all from the government. Meanwhile, large-scale mines, mostly foreign, have wrought havoc and destruction to our lands for decades with all incentives given to them. We cannot treat our people this way. The Filipinos and our quest for national industrialization must be the primary beneficiaries of our rich mineral

resources," he added.

In a petition submitted to the Bayan Muna lawmaker, the 20,000-strong Benguet Federation of Small Scale Miners (BFSSM) also bewailed the DENR's stringent requirements, since the same are "designed to abolish small-scale mining."

They also called on Zarate's committee to initiate "meaningful legislative remedial measures to alleviate their sad condition."

"We seek the support of our small-scale miners for the crafting of a more progressive, pro-people and pro-environment mining law that will help propel our country to industrialization and, at the same time, also gives due support and recognition to small-scale, traditional miners that had eked out a living from our minerals for centuries," Zarate added.

The Committee on Natural Resources is deliberating on comprehensive mining bills to replace the Mining Act of 1995. It is also looking into amending Republic Act 7076, also known as the Small-Scale Mining Act, to incorporate the concerns of BFSSM and other groups of small mining elsewhere in the country.

20 DEC 2016

DATE

UPPER HA

8-10

PAGE

LOWER HA

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Filling the void from PH

# New Caledonian miners to ramp up nickel ore exports to China

SYDNEY/PARIS (Reuters) – New Caledonia's nickel ore miners have applied to increase shipments to China after an environmental crackdown on Philippine mine supply this year has caused prices to spike, four sources familiar with the matter said this week.

Two miners, Societe Metallurgique Le Nickel (SLN), owned by France's Eramet, and Societe des Mines de la Tontouta (SMT) have applied for permits to export more ore to China in 2017, the sources said.

China is demanding new sources of nickel ore to feed its vast stainless steel industry after the Philippines, the world's biggest ore exporter, halted production at some mines for environmental violations. China's steel industry has boosted production this year to meet construction demand amid a domestic property boom.

China began importing ore this year from New Caledonia for the first time

since 2011, after shipments to Australia's Queensland Nickel were diverted after the plant shut down due to low prices, and as Philippine exports fell. The island territory is the world's fifth-largest nickel miner, producing nickel laterite ore, a type prized by Chinese smelters.

"We are requesting an extension to sell 950,000 tons of laterites a year to China for two years," said Thibaut Martelin, general manager of SMT, up from 350,000 tons initially allowed.

The mining company, owned by Groupe Ballande, said it had reached its quotas and was now limiting production.

"We are running out of stock space and if we had had the quotas, we could have had loaded three more ships," Martelin said.

The New Caledonian government will review the applications next week.

With a quarter of the world's nickel reserves, New Caledonia has resisted

selling ore directly to consuming countries to smelt and refine onshore, boosting a main source of its revenue.

China must find new nickel ore sources after the Philippines halted eight nickel mines earlier this year and may suspend another 14. Together, those mines would account for more than half of the Philippines nickel ore output last year.

The onset of the Philippine rainy season may also halt shipments to China over the coming months.

China imported 12 percent less nickel ore in the first ten months of the year at 26.2 million tons and its ore stockpiles are near five-year lows.

However, China's stainless steel output surged 7.9 percent to 11.73 million tons in the first half of the year.

LME nickel prices have jumped 28 percent this year because of the Philippine supply concerns, and last traded up 0.6 percent at \$11,455 a ton.

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

20 DEC 2016

DATE

UPPER H

8

PAGE

LOWER H

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

8

MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Visayas News

VOLVO



**A STICKY SITUATION** - The new garbage transfer station of Cebu City in the South Road Properties is drawing criticism because it is within smelling distance of a subdivision. City Hall insists the station is temporary and will be closed after a new site for a landfill is found. (Juan Carlo de Vela)

TUESDAY / DECEMBER 20, 2016  
WWW.INQUIRER.NET

## BUSINESS

# Water everywhere and nowhere

## COMMENTARY

ERNESTO M. ORDÓÑEZ



**The LGUs should be equipped with water-treatment facilities and make arrangements for the more than one million households ... that do not have sanitary toilets and septic tanks.**

### Highlights

Also participating in this meeting were UPLB Deans Decibel Eslava of Environmental Science and Management and Arnold Alepano of Engineering and Agro Industry Technology; Water Expert Patricia Santos representing the UPLB Chancellor; and former Planters Development Bank president and Ambassador Jesus Tambunting.

The United Nations had earlier predicted a global shortfall of water by 2030. But a CNN

report in the last few days stated that very serious water problems would occur as early as 2020.

In fact, a Pagasa report confirms this will be true in the Philippines. By 2020, Batangas will have 20 percent less water during the summer period and 10 percent more water during the rainy period. De Guzman said that the water crisis was already here in the Philippines. Consequently, the water master plan is urgent.

Eslava identified four major areas that this master plan should address: Water quality, water availability and watershed management.

While this is being done, we should immediately implement low-cost but high impact initiatives. Roger Navarro said that more than 80 percent of our piggery and poultry farms were wasting huge amounts of water. They should construct downspouts that can catch water from the roofs into aquifers that will, in turn, have low-cost filters to recycle the water.

Alepano said that water management can be significantly improved. More than P25 billion is spent annually on irrigation. However, though there are 33,000 new irrigated hectares, 70,000 hectares are lost due to management and maintenance problems. Alyansa Agrikultura leader Sonny Siozon cites the numerous unused Small Water Impounding Dams that are quickly deteriorating.

LGUs play a critical role in addressing polluted water. For

example, 80 percent of the massive pollution in the Laguna de Bay comes from households. The LGUs should be equipped with water-treatment facilities and make arrangements for the more than one million households around Laguna de Bay that do not have sanitary toilets and septic tanks.

And of course, the 5.7 million denuded hectares should be addressed immediately with initiatives such as Secretary Lopez's one-million-hectare bamboo planting program.

### Low-lying fruits

Ideas mentioned here are only a few of the many actions that should be taken to address our water crisis.

Even as we do the master plan, we should already implement immediately public-private doable initiatives. The UPLB Foundation, in coordination with the Water Master Plan Steering Committee, should use this as a starting point for the March 2017 Water Summit.

There is no time to lose. As De Guzman stated when the "water everywhere and nowhere" problem was discussed: "This is a moral imperative as it concerns the survival of millions of Filipinos." INQ



The author is Agriwatch Chair, former Secretary of Presidential Programs and Projects, and former Undersecretary of DA and DTI.  
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**W**ater significantly affects our lives. When it is everywhere (e.g. floods) and when it is nowhere (e.g. droughts), we have serious problems. That is why we need a water master plan so that we can control water, instead of water controlling us.

In the Philippines, 70 percent of our water is used by agriculture. That is why the five coalition Agri Fisheries Alliance (AFA) identified this issue as a priority in executive sessions with President Duterte and Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol. Unfortunately, nothing significant has happened in the last six months. The five AFA coalitions represent farmers and fisherfolk, agribusiness, science and technology, rural women, and multisector leaders.

The AFA has since brought this up with Senate Environment Committee Chair Sen. Loren Legarda, Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez and Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Manuel de Guzman.

Last Dec. 17, AFA met with De Guzman. He approved two AFA proposals: First, CCC will arrange for the formulation of a preliminary skeletal water master plan that will be discussed in a national public-private water summit in March 2017, and, second, the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Foundation will initially act as the coordinator for this master plan formulation, assisted by AFA in its steering committee.

20 DEC 2016

DATE

UPPER HALF

PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Fishers et al declare war vs 'Great Wall of Leyte'

**By Sandy Araneta**

THE fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya-Pilipinas), People Surge, an alliance of Yolanda survivors based in Tacloban City, and environmental group Center for Environmental Concerns are gearing for a total war against the national government's ambitious plan to build anti-storm surge wall.

The Tep (also known as the

Tide Embankment Project or 'The Great Wall of Leyte'), which costs P7.9 billion, is a long stretch of seawall from Tacloban to the town of Tanauan, Leyte, touted to protect people from storm surges.

Of the 27.3 kilometers length of the embankment, 20.1 km. are in Tacloban, 4.1 km. will cover Palo and 3.1 km. in Tanauan.

It shall have a height of about 4.5 meters and its center line would stand 30 meters from the seashore.